

CITY OF LOS ANGELES
CALIFORNIA



ANTONIO R. VILLARAIGOSA
MAYOR

DEPARTMENT OF
CITY PLANNING
OFFICE OF HISTORIC RESOURCES
200 N. SPRING STREET, ROOM 620
LOS ANGELES, CA 90012-4801
(213) 978-1200

CULTURAL HERITAGE COMMISSION
RICHARD BARRON
PRESIDENT
ROELLA H. LOUIE
VICE-PRESIDENT

GLEN C. DAKE
MIA M. LEHRER
OZ SCOTT

LOURDES SANCHEZ
COMMISSION EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT
(213) 978-1300

EXECUTIVE OFFICES

S. GAIL GOLDBERG, AICP
DIRECTOR
(213) 978-1271

VINCENT P. BERTONI, AICP
DEPUTY DIRECTOR
(213) 978-1272

JOHN M. DUGAN, AICP
DEPUTY DIRECTOR
(213) 978-1274

EVA YUAN-McDANIEL
DEPUTY DIRECTOR
(213) 978-1273

FAX: (213) 978-1275

INFORMATION
(213) 978-1270

www.lacity.org/PLN

October 22, 2008

Los Angeles City Council
Room 395, City Hall
200 North Spring Street
Los Angeles, California 90012

ATTENTION: Barbara Greaves, Legislative Assistant
Planning and Land Use Management Committee

CASE NUMBER: **CHC-2008-3064-HCM**
NORTH VERMONT AVENUE MORETON BAY FIG TREES
N. VERMONT AVE. BETWEEN LOS FELIZ BLVD. AND ABERDEEN AVE.

At the Cultural Heritage Commission meeting of October 16, 2008, the Commission moved to include the above property in the list of Historic-Cultural Monuments, subject to adoption by the City Council.

As required under the provisions of Section 22.171.10 of the Los Angeles Administrative Code, the Commission has solicited opinions and information from the office of the Council District in which the site is located and from any Department or Bureau of the city whose operations may be affected by the designation of such site as a Historic-Cultural Monument. Such designation in and of itself has no fiscal impact. Future applications for permits may cause minimal administrative costs.

The City Council, according to the guidelines set forth in Section 22.171 of the Los Angeles Administrative Code, shall act on the proposed inclusion to the list within 90 days of the Council or Commission action, whichever first occurs. By resolution, the Council may extend the period for good cause for an additional 15 days.

The Cultural Heritage Commission would appreciate your inclusion of the subject modification to the list of Historic-Cultural Monuments upon adoption by the City Council.

The above Cultural Heritage Commission action was taken by the following vote:

Moved: Commissioner Louie
Seconded: Commissioner Dake
Ayes: Commissioner Barron, Dake, Louie
Absent: Commissioners Lehrer, Scott
Vote: 3 - 0

OCT 27 2008

PLANNING & LAND
USE MANAGEMENT


James Williams, Commission Executive Assistant I
Cultural Heritage Commission

Attachment: Staff Report with Findings

c: Councilmember Tom LaBonge, Fourth Council District
City of Los Angeles, Department of Public Works, Bureau of Street Services,
Urban Forestry Division, Attn. George Gonzalez, Chief Forester: Owner
Thomas Ford, Los Feliz Improvement Association: Applicant

CP 4



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October 22, 2008

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Room 395, City Hall
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Moved: Commissioner Louie
Seconded: Commissioner Dake
Ayes: Commissioner Barron, Dake, Louie
Absent: Commissioners Lehrer, Scott
Vote: 3 - 0


James Williams, Commission Executive Assistant I
Cultural Heritage Commission

Attachment: Staff Report with Findings

c: Councilmember Tom LaBonge, Fourth Council District
City of Los Angeles, Department of Public Works, Bureau of Street Services,
Urban Forestry Division, Attn. George Gonzalez, Chief Forester: Owner
Thomas Ford, Los Feliz Improvement Association: Applicant

Los Angeles Department of City Planning

RECOMMENDATION REPORT

CULTURAL HERITAGE COMMISSION

CASE NO.: CHC-2008-3064-HCM

HEARING DATE: October 16, 2008
TIME: 10:00 AM
PLACE: City Hall, Room 1010
200 N. Spring Street
Los Angeles, CA
90012

Location: North Vermont Ave between Los Feliz
Blvd and Aberdeen Ave
Council District: 4
Community Plan Area: Hollywood
Area Planning Commission: Central
Neighborhood Council: Greater Griffith Park
Legal Description:

PROJECT: Historic-Cultural Monument Application for the
NORTH VERMONT AVENUE MORETON BAY FIG TREES

REQUEST: Declare the property a Historic-Cultural Monument


APPLICANT: Thomas Ford
Los Feliz Improvement Association
PO Box 29395
Los Angeles, CA 90029

OWNER: George Gonzalez, Chief Forester
Urban Forestry Division
Public Works: Street Services
City of Los Angeles
1149 S. Broadway, 4th Floor
Los Angeles, CA 90015-2213

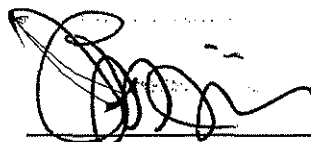
RECOMMENDATION That the Cultural Heritage Commission:

1. **Declare** the property a Historic-Cultural Monument per Los Angeles Administrative Code Chapter 9, Division 22, Article 1, Section 22.171:7
2. **Adopt** the report findings.


S. GAIL GOLDBERG, AICP
Director of Planning



Ken Bernstein, Manager
Office of Historic Resources



Lambert M. Giessinger, Preservation Architect
Office of Historic Resources

Prepared by:


Edgar Garcia, Preservation Planner
Office of Historic Resources

Attachments: June 10, 2008 Historic-Cultural Monument Application
ZIMAS Report

FINDINGS

1. The streetscape feature is associated with a master builder, designer, or architect, as a work by the landscape architect Wilbur Cook.
2. The streetscape feature reflects "the broad cultural, economic, or social history of the nation, State or community" for its association with the development of the Vermont Canyon area of Los Angeles.

CRITERIA

The criterion is the Cultural Heritage Ordinance which defines a historical or cultural monument as any site (including significant trees or other plant life located thereon) building or structure of particular historic or cultural significance to the City of Los Angeles, such as historic structures or sites in which the broad cultural, economic, or social history of the nation, State or community is reflected or exemplified, or which are identified with historic personages or with important events in the main currents of national, State or local history or which embody the distinguishing characteristics of an architectural type specimen, inherently valuable for a study of a period style or method of construction, or a notable work of a master builder, designer or architect whose individual genius influenced his age.

SUMMARY

Located in the Los Feliz area, these thirty-nine Moreton Bay Fig Trees (*Ficus macrophylla*) appear to have been planted in 1913 and line North Vermont Avenue between Los Feliz Boulevard and Aberdeen Avenue as a streetscape feature. The trees are planted along both sidewalks, with a majority located along the eastern edge of North Vermont Avenue. The trees occupy six distinct blocks and are planted in tree lawns of various sizes. The fig trees have gnarled trunks and crowns that range from 50-120 feet in diameter and form a canopy that spans the width of the street. The subject trees are located on a portion of N. Vermont Ave. that serves as an entrance to Griffith Park and as a thoroughfare to the Greek Theatre and the Griffith Observatory.

The proposed North Vermont Avenue Moreton Bay Fig Trees historic monument appears to have been planted in or around 1913. The fig trees appear to predate many of the homes built along Vermont Avenue. They were planted on land sold to developer William Mead by Colonel Griffith J. Griffith, who donated Griffith Park to the City of Los Angeles. The streetscape feature was designed by landscape architect Wilbur Cook, who developed the master plan for the City of Beverly Hills. Cook is mentioned multiple times in Gebhard and Winter's *Architectural Guidebook to Los Angeles*, being credited with the layout of Exposition Park's grounds and the expansion of the Henry E. Huntington Gardens.

Later changes to the proposed historic monument include the planting of additional Moreton Bay Fig trees at various times.

DISCUSSION

The North Vermont Avenue Moreton Bay Fig Trees successfully meet two of the specified Historic-Cultural Monument criteria: 1) reflects "the broad cultural, economic, or social history of the nation, State or community" and 2) is associated with a master builder, designer, or architect. As a prominent streetscape feature in the Vermont Canyon area designed by

landscape architect Wilbur Cook, the subject trees clearly qualify for designation as a Historic-Cultural Monument based on these criteria.

BACKGROUND

At its meeting of August 7, 2008, the Cultural Heritage Commission voted to take the application under consideration. On September 4, 2008, the Cultural Heritage Commission toured the subject property.

Responding to requests for additional information, staff of the Office of Historic Resources obtained an attachment to the application from the applicant expanding on the historical context of the subject trees. Staff also received a communication from City staff of the Urban Forestry Division of the Department of Public Works regarding the condition of the subject trees, stating that "all trees are mature and healthy specimens" except for two trees that are in poor condition.

CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT ("CEQA") REVIEW

State of California CEQA Guidelines, Article 19, Section 15308, Class 8 "*consists of actions taken by regulatory agencies, as authorized by state or local ordinance, to assure the maintenance, restoration, enhancement, or protection of the environment where the regulatory process involves procedures for protection of the environment.*"

State of California CEQA Guidelines Article 19, Section 15331, Class 31 "*consists of projects limited to maintenance, repair, stabilization, rehabilitation, restoration, preservation, conservation or reconstruction of historical resources in a manner consistent with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for Preserving, Rehabilitating, Restoring, and Reconstructing Historic buildings.*"

The designation of the proposed Vermont Avenue Moreton Bay Fig Trees as a Historic-Cultural Monument in accordance with Chapter 9, Article 1, of The City of Los Angeles Administrative Code ("LAAC") will ensure that future construction activities involving the subject property are regulated in accordance with Section 22.171.14 of the LAAC. The purpose of the designation is to prevent significant impacts to a Historic-Cultural Monument through the application of the standards set forth in the LAAC. Without the regulation imposed by way of the pending designation, the historic significance and integrity of the subject property could be lost through incompatible alterations and new construction and the demolition of irreplaceable historic structures. The Secretary of Interior's Standards of Rehabilitation are expressly incorporated into the LAAC and provide standards concerning the historically appropriate construction activities which will ensure the continued preservation of the subject property.

The use of Categorical Exemption Class 8 in connection with the proposed designation is consistent with the goals of maintaining, restoring, enhancing, and protecting the environment through the imposition of regulations designed to prevent the degradation of Historic-Cultural Monuments.

The use of Categorical Exemption Class 31 in connection with the proposed designation is consistent with the goals relating to the preservation, rehabilitation, restoration and reconstruction of Historic buildings in a manner consistent with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for Preserving Rehabilitating, Restoring, and Reconstructing Historic Buildings.

Moreton Bay Fig HCM Application- Addendum
Tom Ford
August 7, 2008

Significance:

The Moreton Bay Fig Trees meet the first criterion for a City of Los Angeles Historic-Cultural Monument eligibility, ..."in which the broad cultural, political, economic, or social history of the nation, state, or community is reflected or exemplified."

William Mead's hiring of the noted landscape architect Wilbur Cook is a historically significant gesture within the turn-of-the century context of the City Beautiful Movement. This movement was a progressive, nationwide social movement for city beautification and urban revitalization in response to the rapid growth accompanying the industrial revolution. Besides the beneficial psychological effects on social behavior of the masses and obvious health benefits of green spaces, making the city more beautiful had the more practical outcome of making the adjacent land more valuable.

The Moreton Bay Fig Trees also meet the second criterion for a City of Los Angeles Historic-Cultural Monument eligibility ..."which are identified with historic personages or with events in the main currents of national, state, or local history.

The trees are historically associated with Col. Griffith J. Griffith who owned the land where the trees are now planted. A penniless immigrant, his mining investments made him one of the richest Californians. He purchased Rancho Los Feliz in 1822. Later he sold some of the water rights to the City of Los Angeles and recouped his investment. In 1896 Griffith donated the land for Griffith Park, the largest urban wilderness park in the United States, which lies at the northern end of Vermont Avenue. Later Griffith donated money for the construction of both the Griffith Observatory and the Greek Theatre.

The trees are also historically associated with William Mead who purchased the land from Griffith in 1910. Mead was the first president of the LA Planning Commission. He was a commissioner on the LA Department of Water and Power at the time of the building of the LA aqueduct from the Owens Valley. Mead also served on the Chamber of Commerce and on the Charter Commission of the City and County of Los Angeles in 1907.

As a developer Mead built the first home in Vermont Canyon. The Los Angeles Times described it as "New foothill showplace will occupy

8-acre knoll. Dwelling of palatial proportions." and included an artist's rendering. (Source: Los Angeles Times, 06/02/12) Hillhurst Park was the first subdivision in the city and Mead was determined that it would be the most elegant, exclusive and desirable place in all the city to live.

The Moreton Bay figs are also historically associated with Wilbur Cook, the landscape architect hired by Mead to make his subdivision the most beautiful in the city. Cook designed Exposition Park with its famous sunken rose garden in 1911. Cook planned the new Beverly Hills business area, the Beverly Hills Hotel grounds and gardens in 1912, Santa Monica Park across from the Beverly Hills Courthouse, and the Huntington Gardens. For Vermont Avenue Wilbur Cook designed streets, parkways, and landscaping that curved with the terrain.

The Moreton Bay figs are also historically associated with Col. Griffith's son, Van Griffith, who built his estate at the end of Vermont Avenue and planted a Moreton Bay fig on his own property. Van Griffith continued his father's civic interests, was a park developer and served on the Park Commission for many years. Griffith had an irrigation system installed in the park for reforestation and for fire prevention. He spearheaded the construction of the Municipal Nursery in 1927 in Commonwealth Canyon. Van Griffith added to the size of his father's original donation of park land by selling the 351-acre Griffith reservation (where the Zoo is now located) in 1921 to the City for below market value to keep it from being developed as a subdivision.

Edgar

Staff did inspect the trees all the way to Aberdeen.

Thanks

Staff performed a visual inspection of the subject Moreton Bay Fig trees growing on Vermont Ave between Los Feliz and Hillhurst St. The inspection revealed all trees are mature and healthy specimens and worthy of preservation and recognition of the proposed monument status. It should be noted two trees located at 2301 and 2237 N. Vermont Ave. are in poor condition and will require constant monitoring and nurturing to ensure their survival.

2237 N Vermont Ave: aprox 24" X 25' MB Fig with offset and light crown adjacent to an existing street light with large wounds on the lower part of the trunk on the street side. The wounds on the trunk may have been the result of previous limb failure or damage by an auto/truck. Most of the tree/crown is growing towards the private residence.

2301 N Vermont Ave: aprox 45" X 25' MB Fig w/ sparse crown with a 4" dia wound 15' over street (evidence of previous limb failure). Several large roots have been cut/severed, possess some degree of decay, and the tree appears to be in decline.

Even these two trees should continue to survive and provide the City with their benefits for some time.

The overall condition of the trees is B-B+. It is estimated the trees will continue to thrive to their estimated lifespan that is over 150 years. The trees are a vital asset to the City. This inspection was performed to determine the outward visual health of the trees. No in depth study of the root zones or in tree structural conditions were performed. Trees are a dynamic living organism and all potential problems cannot be determined if in fact they exist.

Ron

GGPNC OFFICERS

PRESIDENT
Philip Gasteier
VICE-PRESIDENTS
Bruce Carroll - Administration
Rosemary DeMonte - Outreach
TREASURER
Thomas O'Grady
SECRETARY
Kurt Rademakers



**Greater Griffith Park
Neighborhood Council**
*Your Neighborhood. Your Voice.
Your Council.*



PO Box 27003
Los Angeles, CA 90027
323-908-6054
www.GGPNC.org
GGPNC@GGPNC.org
Certified Council #35

August 20, 2008

Cultural Heritage Commission
Room 272
City Hall
200 North Spring Street
Los Angeles, California 90012

Moreton Bay Fig Trees
North Vermont Avenue
CHC-2008-3064-HCM

Dear Commissioners:

The Board of Directors of Greater Griffith Park Neighborhood Council, whose area includes Vermont Avenue north of Los Feliz Boulevard, at its duly noticed and held meeting on August 19, 2008, resolved to advise you that we wholeheartedly support the application of Thomas Ford to have the Moreton Bay fig trees lining Vermont Avenue north from Los Feliz Boulevard to one of the entrances of Griffith Park designated an Historic-Cultural Monument.

Such action was taken after a review of the application and following the recommendation of Greater Griffith Park Neighborhood Council's Planning, Zoning and Historic Preservation Committee, which considered the matter at a duly noticed and held meeting on August 13, 2008.

We urge the Commission to give favorable consideration to this application.

Respectfully submitted,

Philip Gasteier, President.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kenneth E. Owen'.

By Kenneth E. Owen, chair of the Planning, Zoning and Historic Preservation Committee

Cc: Thomas Ford
The Hon. Tom LaBonge
Office of Historic Resources

Los Angeles Department of City Planning

RECOMMENDATION REPORT

CULTURAL HERITAGE COMMISSION

CASE NO.: CHC-2008-3064-HCM

HEARING DATE: August 7, 2008
TIME: 10:00 AM
PLACE: City Hall, Room 1010
200 N. Spring Street
Los Angeles, CA
90012

Location: North Vermont Ave between Los Feliz
Blvd and Aberdeen Ave
Council District: 4
Community Plan Area: Hollywood
Area Planning Commission: Central
Neighborhood Council: Greater Griffith Park
Legal Description:

PROJECT: Historic-Cultural Monument Application for the
NORTH VERMONT AVENUE MORETON BAY FIG TREES

REQUEST: Declare the property a Historic-Cultural Monument

APPLICANT: Thomas Ford
Los Feliz Improvement Association
PO Box 29395
Los Angeles, CA 90029

OWNER: George Gonzalez, Chief Forester
Urban Forestry Division
Public Works: Street Services
City of Los Angeles
1149 S. Broadway, 4th Floor
Los Angeles, CA 90015-2213


RECOMMENDATION That the Cultural Heritage Commission:

1. **Take the property under consideration** as a Historic-Cultural Monument per Los Angeles Administrative Code Chapter 9, Division 22, Article 1, Section 22.171.10 because the application and accompanying photo documentation suggest the submittal may warrant further investigation.
2. **Adopt** the report findings.

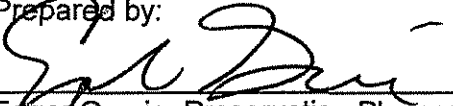
S. GAIL GOLDBERG, AICP
Director of Planning



Ken Bernstein, Manager
Office of Historic Resources



Lambert M. Giessinger, Preservation Architect
Office of Historic Resources

Prepared by:


Edgar Garcia, Preservation Planner
Office of Historic Resources

Attachments: June 10, 2008 Historic-Cultural Monument Application
ZIMAS Report

North Vermont Avenue Moreton Bay Fig Trees

CHC-2008-3064-HCM

Page 2 of 2

SUMMARY

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The proposed North Vermont Avenue Moreton Bay Fig Trees historic monument appears to have been planted in or around 1913. The fig trees appear to predate many of the homes built along Vermont Avenue. They were planted on land sold to developer William Mead by Colonel Griffith J. Griffith, who donated Griffith Park to the City of Los Angeles. The streetscape feature was designed by landscape architect Wilbur Cook, who developed the master plan for the City of Beverly Hills. Cook is mentioned multiple times in Gebhard and Winter's *Architectural Guidebook to Los Angeles*, being credited with the layout of Exposition Park's grounds and the expansion of the Henry E. Huntington Gardens.

Later changes to the proposed historic monument include the planting of additional Moreton Bay Fig trees at various times.

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FINDINGS

Based on the facts set forth in the summary and application, the Commission determines that the application is complete and that the property may be significant enough to warrant further investigation as a potential Historic-Cultural Monument.

SIGNIFICANCE WORK SHEET

TYPE OR HAND PRINT IN ALL CAPITAL BLOCK LETTERS

Complete One or Both of the Upper and Lower Portions of This Page

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE

THE NORTH VERMONT AVENUE MORETON BAY FIG TREES IS AN IMPORTANT EXAMPLE OF
NAME OF PROPOSED MONUMENT

STREET LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE
ARCHITECTURAL STYLE (SEE LINE 8)

AND MEETS THE CULTURAL HERITAGE ORDINANCE BECAUSE OF THE HIGH QUALITY OF ITS DESIGN AND THE RETENTION OF ITS ORIGINAL FORM, DETAILING AND INTEGRITY.

A N D / O R

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE

THE NORTH VERMONT AVENUE MORETON BAY FIG TREES WAS BUILT IN 1913
NAME OF PROPOSED MONUMENT YEAR BUILT

GRIFFITH J. GRIFFITH, WILLIAM MEAD, WILBUR COOK WAS IMPORTANT TO THE
NAME OF FIRST OR SIGNIFICANT OTHER

DEVELOPMENT OF LOS ANGELES BECAUSE (PLEASE SEE ATTACHED)

**HISTORIC-CULTURAL MONUMENT
APPLICATION**

TYPE OR HAND PRINT IN ALL CAPITAL BLOCK LETTERS

IDENTIFICATION

1. NAME OF PROPOSED MONUMENT NORTH VERMONT AVENUE MORETON BAY FIG TREES
2. STREET ADDRESS NORTH VERMONT AVE
CITY LOS ANGELES ZIP CODE 90027 COUNCIL DISTRICT 4
3. ASSESSOR'S PARCEL NO. (PLEASE SEE ATTACHED)
4. COMPLETE LEGAL DESCRIPTION: TRACT (PLEASE SEE ATTACHED)
BLOCK _____ LOT(S) _____ ARB. NO. _____
5. RANGE OF ADDRESSES ON PROPERTY 220 NORTH VERMONT AVE TO 2440 NORTH VERMONT AVE
(VERMONT AVENUE FROM LOS FELIZ BOULEVARD TO ABERDEEN AVE)
6. PRESENT OWNER CITY OF LOS ANGELES
STREET ADDRESS E-MAIL ADDRESS, 1149 SOUTH BROADWAY
CITY LOS ANGELES STATE CA ZIP CODE 90012 PHONE (323) 847-3077
OWNER IS: PRIVATE _____ PUBLIC _____ X
7. PRESENT USE STREET LANDSCAPE ORIGINAL USE STREET LANDSCAPE

DESCRIPTION

8. ARCHITECTURAL STYLE STREET LANDSCAPE
(SEE STYLE GUIDE)
9. STATE PRESENT PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE OR STRUCTURE. (SEE OPTIONAL DECIPTION WORK SHEET)
(PLEASE SEE ATTACHED)

**HISTORIC-CULTURAL MONUMENT
APPLICATION**

NAME OF PROPOSED MONUMENT North Vermont Avenue Moreton Bay Fig Trees

10. CONSTRUCTION DATE: 1912 FACTUAL: ESTIMATED:

11. ARCHITECT, DESIGNER, OR ENGINEER Wilbur Cook, William Mead

12. CONTRACTOR OR OTHER BUILDER Frank Mead owner of Development

13. DATES OF ENCLOSED PHOTOGRAPHS estimated on picture, 1925, 1920's
(1 8X10 BLACK AND WHITE GLOSSY AND 1 DIGITAL E-MAILED TO CULTURAL HERITAGE COMMISSION@LACITY.ORG)

14. CONDITION: EXCELLENT GOOD FAIR DETERIORATED NO LONGER IN EXISTENCE

15. ALTERATIONS Severe pruning on some trees from City, need protection from severe bad prunings

16. THREATS TO SITE: NONE KNOWN PRIVATE DEVELOPMENT VANDALISM PUBLIC WORKS PROJECT
 ZONING OTHER severe pruning, drought, truck traffic from Greek, Observatory

17. IS THE STRUCTURE: ON ITS ORIGINAL SITE MOVED UNKNOWN

SIGNIFICANCE

18. BRIEFLY STATE HISTORICAL AND/OR ARCHITECTURAL IMPORTANCE: INCLUDE DATES, EVENTS, AND PERSON ASSOCIATED
WITH THE SITE (SEE ALSO SIGNIFICANCE WORK SHEET. 750 WORDS MAXIMUM IF USING ADDITIONAL SHEETS)

(PLEASE SEE ATTACHED)

19. SOURCES (LIST BOOKS, DOCUMENTS, SURVEYS, PERSONAL INTERVIEWS WITH DATES) (PLEASE SEE ATTACHED)

20. DATE FORM PREPARED 06/10/2008 PREPARER'S NAME THOMAS FORD

ORGANIZATION LFIA BEAUTIFICATION STREET ADDRESS P.O. BOX 29395

CITY LOS ANGELES STATE CA ZIP CODE 90029 PHONE (323) 660-1914

E-MAIL ADDRESS: LFIA corespondance@lfia.org

DESCRIPTION WORK SHEET

TYPE OR HAND PRINT IN ALL CAPITAL BLOCK LETTERS

THE NORTH VERMONT AVENUE MORETON BAY FIG TREES IS A _____ -STORY,
NAME OF PROPOSED MONUMENT NUMBER OF STORIES

STREET LANDSCAPE PLAN _____
ARCHITECTURAL STYLE (SEE LINE 8 ABOVE) PLAN SHAPE (Click to See Chart) STRUCTURE USE (RESIDENCE, ETC.)

WITH A _____ FINISH AND _____ TRIM,
MATERIAL (WOOD SLIDING, WOOD SHINGLES, BRICK, STUCCO, ETC.) MATERIAL (WOOD, METAL, ETC.)

IT'S _____ ROOF IS _____
ROOF SHAPE (Click to See Chart) MATERIAL (CLAY TILE, ASPHALT OR WOOD SHINGLES, ETC.) WINDOW MATERIAL

_____ WINDOWS ARE PART OF THE DESIGN.
WINDOW TYPE (DOUBLE-HUNG (SLIDES UP & DOWN), CASEMENT (OPENS OUT), HORIZONTAL SLIDING, ETC.)

THE ENTRY FEATURES A _____
DOOR LOCATION (RECESSED, CENTERED, OFF-CENTER, CORNER, ETC.)

_____ DOOR. ADDITIONAL CHARACTER DEFINING ELEMENTS
ENTRY DOOR STYLE (Click to See Chart)

OF THE STRUCTURE ARE _____
IDENTIFY ORIGINAL FEATURES SUCH AS PORCHES (SEE CHART); BALCONIES; NUMBER AND SHAPE OF DORMERS (Click to See Chart)

NUMBER AND LOCATION OF CHIMNEYS; SHUTTERS; SECONDARY FINISH MATERIALS; PARAPETS; METAL TRIM; DECORATIVE TILE OR CAST STONE; ARCHES;

ORNAMENTAL WOODWORK; SYMMETRY OR ASYMMETRY; CORNICES; FRIEZES; TOWERS OR TURRETS; BAY WINDOWS; HALFTIMBERING; HORIZONTALLY;

VERTICALLY; FORMALITY OR INFORMALTY; GARDEN WALLS, ETC.

SECONDARY BUILDINGS CONSIST OF A _____
IDENTIFY GARAGE, GARDEN SHELTER, ETC.

SIGNIFICANT INTERIOR SPACES INCLUDE _____
IDENTIFY ORIGINAL FEATURES SUCH AS WOOD PANELING; MOLDINGS AND TRIM; SPECIAL GLASS WINDOWS;

ORNATE CEILINGS; PLASTER MOLDINGS; LIGHT FIXTURES; PAINTED DECORATION; CERAMIC TILE; STAIR BALUSTRADES; BUILT-IN FURNITURE, ETC.

IMPORTANT LANDSCAPING INCLUDES 39 MORETON BAY FIG TREES, EST, 95 YEARS OLD
IDENTIFY NOTABLE MATURE TREES AND SHRUBS

CITY OF LOS ANGELES HISTORIC-CULTURAL MONUMENT APPLICATION
NORTH VERMONT AVENUE MORETON BAY FIG TREES

CONTINUATION SHEET PAGE 1 OF 6

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE

THE NORTH VERMONT AVENUE MORETON BAY FIG TREES (39) ARE ELIGIBLE FOR DESIGNATION AS A LOS ANGELES HISTORIC CULTURAL MONUMENT FOR THEIR HISTORICAL, AESTHETIC AND SOCIAL QUALITIES RELATING TO LOS ANGELES AND LOS FELIZ. THE TREES WERE PLANTED AROUND 1913 AS PART OF RESIDENTIAL TRACT KNOWN AS HILLHURST PARK, AND ACCOUNTS IN THE LOS ANGELES TIMES DATA BASE INDICATE THAT THEY ARE PART OF THE HUNDREDS OF ACRES **WILLIAM MEAD** PURCHASED FROM **GRIFFITH J. GRIFFITH** IN 1910. MEAD SELECTED LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT **WILBUR COOK**, WHO HAD PLANNED THEN NEW BEVERLY HILLS AND THE BEVERLY HILLS HOTEL GROUNDS, TO CREATE STREETS WHICH CURVED WITH THE TERRAIN, WITH PARKWAYS IN THEIR MIDST. ADVERTISING FOR THE TRACT BEGAN IN 1913. CITY ARCHIVES HOLD DEEDS FOR EASEMENTS FOR SEWERS ISSUED IN 1913.

IN ATTACHED AERIAL VIEW OF VERMONT CANYON FROM THE BOOK ON THE HISTORY OF THE LOS FELIZ IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION, THERE IS NO DATE, BUT THERE WERE ONLY A FEW HOMES IN THE PHOTO, AND THE LAND BOOM OF THE 1920'S WHICH BROUGHT LOS FELIZ SO MANY SPANISH-STYLE HOMES, HAD NOT YET BEGUN. THE FIGS AND PLANTS IN THE PARKWAYS SEEM WELL ESTABLISHED AND THE STREETS WERE PAVED.

THE LOS ANGELES PUBLIC LIBRARY'S PHOTO DATA BASE INCLUDES ANOTHER PHOTO SHOWS THE PARTIALLY CONSTRUCTED ENNIS HOUSE 1925 WITH TREES AND PALMS THAT ARE PROBABLY 20 FEET HIGH AND ANOTHER PHOTO THE PARTIALLY CONSTRUCTED OBSERVATORY 1935 WITH MORE MATURE TREES. (1)

PRESENTLY THE TREES CREATE AN ENVELOPING CANOPY OF SHADE AND CALM TO THE ENTRANCE OF GRIFFITH PARK, THE GREEK THEATER AND THE OBSERVATORY. NORTH VERMONT AVENUE IS ONE OF THE MAIN ACCESSES TO GRIFFITH PARK AND HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS OF PEOPLE TRAVEL UNDER THIS UNIQUE AND BEAUTIFUL CANOPY EVERY YEAR. THEY ARE UNIQUE IN THE TRANSITION FROM THE CITY TO THE CALM OF THE URBAN WILDERNESS OF GRIFFITH PARK.

CONSTRUCTION OF THE OBSERVATORY AND THE GREEK THEATER. HE

CITY OF LOS ANGELES HISTORI-CULTURAL MONUMENT APPLICATION
NORHT VERMONT AVENUE MORETON BAY FIG TREES

CONTINUATION SHEET: 2 OF 6

GRIFFITH J GRIFFITH

THE ORIGINAL OWNER OF THE LAND AND THE BENEFATOR OF THE ADJACENT GRIFFITH PARK, GRIFFITH J. GRIFFITH GAVE OVER 3,000 ACRES OF HIS LAND TO THE CITY AND DONATED THE MONEY TO THE WAS INFAMOUS FOR THE SHOOTING OF HIS WIFE , WHO SAVED HERSELF BY HURLING HERSELF OUT OF A WINDOW AND LANDED ON AN AWNING BELOW, AND CRAWLED TO SAFETY THROUGH ANOTHER WINDOW. GRIFFITH DONATED THE LAND FOR THE PARK, DONATED MONEY AND SETUP A TRUST FOR THE BUILDING OF THE OBSERVATORY AND THE GREEK THEATER.

WILLIAM MEAD

WAS A DEVELOPER AND ON THE BOARD OF WATER COMMISSIONERS OF THE L.A. DEPARTMENT OF WATER AND POWER AT THE TIME OF THE BUILDING OF THE L.A. AQUEDUT TO OWENS VALLEY. MEAD ALSO SERVED IN THE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND ON THE CHARTER COMMISSION OF THE CITY AND COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES, IN 1907

WILBUR D. COOK

HIRED BY BURTON E. GREEN AS LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT FOR THE NEW CITY OF BEVERLY HILLS AND AS DESIGNER OF SANTA MONICA PARK (ACROSS FROM THE BEVELY HILLS COURTHOUSE) AND THE EXTENSIVE GARDENS OF THE GROUNDS OF THE BEVERLY HILLS HOTEL , 1912

CITY OF LOS ANGELES HISTORIC-CULTURAL MONUMENT APPLICATION
NORTH VERMONT AVENUE MORETON BAY FIG TREES
 CONTINUATION PAGE 3 OF 6

3. ASSESSORS PARCEL NO.

ON THE EAST, SIDE OF VERMONT AVENUE THE EAST SIDE TRACK NO.
 10976 MB 192 -44-45, , TRACK NO 9398 , TRACK NO 18490 MB 563 27-29,
 HILLHURST PARK M.B. 22-3435, TRACK NO. 6584 M.B. 55-87TRACK NO. 10976,
 TRACT NO 13268
 N.E.CORNER LOT 1 TR NO 16571 , TRACK NO 9680,

EAST SIDE OF STREET	ASSESSORS ID	TREES	#
2200 N. VERMONT AVE	5588-025-045	2 TREES	#1,2
2210 N. VERMONT AVE	5588-025-044	1 TREE	#3
2220 N. VERMONT AVE	5588-025-024	3 TREES	#4,5,6,
2300 N. VERMONT AVE	5588-024-015	2 TREES	#7,8
2310 N. VERMONT AVE	5588-024-016	1 TREE	#9
2324 N. VERMONT AVE	5588-024-017	1 TREE	#10
2340 N. VERMONT AVE	5588-024-018	1 TREE	#11
2344 N. VERMONT AVE	5588-024-019	2 TREES	#12,13,
2350 N VERMONT AVE	5588-024-020	1 TREE	#14
2358 N. VERMONT AVE	5588-024-021	1 TREE	#15
2370 N. VERMONT AVE	5588-024-001	3 TREES	#16,17,18
2400 N. VERMONT AVE	5588-024-022	1 TREE	#19
2410 N. VERMONT AVE	5588-034-001	1 TREE	#20
2420 N VERMONT AVE	5582-028-013	1 TREE	#21
2430 N VERMONT AVE	5588-028-012	1 TREE	#22,23
2440 N. VERMONT AVE	5588-028-010	2 TREES	#24,25
ABERDEEN	(25 TOTAL TREES)		

THE WEST SIDE OF VERMONT AVE
 TRACK NO 4441 MB 49 36 TRACK NO 3056 PM 106-4-5 TRACK NO 53768
 HILLHURST PARK M.B.25,26,27, TRACT NO 13428 M.B. 37 ,38

WEST SIDE OF STREET	ASSESSORS ID	TREES	#
2210 N. VERMONT AVE	5588-016-045	1 TREE	#39
2231 N. VERMONT AVE	5588-016-038	1 TREE	#38
2237 N. VERMONT AVE	5588-016-037	1 TREE	#37
2301 N. VERMONT AVE	5588-016-036	1 TREE	#36
2315 N.VERMONT AVE	5588-016-003	2 TREES	#35
2325 N VERMONT AVE	5588-016-035	3 TREES	#33,32,31
2443 N. VERMONT AVE	5588-023-038	2 TREES	#30,29
2445 N. VERMONT AVE	5588-023-025	1 TREE	#28
2449 N. VERMONT AVE	5588-023-027	2 TREES	#27,26
ABERDEEN	(19 TOTAL TREES)		

4. COMPLETE LEGAL DESCRIPTION: TRACT

THE SUBJECT OF NOMINATION , (39) MATURE MORETON BAY FIG TREES (FICUS MACROPHYLLA MORACEAE) LOCATED ALONG NORTH VERMONT AVENUE ON BOTH SIDES, NORTH OF LOS FELIZ BOULEVARD TO ABERDEEN THE SURROUNDING PROPERTIES ARE LARGE HOMES AND ESTATES. 2200 NORTH VERMONT AVENUE TO 2449 NORTH VERMONT AVENUE

9. STATE PRESENT PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE OR STRUCTURE.

THE SUBJECT OF CULTURAL MONUMENT APPLICATION ARE MORETON BAY FIG TREES, ALSO KNOW AS MACROPHYLLA FICUS MORACEAE---. WIDE SPREADING EVERGREEN TREES WITH OBLONG TO ELLIPTICAL LEAVES, THEY HAVE EXTENSIVE SURFACE ROOTS AND CAN GROW TO 200 FEET. IT HAS LONG BEEN CULTIVATED CALIFORNIA. (THEY ARE PLANTED AROUND CITY HALL, AND ONE IS LANDMARKED IN SANTA BARBARA AND SAN DIEGO)

THE VERMONT AVENUE MORETON BAY FIG TREES RIVAL THE FAMOUS MORETON BAY FIG TREE IN SAN DIEGO'S BALBOA PARK WHICH IS 123 FEET ACROSS.

THE 39 MORETON BAY FIG TREES SHOW UP IN EARLY PHOTOGRAPHS OF THE FAMOUS HILLCREST ESTATES DEVELOPMENT IN 1913 THE RANGE IN SIZE FROM 50 FEET ACROSS TO OVER 120 FEET ACROSS AND FORM A GRAND CANOPY OVER VERMONT AVENUE. . THE MASSIVE GNARLED TRUNKS MAKE SOME PEOPLE CALL THEM THE JURASSIC PARK TREES.

THERE HAS BEEN SOME CHANGES IN COMPOSITION OF THE STREETScape OVER THE YEARS, WE WANT TO PROTECT THE TREES, WITH A DESIGNATION

18. BRIEF STATE HISTORICAL AND OR ARCHITECTURAL IMPORTANCE : INCLUDE DATES, EVENTS, AND PERSON ASSOCIATED WITH THE SITE.

GRIFFITH J GRIFFITH (COL. GRIFFITH) ARRIVED IN NEW YORK IN IN 1866 AS A 14 YEAR OLD WELSH IMMIGRANT . HE WENT FROM A PENNILESS ADOLESCENT TO ONE OF THE RICHEST CALIFORNIANS, THROUGH HIS MINING OPperATIONS. HE BOUGHT RANCHO LOS FELIZ IN 1882 AND THEN SOLD SOME OF THE WATER RIGHTS TO THE CITY --RECOUPING HIS INVESTMENT. IN 1903 HE ENTERED HIS WIFES ROOM WITH A PRAYER BOOK IN ONE HAND AND A REVOLVER IN THE OTHER. THE COLONEL AIMED AND FIRED AND AT THE LAST MINUTE HIS WIFE MOVED HER HEAD, IT SAVED HER LIFE, SHE THREW HERSELF OUT THE WINDOW , LANDING

CITY OF LOS ANGELES HISTORIC-CULTURAL MONUMENT APPLICATION
VERMONT AVENUE MORETON BAY FIG TREES
CONTINUATION OF 18. PAGE 5 OF 6

ON AN AWNING BELOW AND CRAWLED INTO ANOTHER ROOM.. HE SERVED A FEW YEARS IN PRISON.

HE DONATED OVER 3,000 ACRES OF RANCHO SANTE FE FOR AN URBAN WILDERNESS, *GRIFFITH PARK*, HE DONATED MONEY TO HAVE THE OBSERVATORY AND THE GREEK THEATER BUILT. VERMONT AVENUE AND THE MAGNIFICENT CANOPY OF FIG TREES ARE THE MAIN ENTRANCE TO BOTH THE GREEK THEATER AND THE OBSERVATORY.

IN ABOUT 1910 HE SOLD HUNDREDS OF ACRES TO **WILLIAM MEAD** WILLIAM MEAD IS INTERESTING IN THAT HE WAS ON THE FAMOUS WATER COMMISSION THAT CREATED THE AQUEDUCT FROM OWENS VALLEY TO LOS ANGELES, ALONG WITH WILLIAM MULHOLLAND. THERE WAS A SCANDAL TO LAND DEALINGS ASSOCIATED WITH THE WATERLINE. (MADE FAMOUS IN THE MOVIE *CHINATOWN*) COL. GRIFFITH'S SON LIVED AT THE END OF VERMONT AND HAD A MORETON BAY FIG IN HIS ESTATE.

THE STREET WHERE THE MORETON BAY FIGS TREES END, THAT WILLIAM MEAD NAMED IS CALLED *ABERDEEN* WHICH IS ONE OF THE TOWNS THAT WAS DESTROYED WHEN THE WATER WAS TAKEN FROM OWENS VALLEY. WILLIAM MEAD SPECULATED IN AN EXCLUSIVE ESTATE AREA HE NAMED HILLHURST PARK. WE HAVE PICTURES FROM THE LOS FELIZ IMPROVEMNET ASSOCIATIONS ARCHIVES SHOWING THE TREES PLANTED IN THE EMPTY ESTATES AROUND 1913 TO 1925,

WILLIAM MEAD HIRED LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT **WILBUR COOK** , WHO HAD PLANNED THE THEN NEW *BEVERLY HILLS* AND THE *BEVERLY HILLS HOTEL* GROUNDS AND GARDENS AND THE *SANTA MONICA PARK* (, WHICH IS ACROSS FROM THE BEVERLY HILLS COURTHOUSE.) WILBUR COOK DESIGNED STREETS AND LANDSCAPING THAT CURVED WITH THE TERRAIN, WITH PARKWAYS. THE MORETON BAY FIGS APPEAR IN THE PHOTOS FROM THAT TIME, WITH PHOTOS SHOWING THE BUILDING OF THE HISTORIC ENIS HOUSE 1925 AND THE BUILDING OF THE OBSERVATORY 1935 WITH MORE MATURE TREES..

WE NEED TO EXTEND PROTECTION TO THESE TREES , THEY ARE BEING POORLY MAINTAINED BY THE URBAN FORESTRY DEPARTMENT AND ARE BEING DAMAGED BY THE NEW INCREASED TRUCK TRAFFIC TO THE GREEK AND OBSERVATORY. WHEN WATERING RESTRICTIONS COME INTO EFFECT: AS PLANNED, THE TREES WILL NEED TO BE MONITORED AND THE NEIGHBORS AND CITY ORANGIZED TO MAINTAIN THE TREES, SOMETHING THE LFIA AND THE VERMONT NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION PLEDGE ..A PRUNING , WATERING AND FERTILIZING PLAN WILL BE PUT INTO EFFECT WHEN THE TREES ARE LANDMARKED.

CONCLUSION

THE NORTH VERMONT AVENUE MORETON BAY FIG TREES (39) ARE AN INTEGRAL DESIGNED STREETScape FROM EARLY 1913, AND REFLECT THE LOCAL HISTORY. IN THE LAST 95 YEARS THE TREES HAVE GROWN TO HAVE CANOPIES THAT ARE OVER 120 FEET IN DIAMETER. THEY ARE A MAGNIFICENT ENTRANCE FROM THE CROWDED CITY TO THE ENTRANCE OF THE URBAN WILDERNESS OF GRIFFITH PARK. THEY WERE AROUND WHEN COLONEL GRIFFITH WAS ALIVE. THE GREEK THEATER HAS STOOD FOR 60 YEARS, THE OBSERVATORY FOR 65 THE TREES FOR ALMOST 95 YEARS. MILLIONS OF PEOPLE HAVE PASSED UNDER THEIR CANOPY ON THEIR WAY TO ENJOY THE PARK. THERE ARE PLANS TO ADD TO THE MONUMENT WITH NEW MORETON BAY FIG TREES IN THE FEW AREAS THAT ARE UNPLANTED.

19. SOURCES

February 2008 Los Feliz Ledger article: *The Picture is worth the proverbial 1,000 Words.* by Diane Kanner, Ledger columnist

Griffith Park's Unique Donor

This article appeared in the Glendale News-Press on the 75th anniversary of Col. Griffiths death, July 6, 1994

The Griffith Park History Project, Glendale Community College

August 1907 City County Consolidation: Soda: The Palms
George Garriques Index Page. www.ulwaf.com

LA County Assessors office home page

Archival photos

Los Angeles Public Library photo archives

Photograph of Ennis house on Glendower Avenue in 1825, photo Security Pacific National Bank Photographic Collection, Los Angeles, Public Library

History of Los Feliz, Los Feliz Improvement Association

Wilbur David Cook

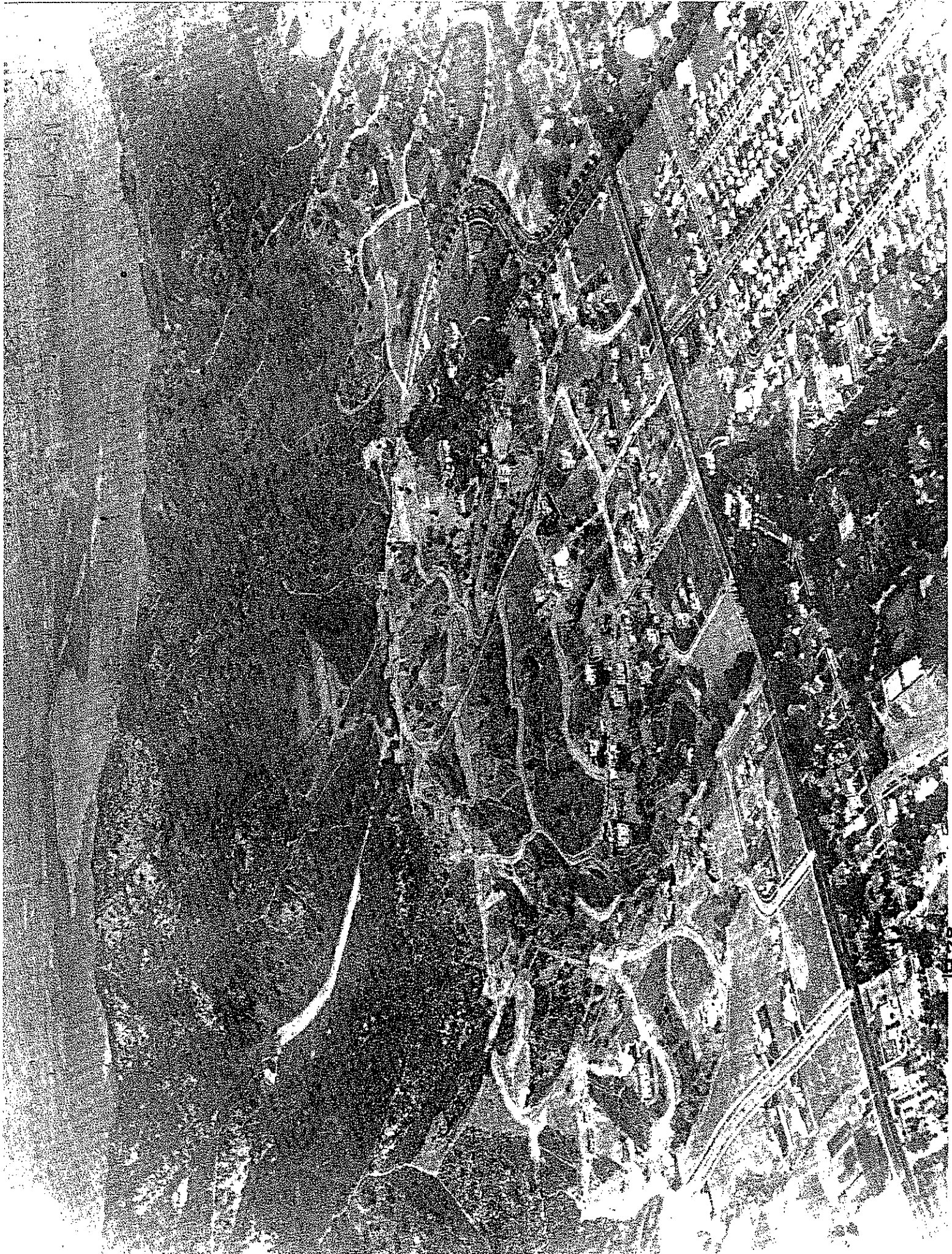
<http://mit.nelc.edu/OCWExternal/Akamai/11/11.001j/f01/lectureimages/8/image14.html>

March 27th, 2005 Los Angeles Times, It's not just swimming pools, movie stars

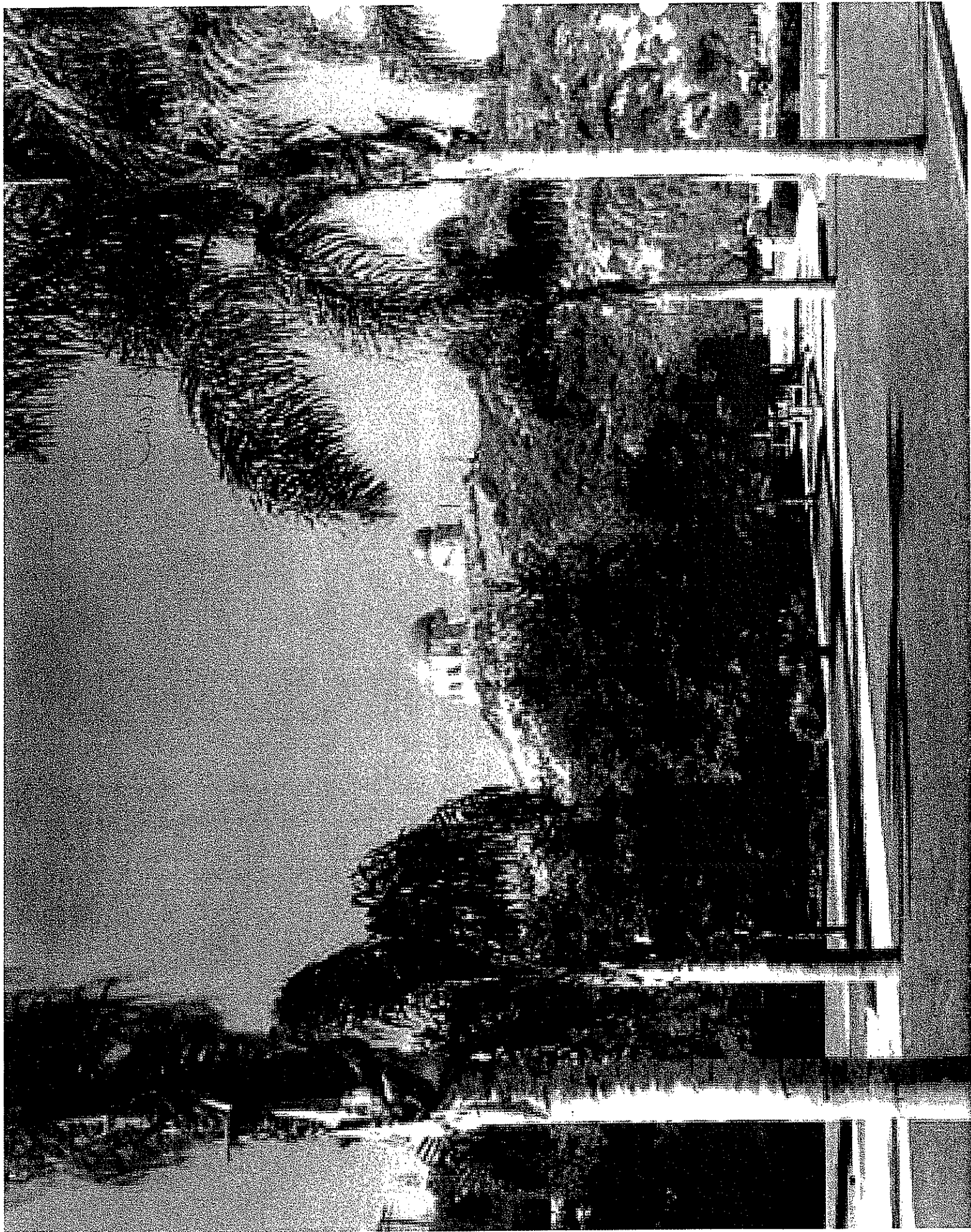
<http://www.latimes.com/classified/realestate/news/communities/la-re-guide27mar27.0.424560.story?coll=la-home-realestate>

Dallas morning news June 8th

2008 <http://www.dallasnews.com/classifieds/homecenter/profiles/parkcities.html>



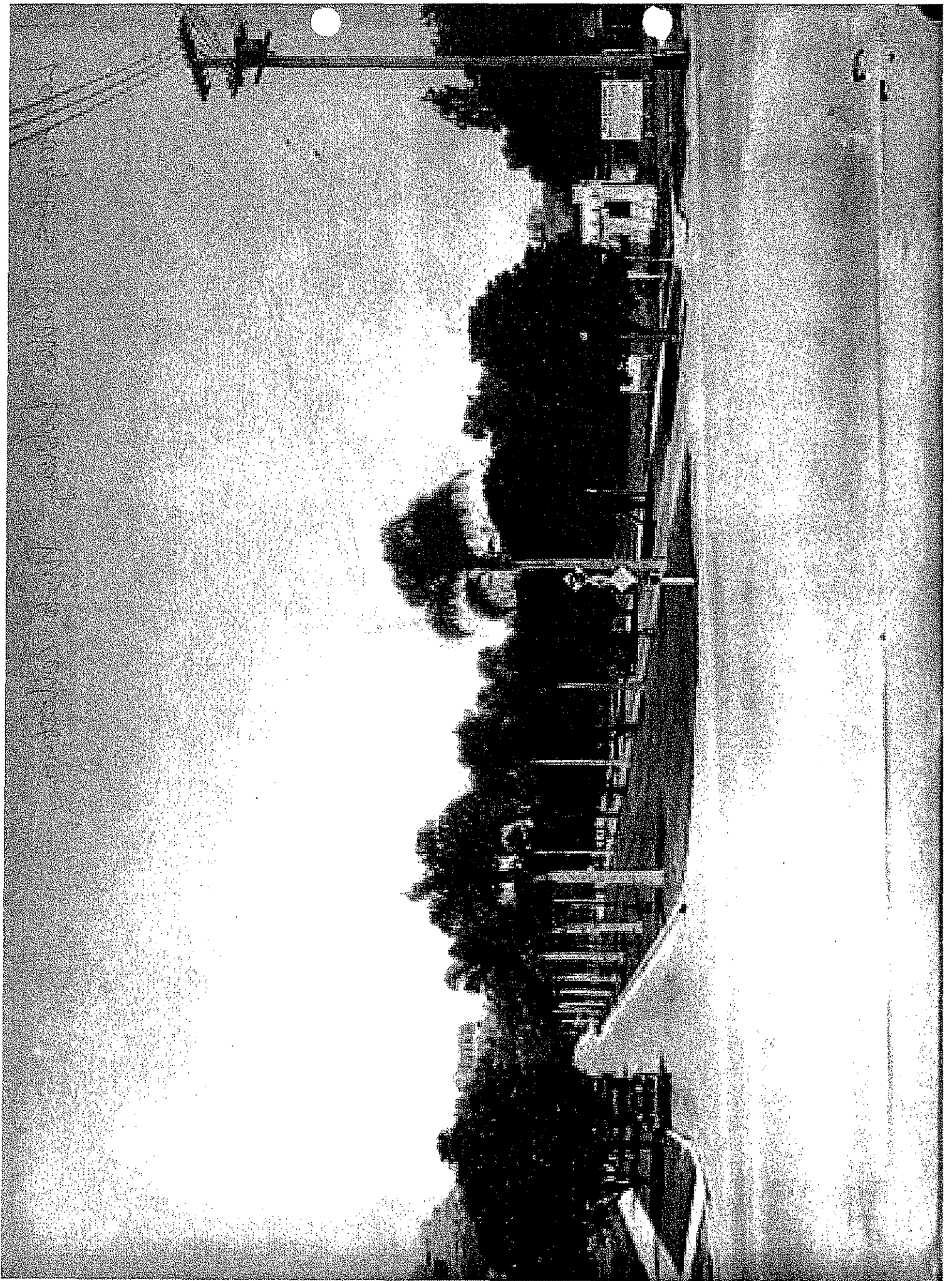
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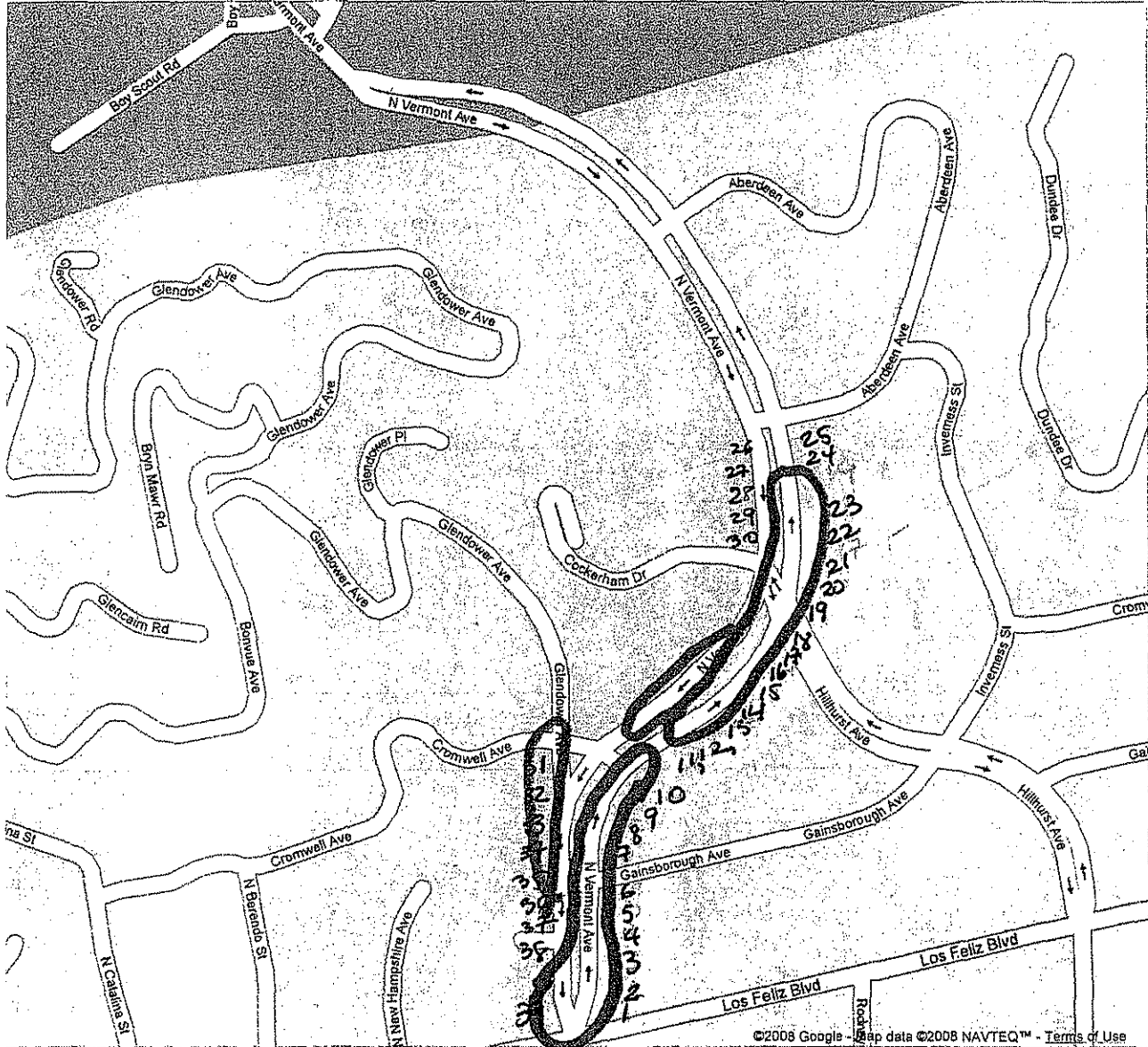
PL 53 A

VERMONT AVE

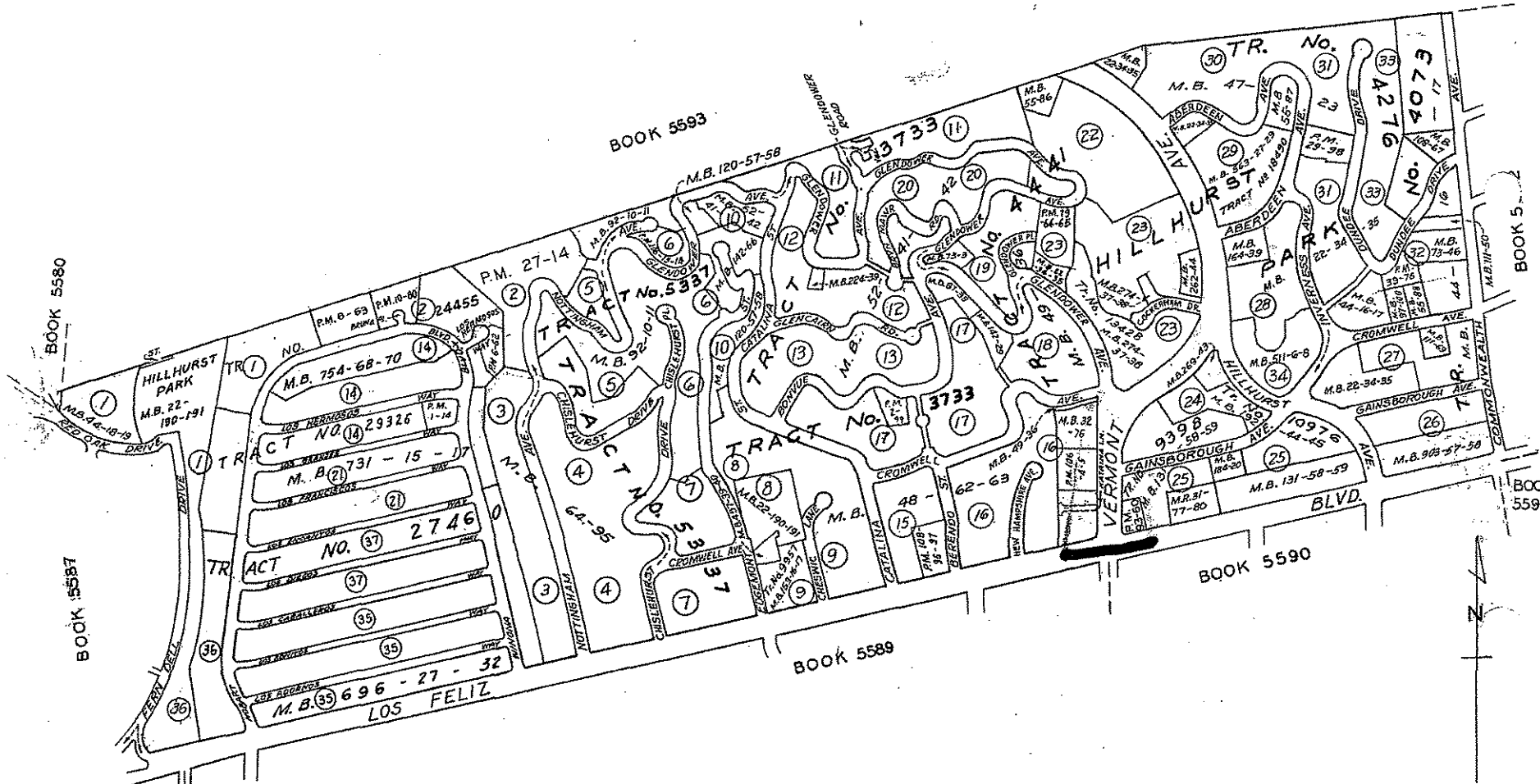




Address **Los Feliz**
Los Angeles, CA



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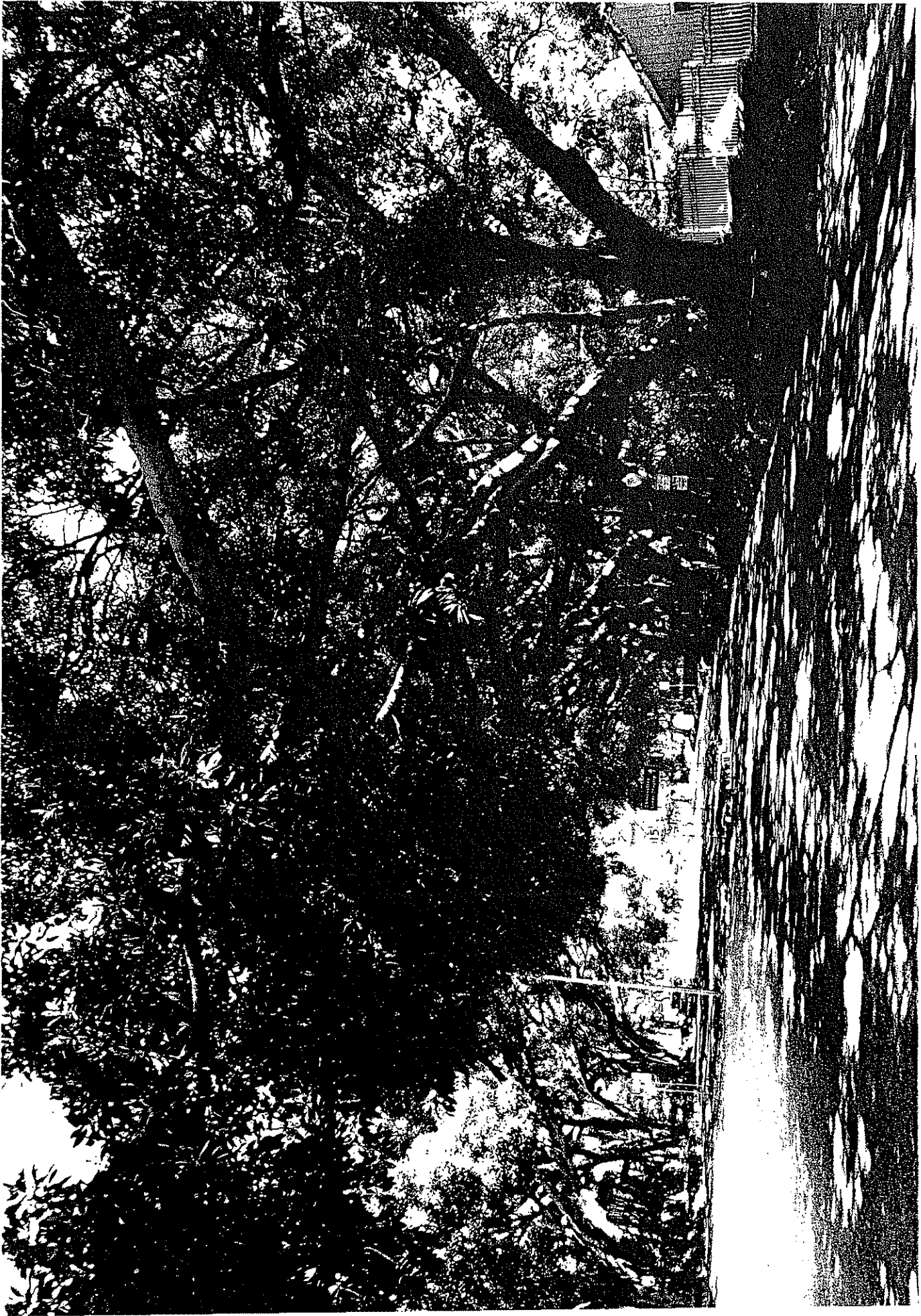


CITY OF LOS ANGELES

ASSESSOR'S MAP
COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES, CALIF.

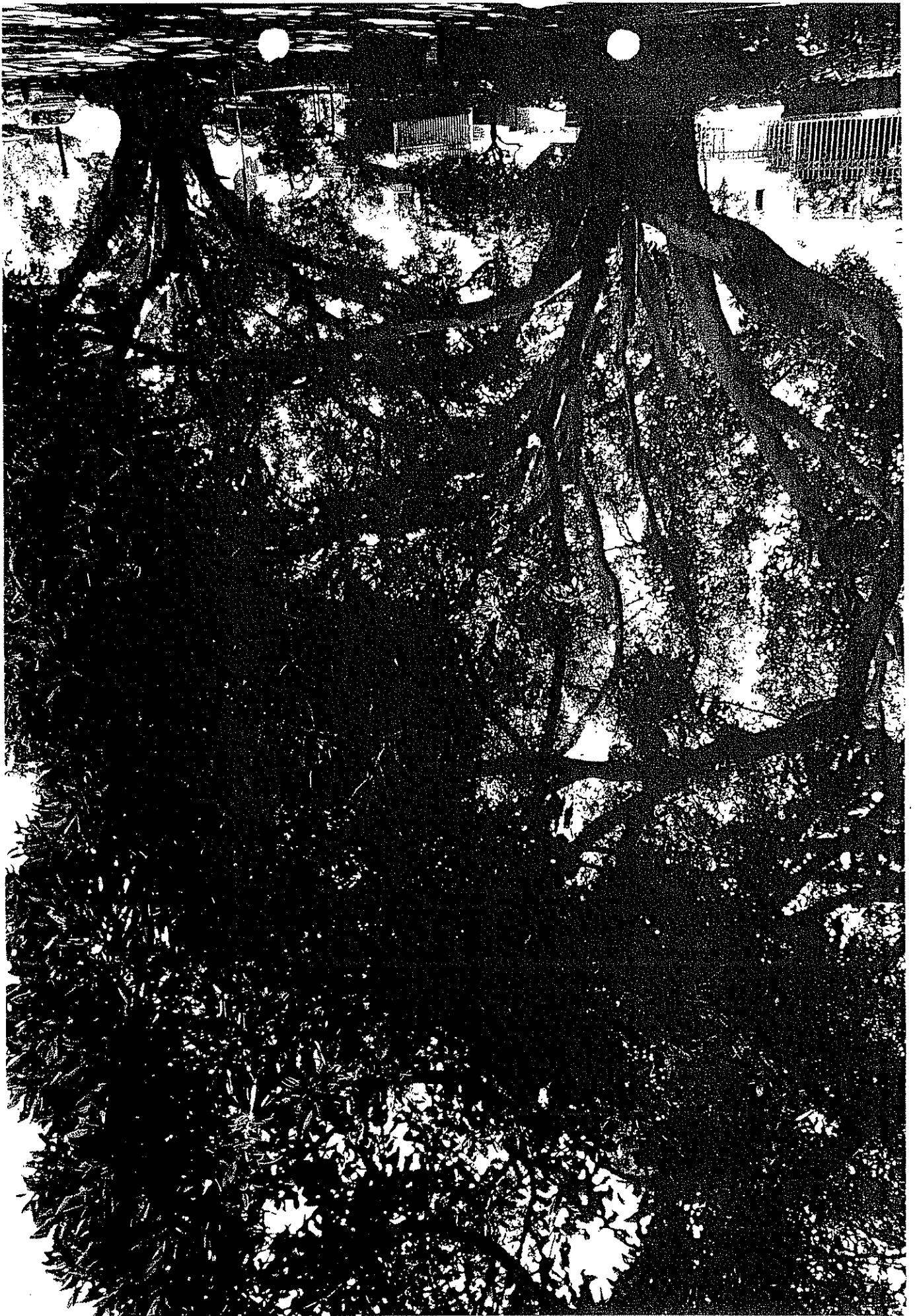


Tree



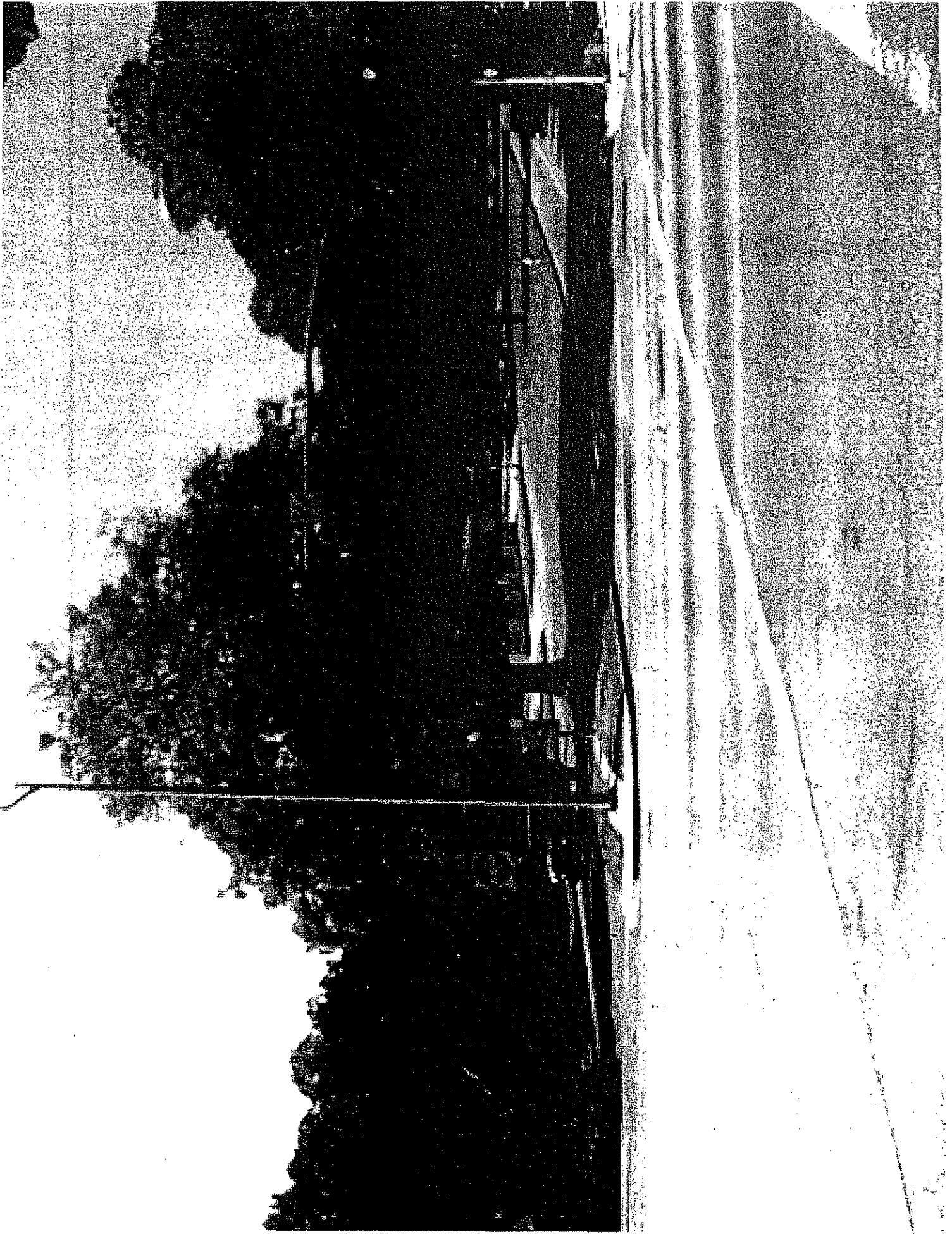
Canopy of fig trees Vermont Ave / Hillhurst

VERMONT AVE
MORRISON BAY FIGS TREES

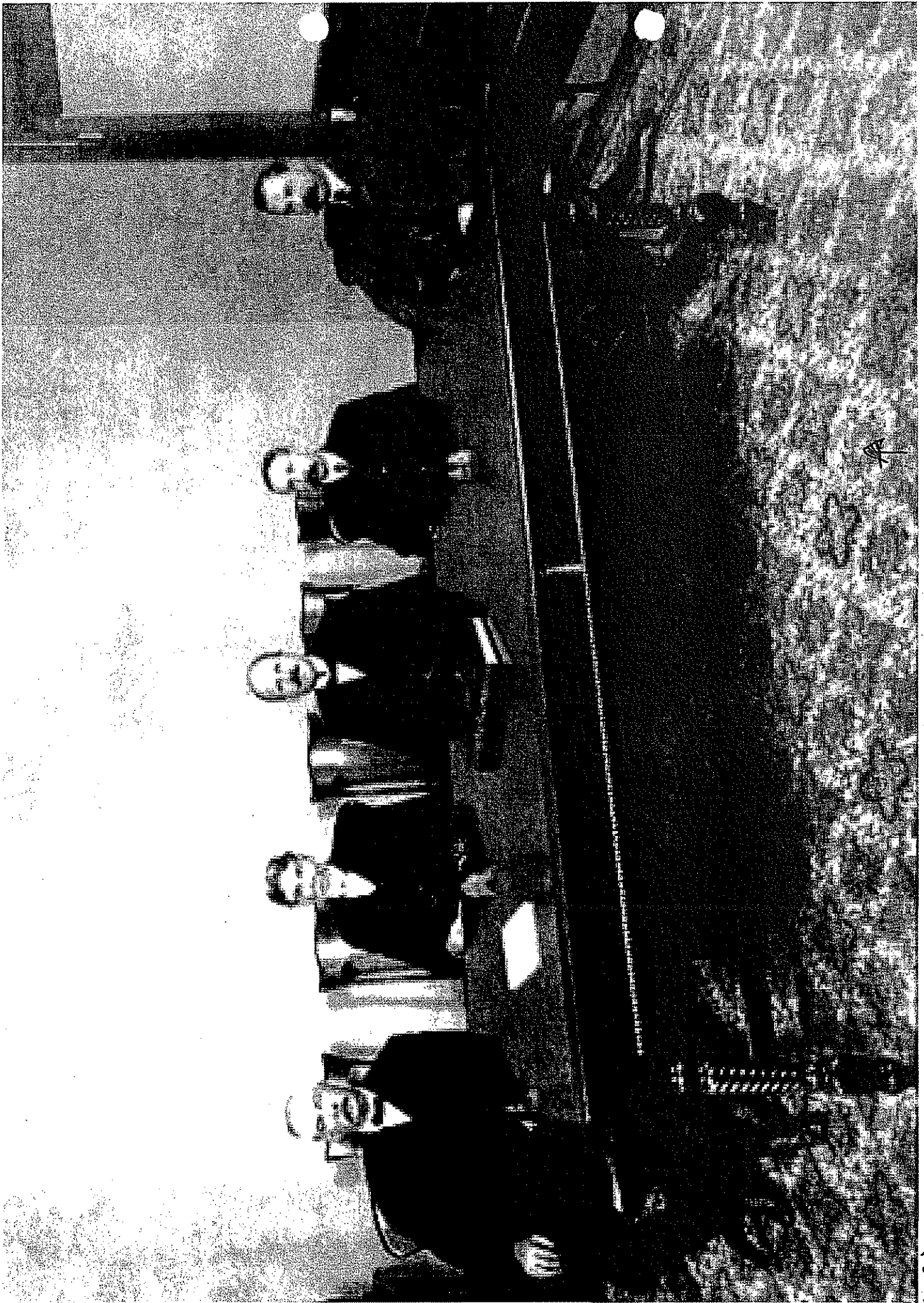




VERMONT - LOS FELIZ BOULEVARD



VERMONT / LOS FRUIT /



(42) John J. Fay, S. M. Elliot, Moses H. Sherman, William Mead, Fred C. Baker

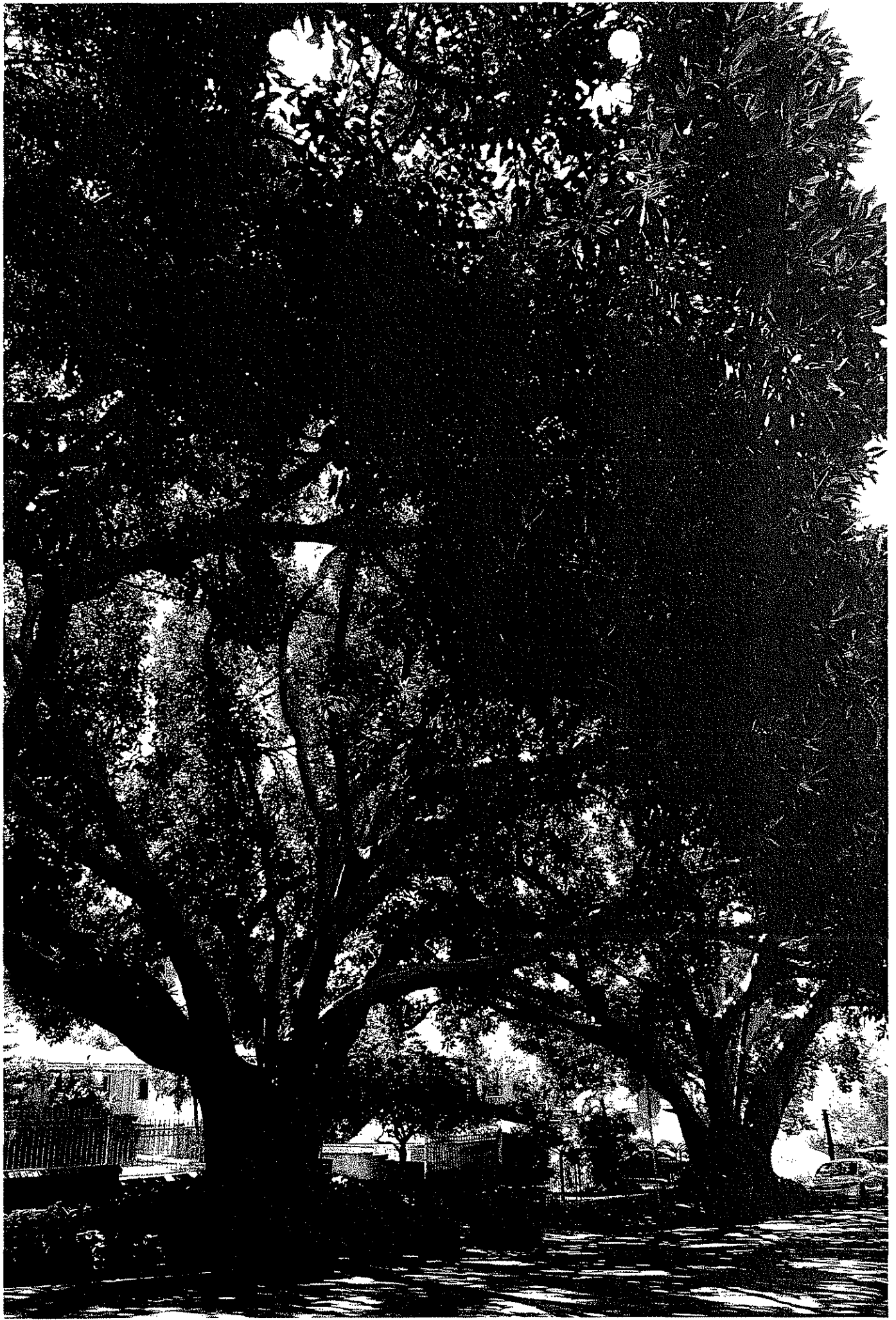
North Vermont Ave Morton Bay Fig Count from Los Feliz Ave to Aberdeen Avenue

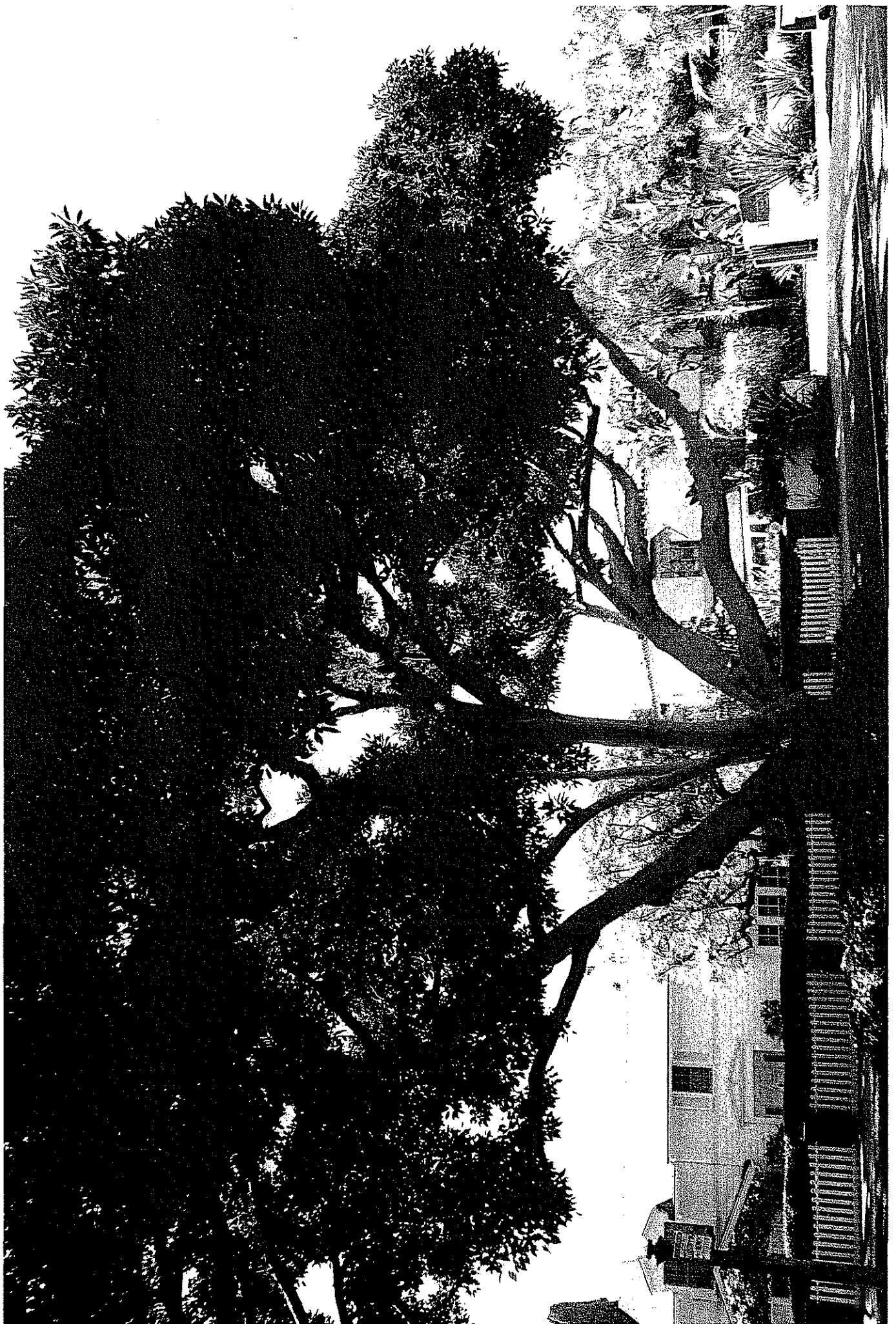
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2210 North Vermont Ave	5588-025-044	1 Tree	#3
2220 North Vermont Ave	5588-025-024	3 Trees	#4,5,.6
2300 North Vermont Ave	5588-024-015	2 Trees	#7,8
2310 North Vermont Ave	5588-024-016	1 Tree	#9
2324 North Vermont Ave	5588-024-017	1 Tree	#10
2340 North Vermont Ave	5588-024-018	1 Tree	#11
2344 North Vermont Ave	5588-024-019	1 Trees	#12,13
2350 North Vermont Ave	5588-024-020	1 Tree	#14
2358 North Vermont Ave	5588-024-021	1 Tree	#15
2370 North Vermont Ave	5588-034-001	3 Trees	#16,17,18
2400 North Vermont Ave	5588024001	1 Tree	#19
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Aberdeen			

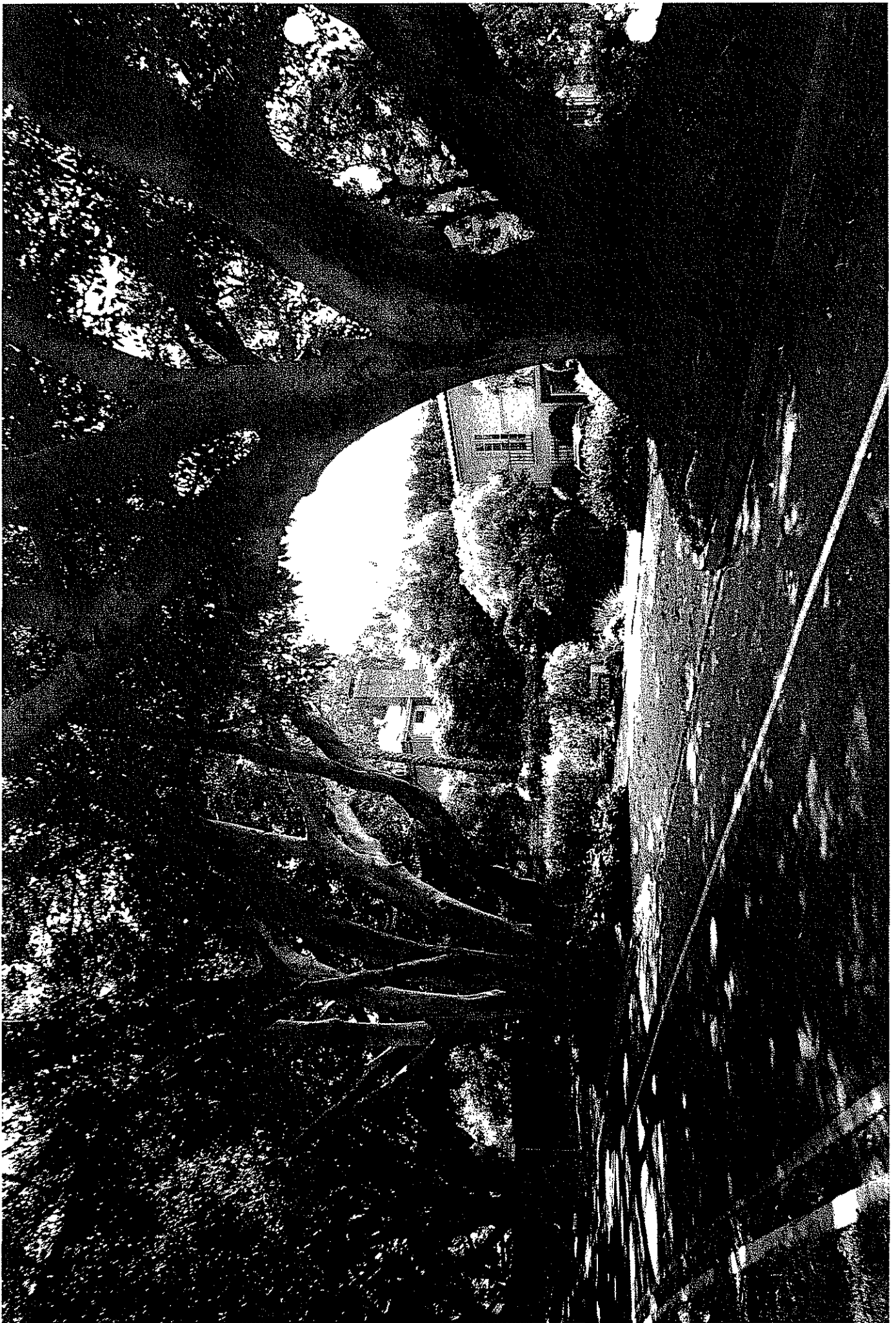
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2301 North Vermont Ave	5588-016-036	1 Tree	#36
2315 North Vermont Ave	5588-016-003	2 Trees	#35,34
2325 North Vermont Ave	5588-016-035	3 Trees	#33,32,31
2443 North Vermont Ave	5588-023-038	2 Trees	#30,29
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Aberdeen

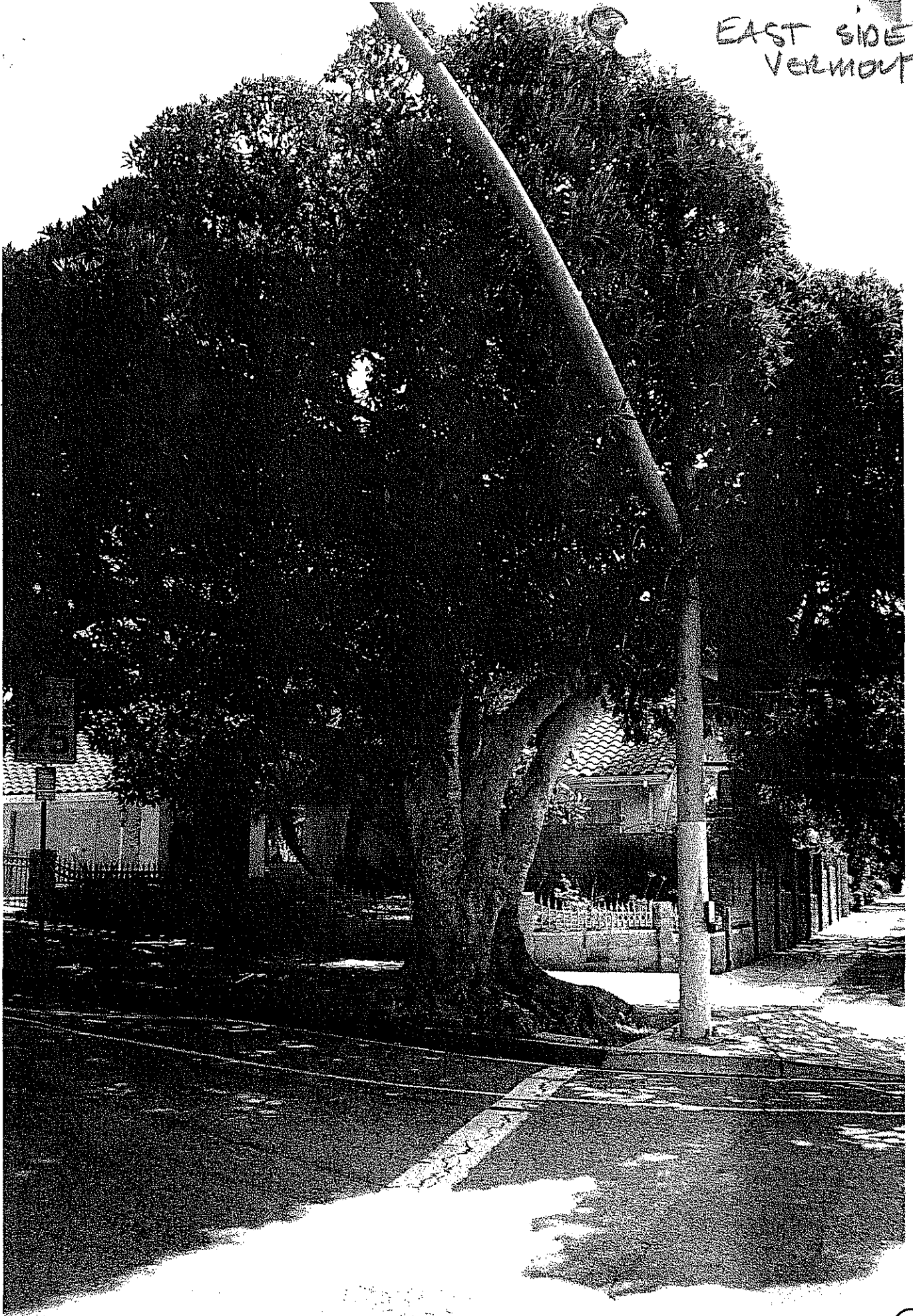
Total of 39 trees





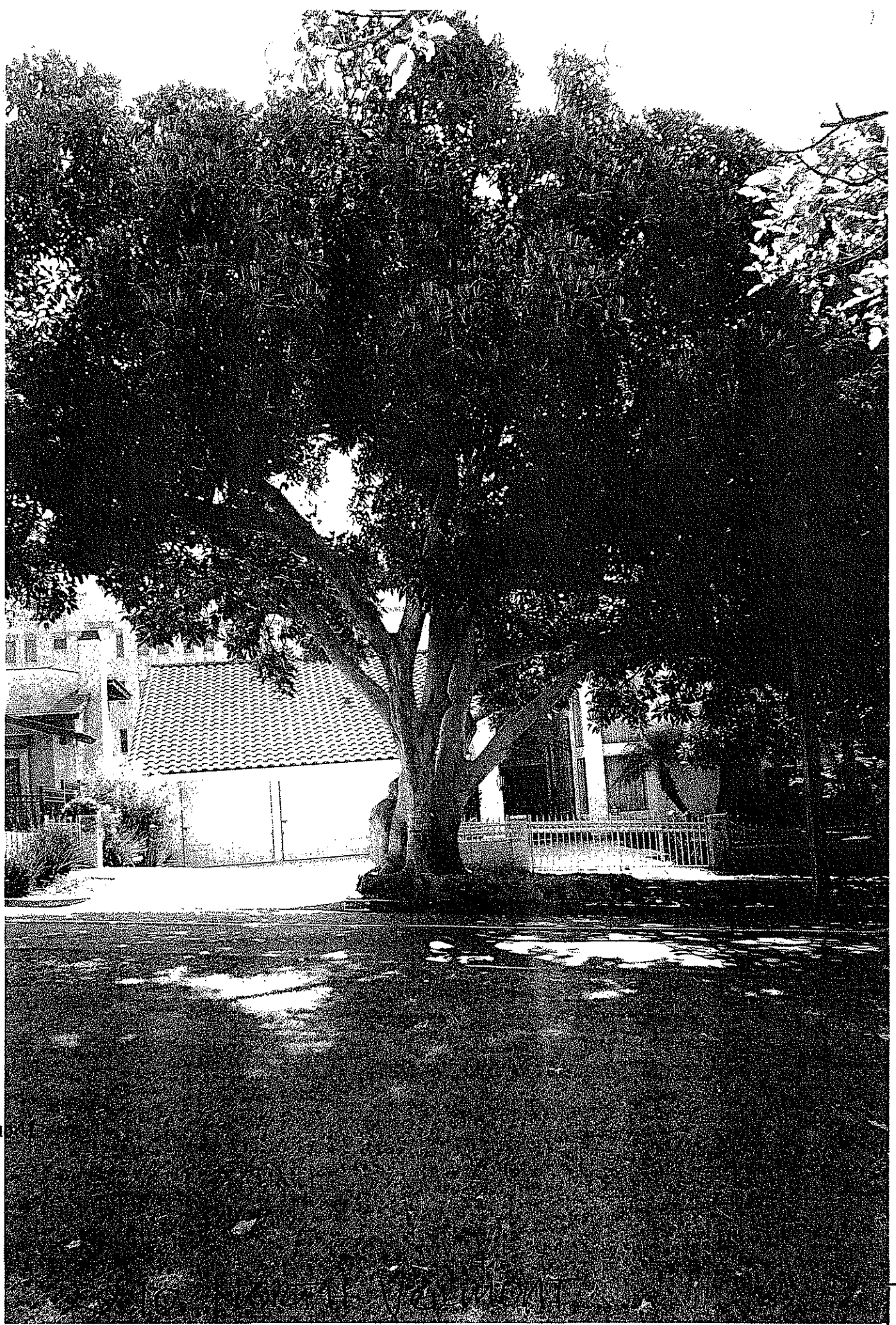


EAST SIDE
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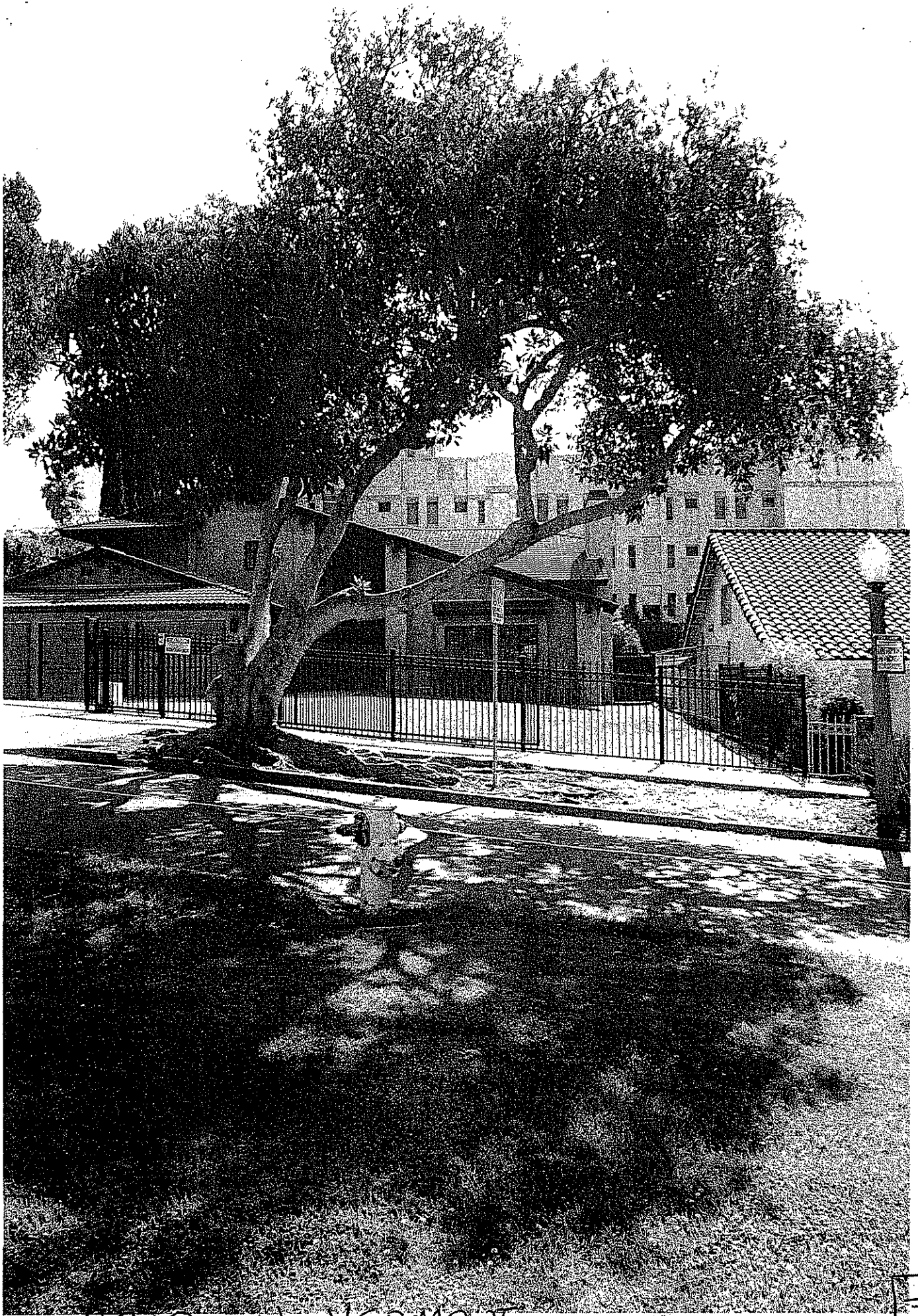
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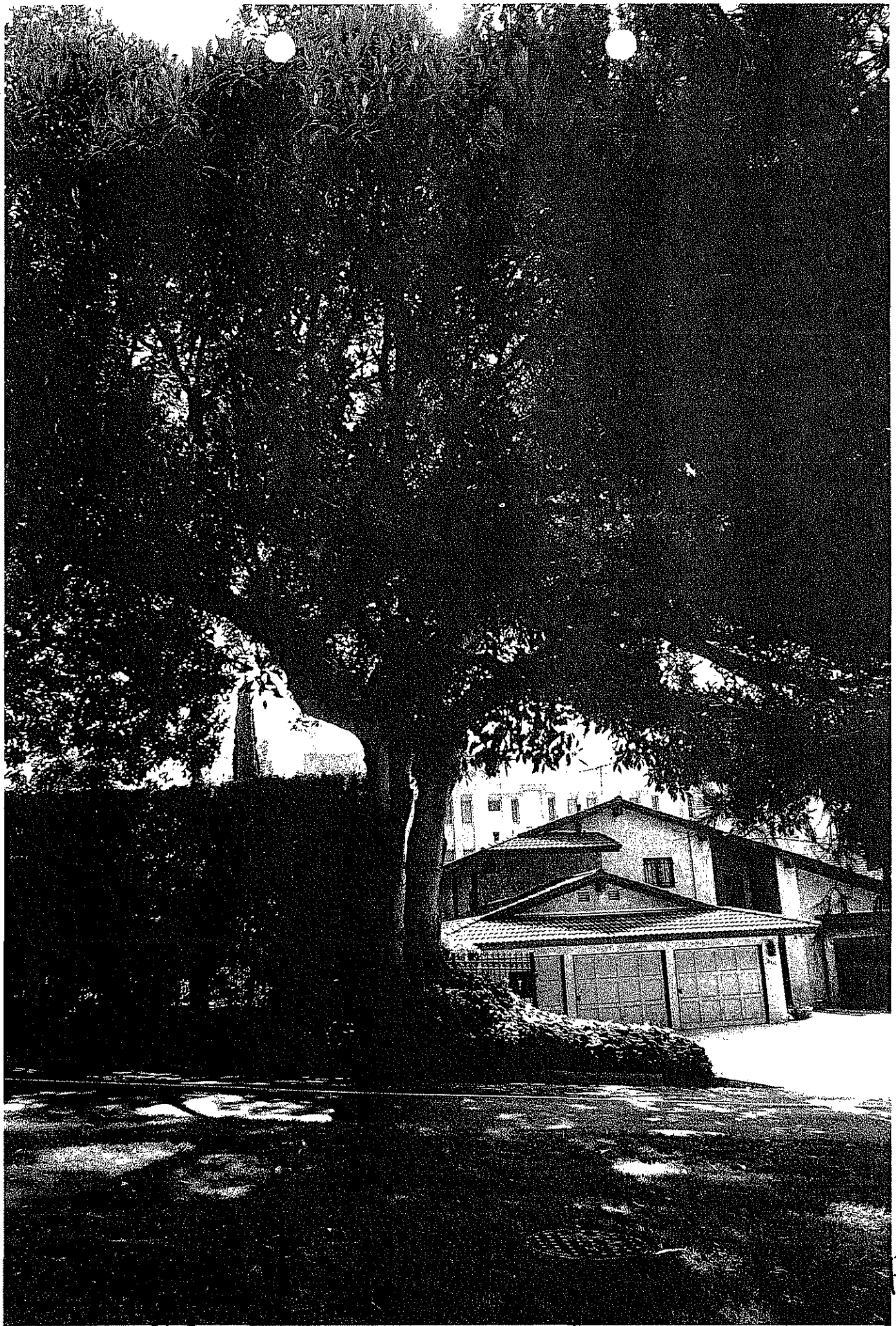
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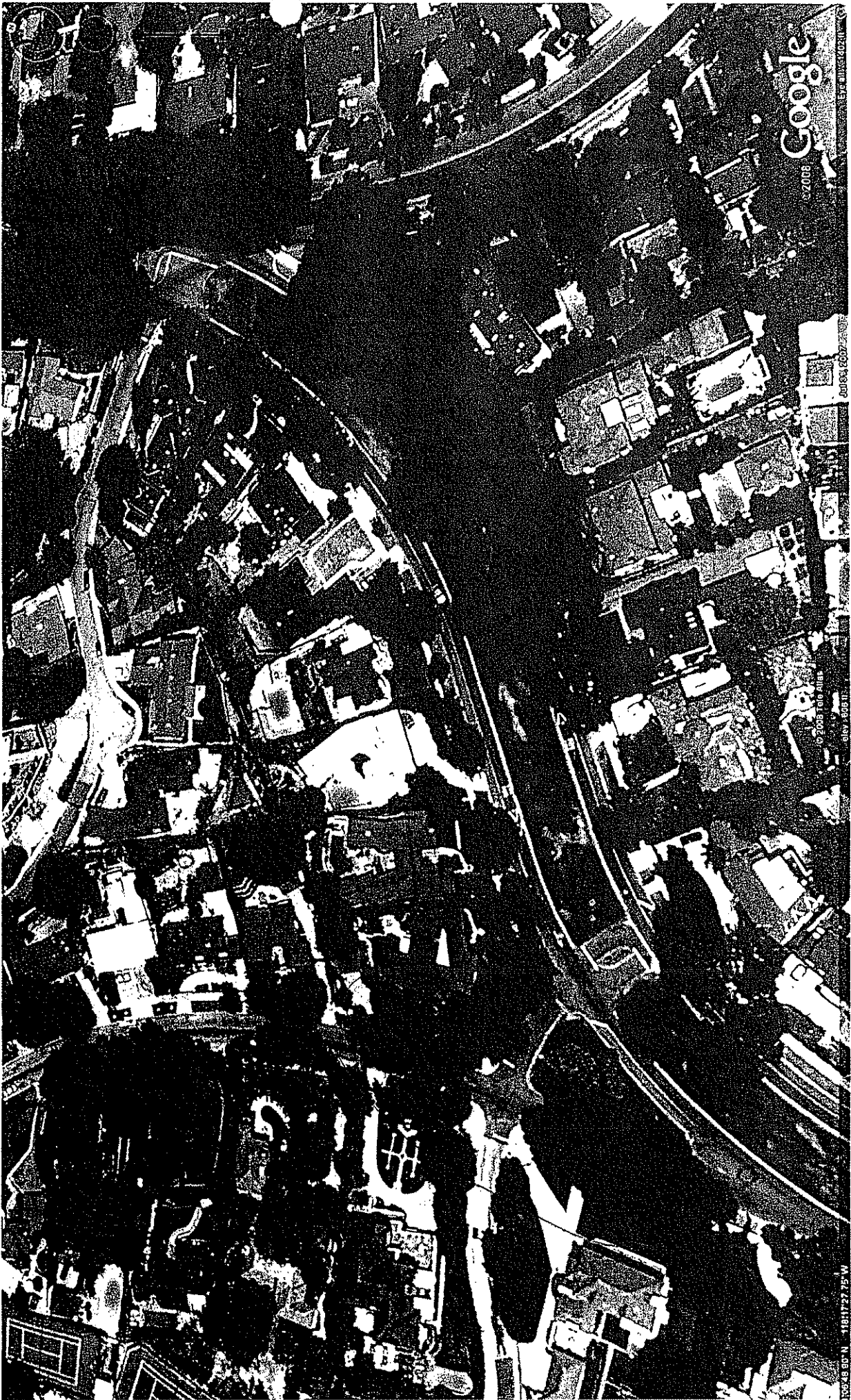
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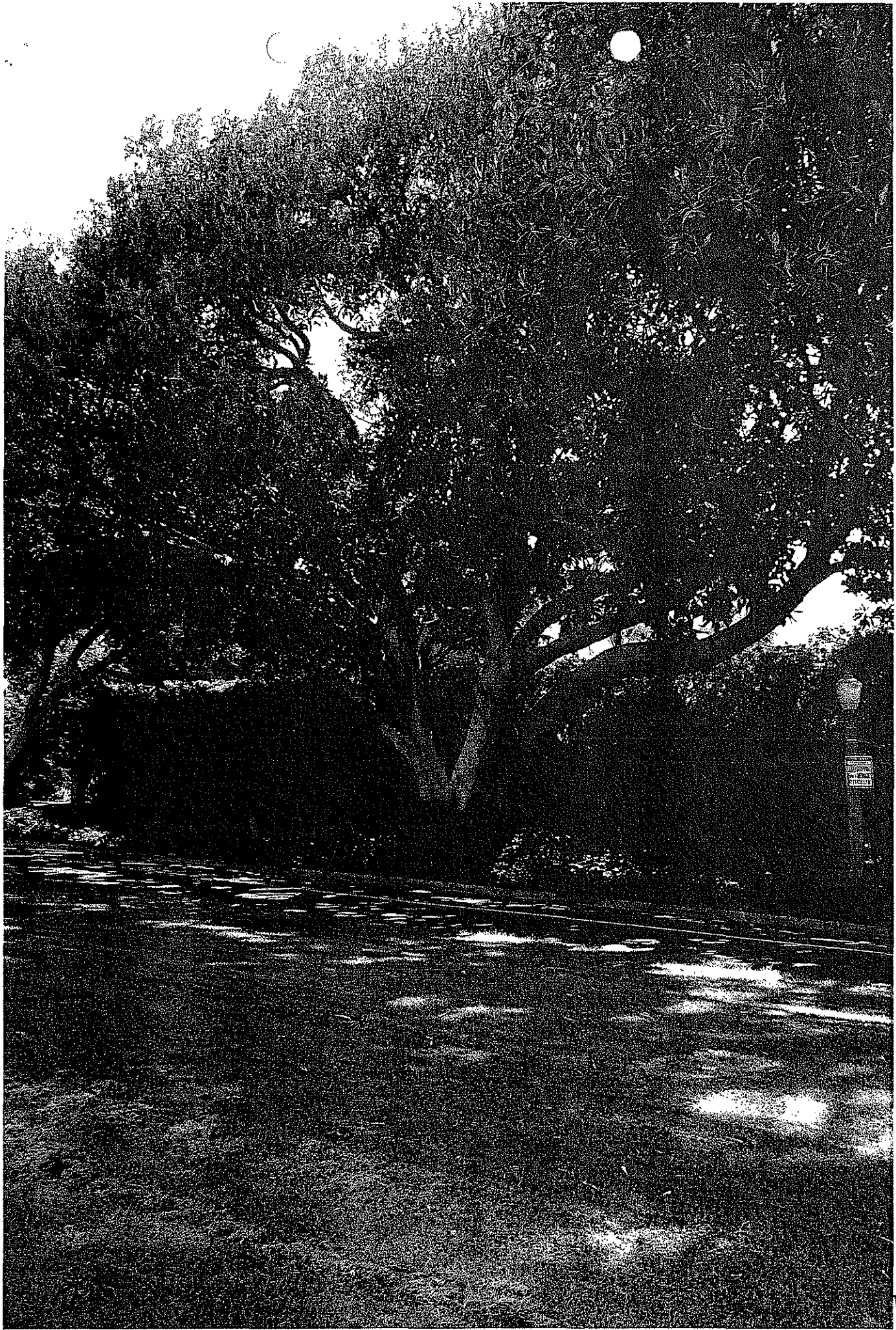


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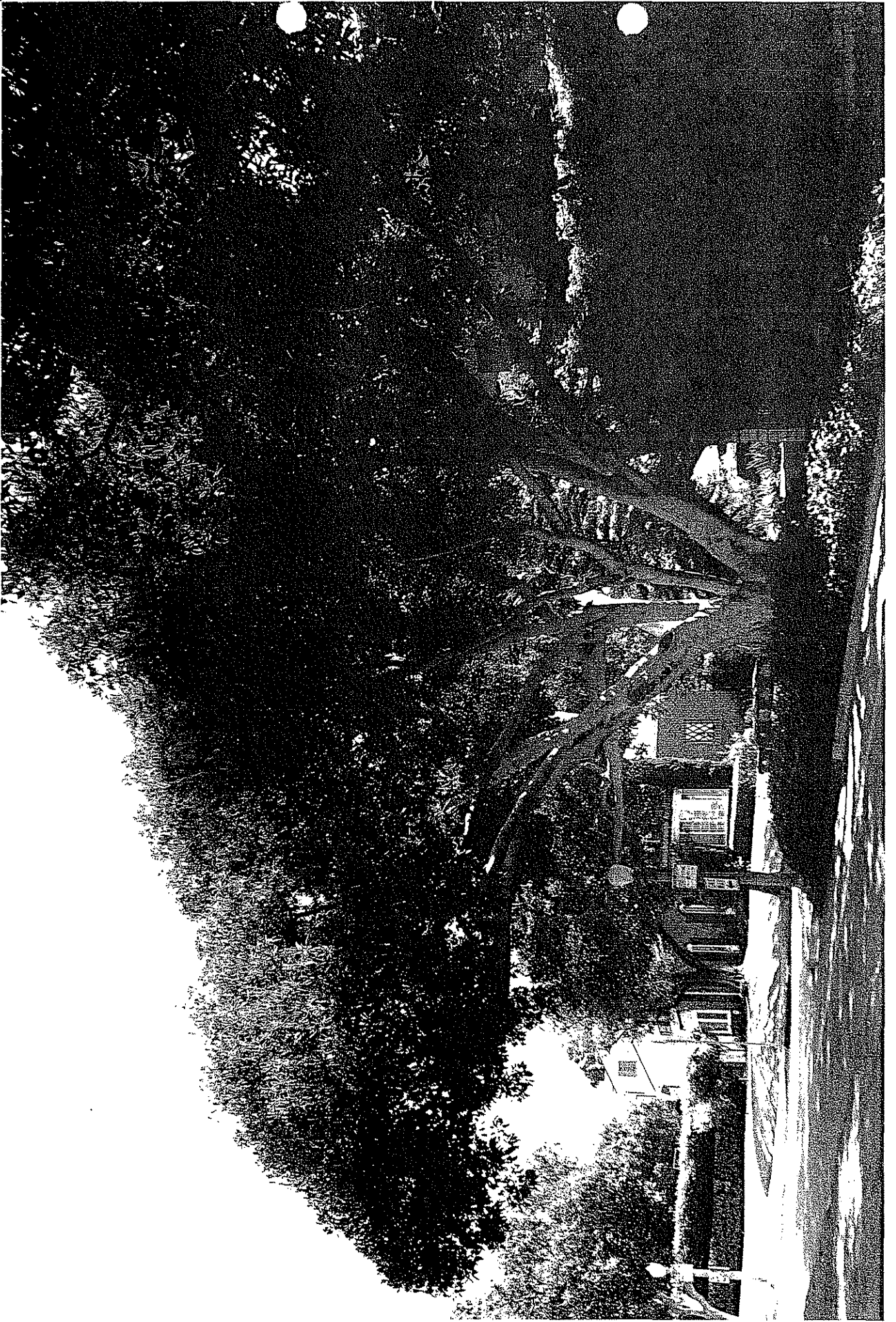
Vermont Ave Canopy at Moreau Bkly Big Feet



2220 N VERMONT

B

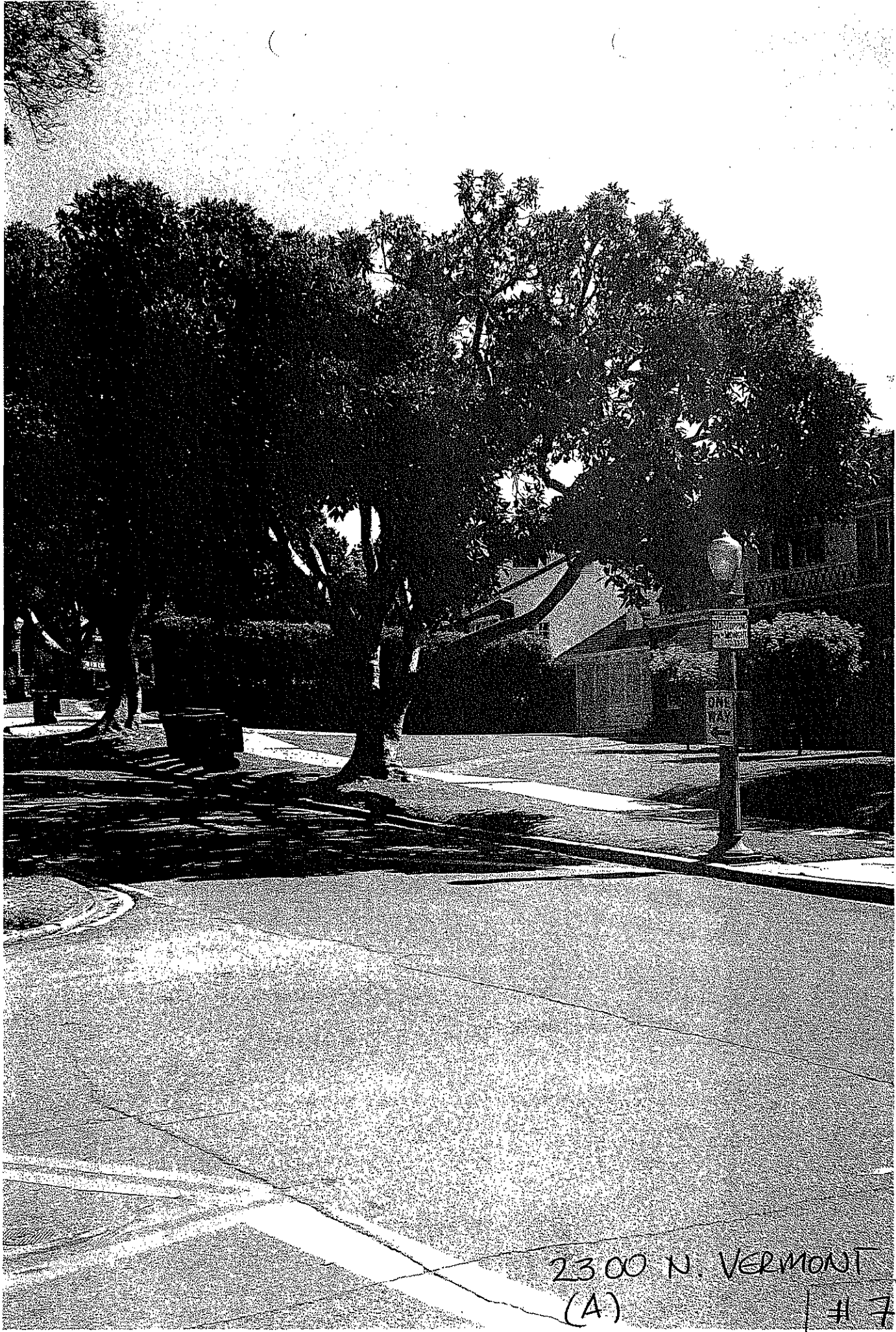
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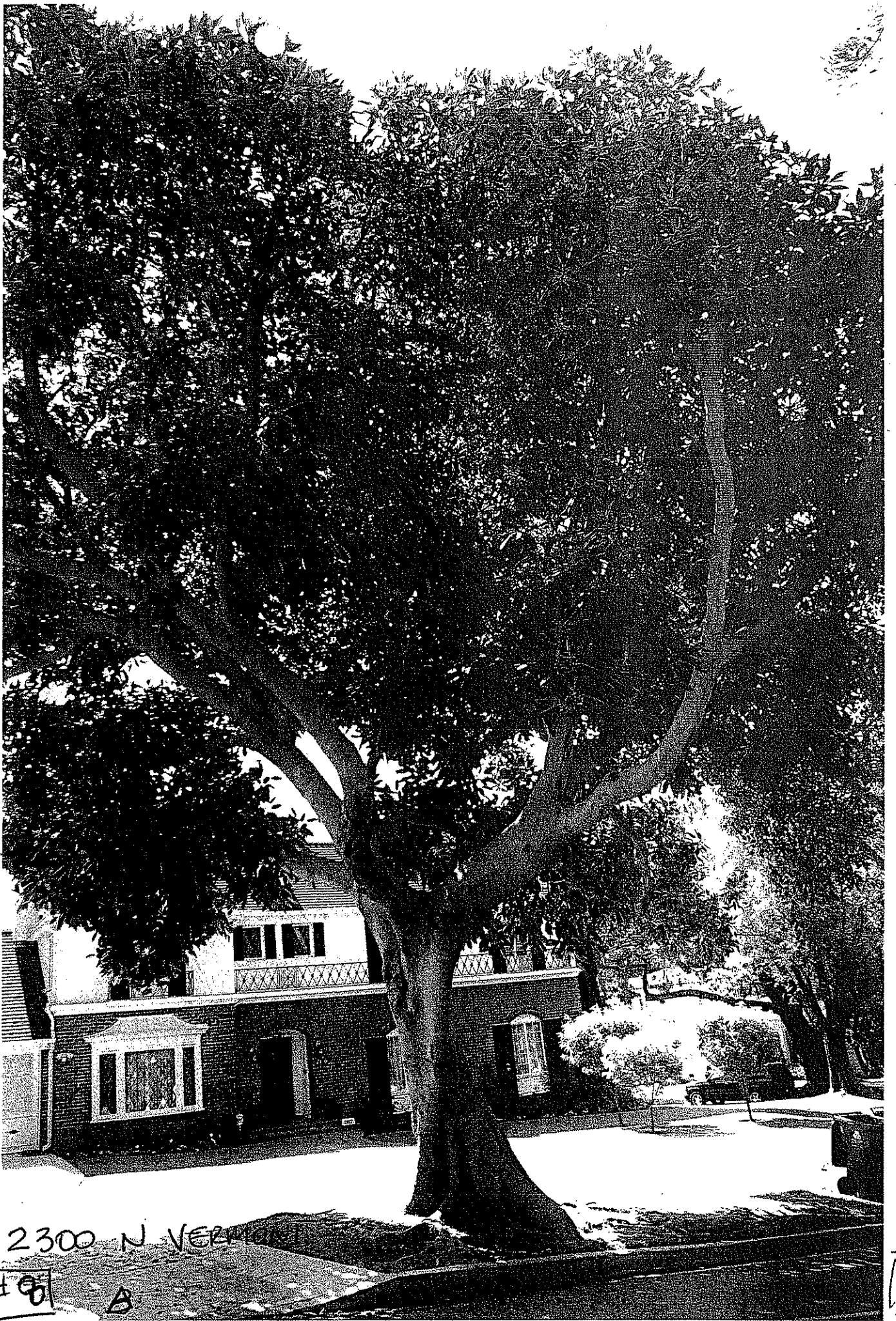
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(C)

#16.



2300 N. VERMONT
(A) #7

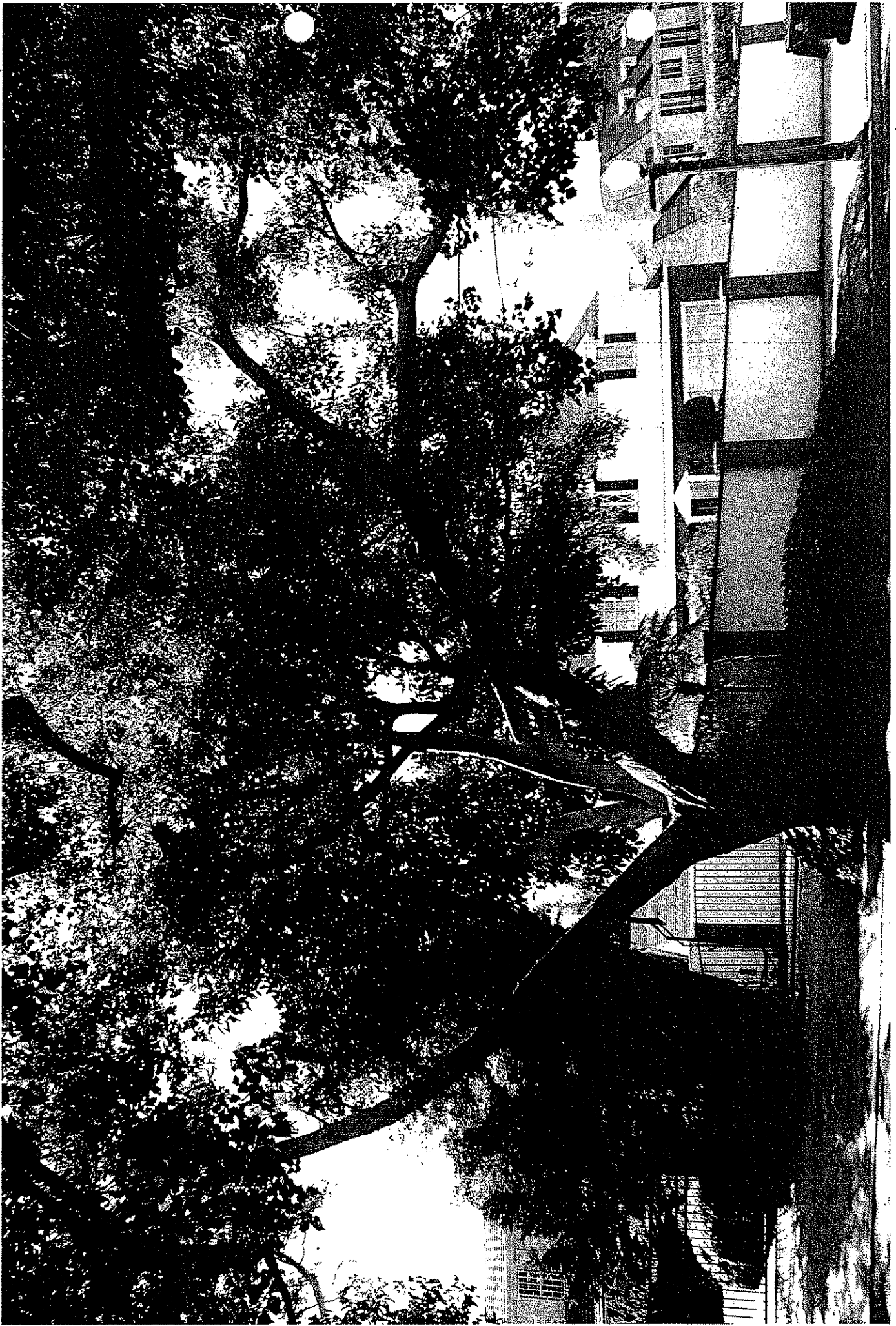


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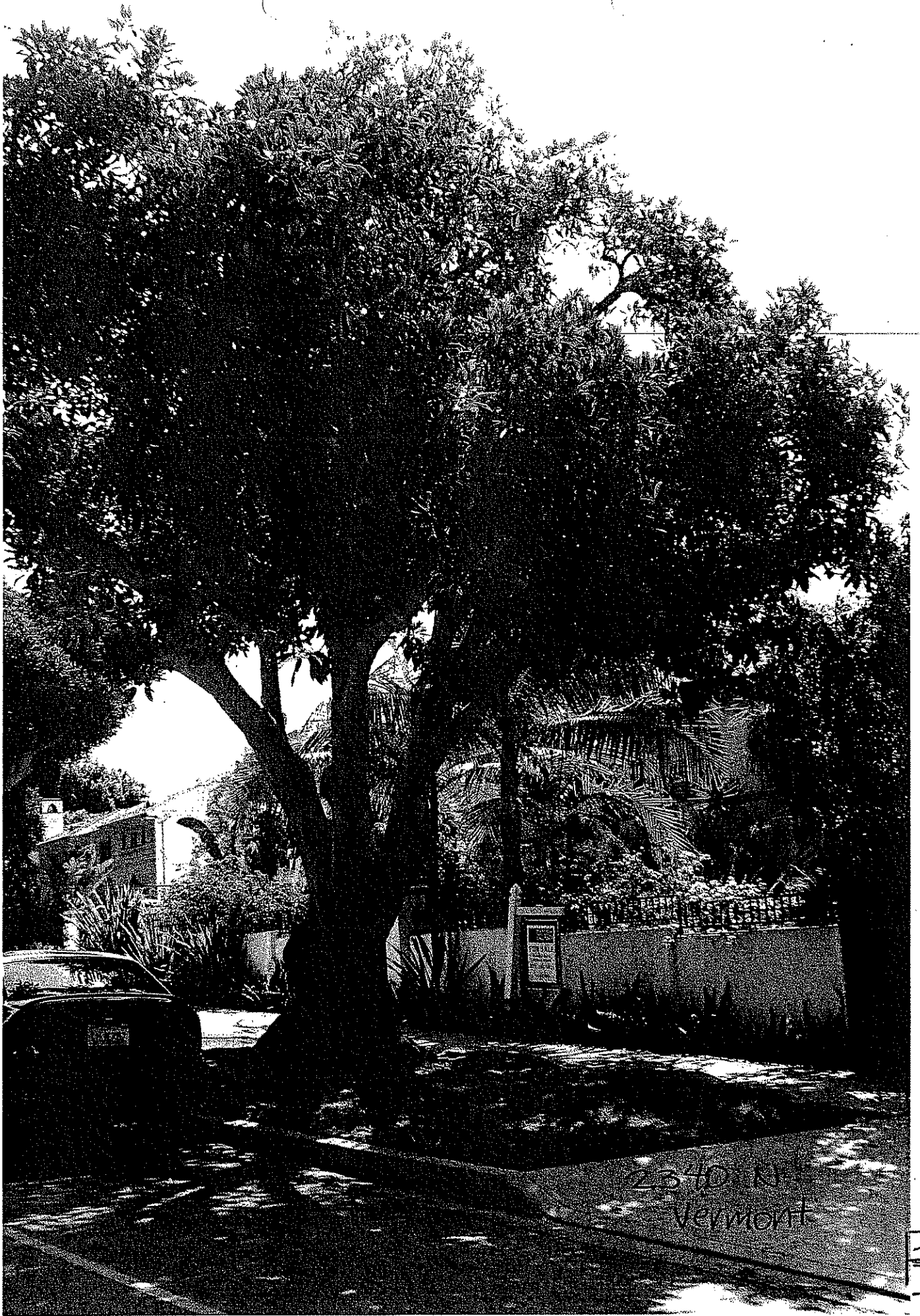
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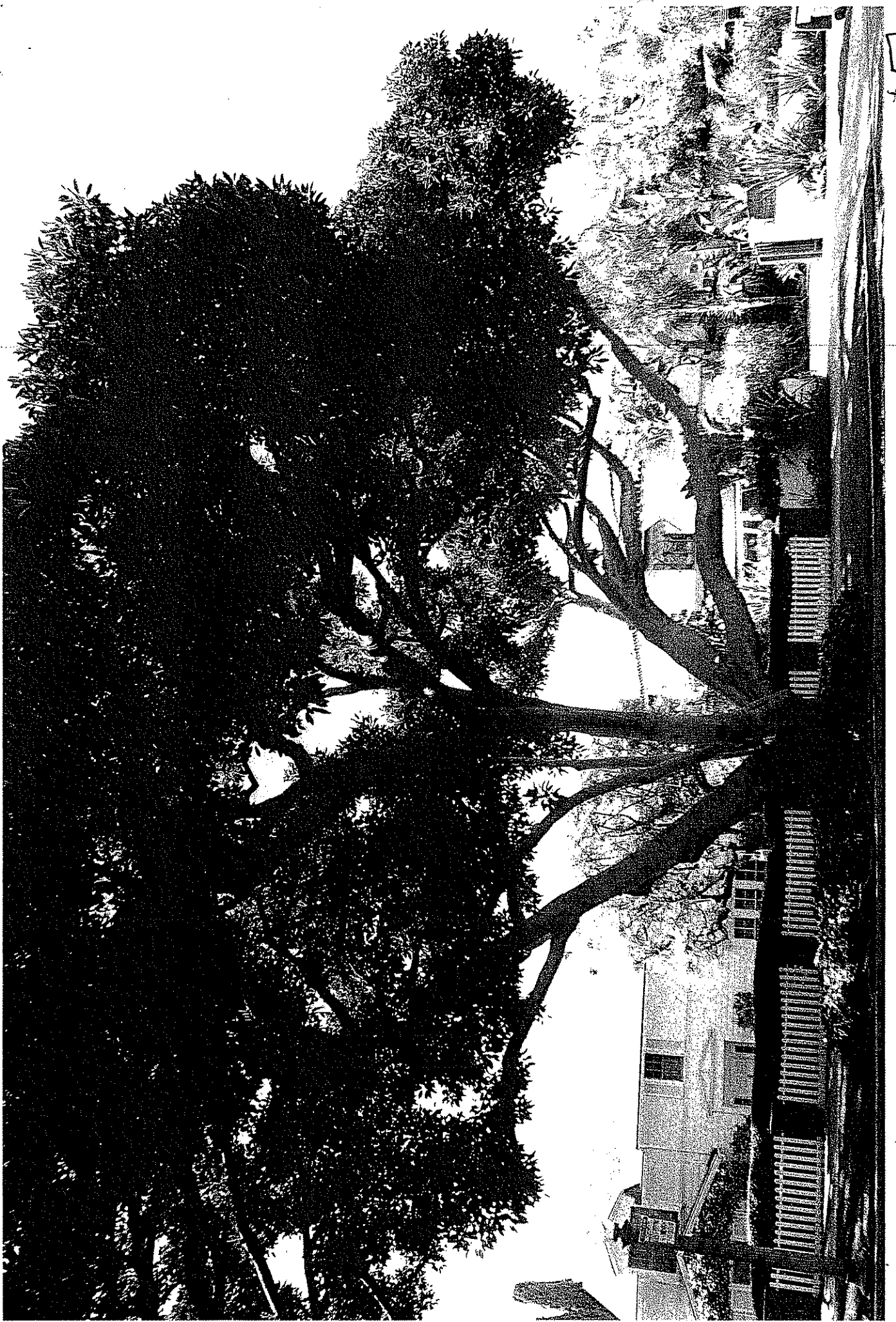
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2340 N
VERMONT

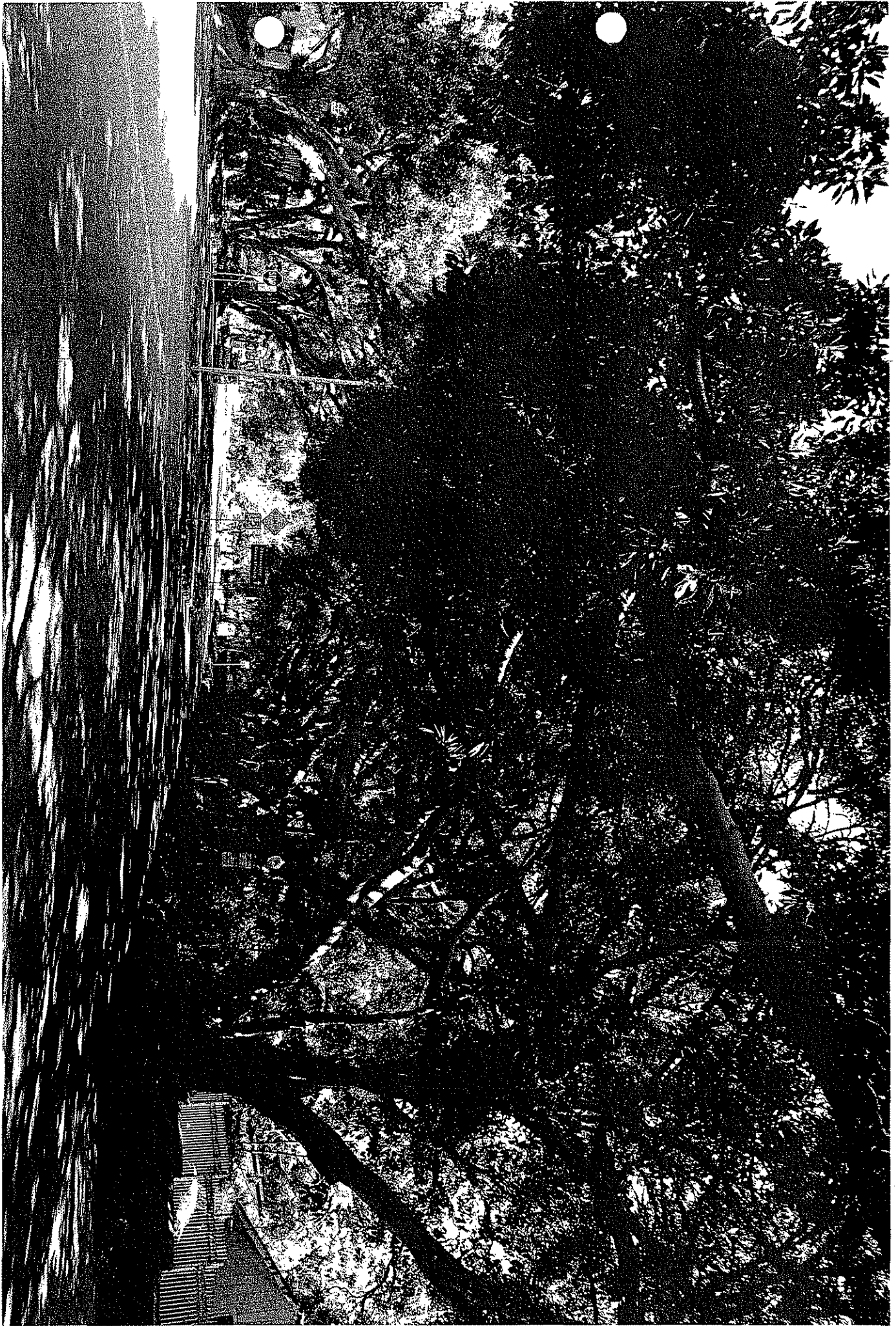
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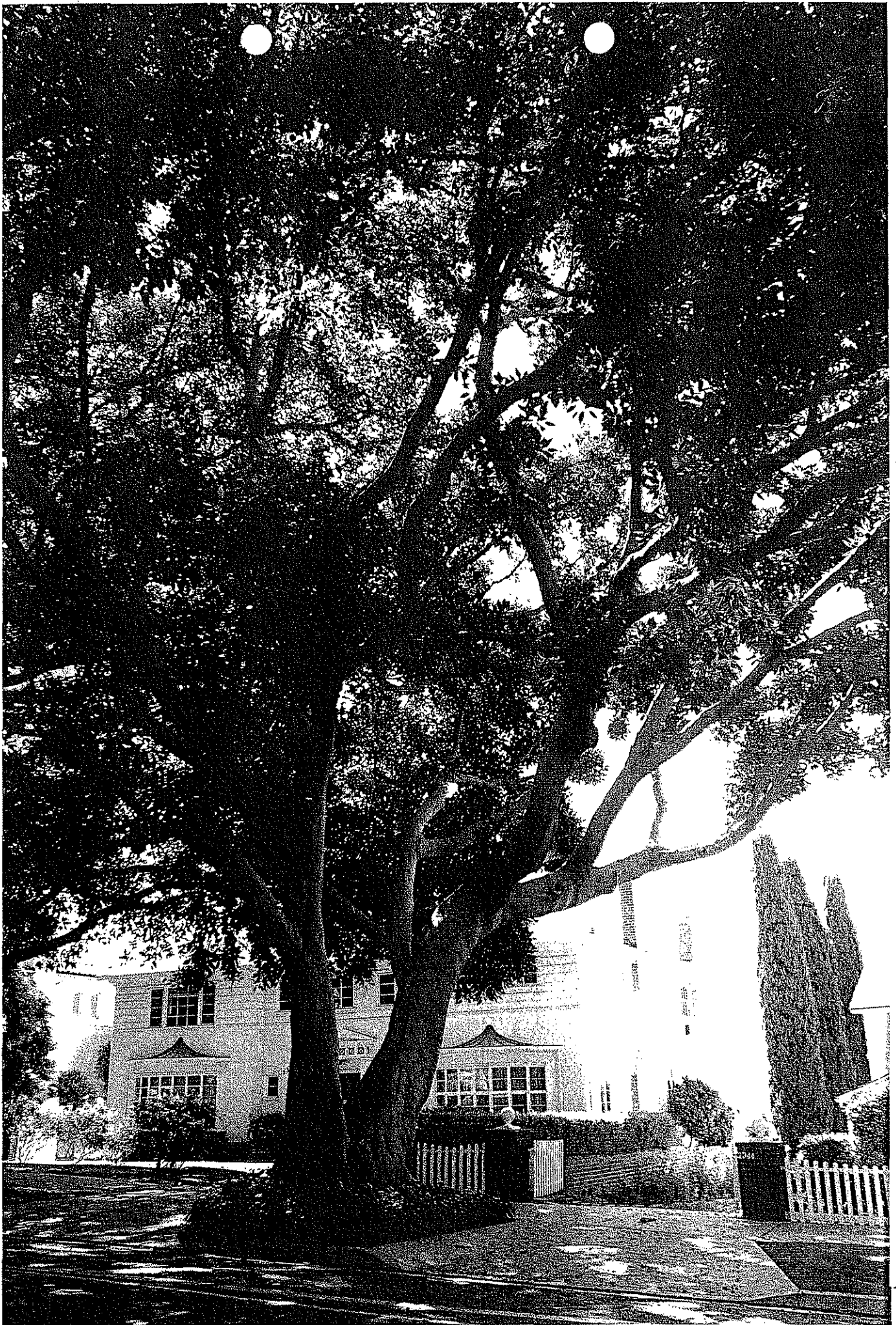


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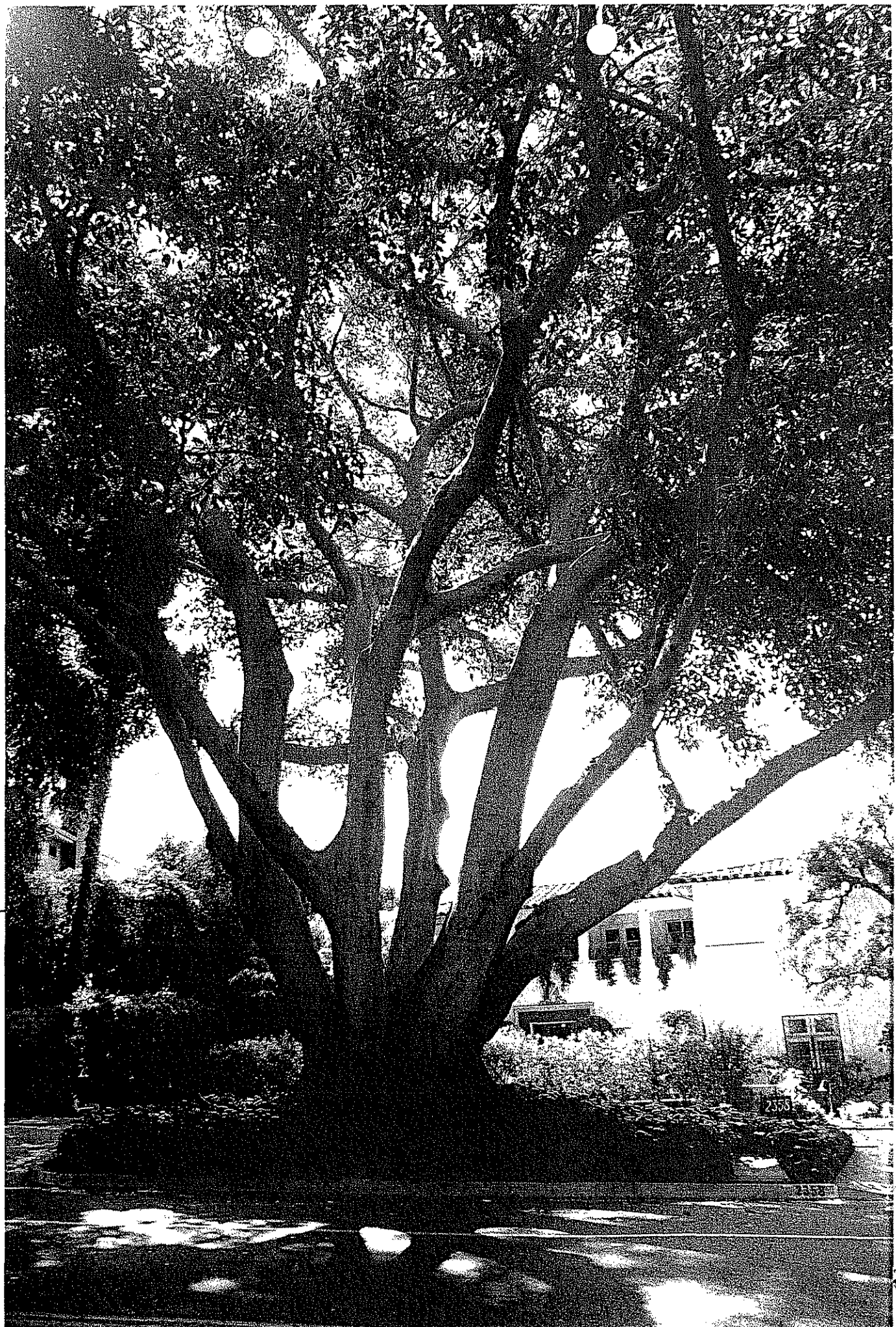
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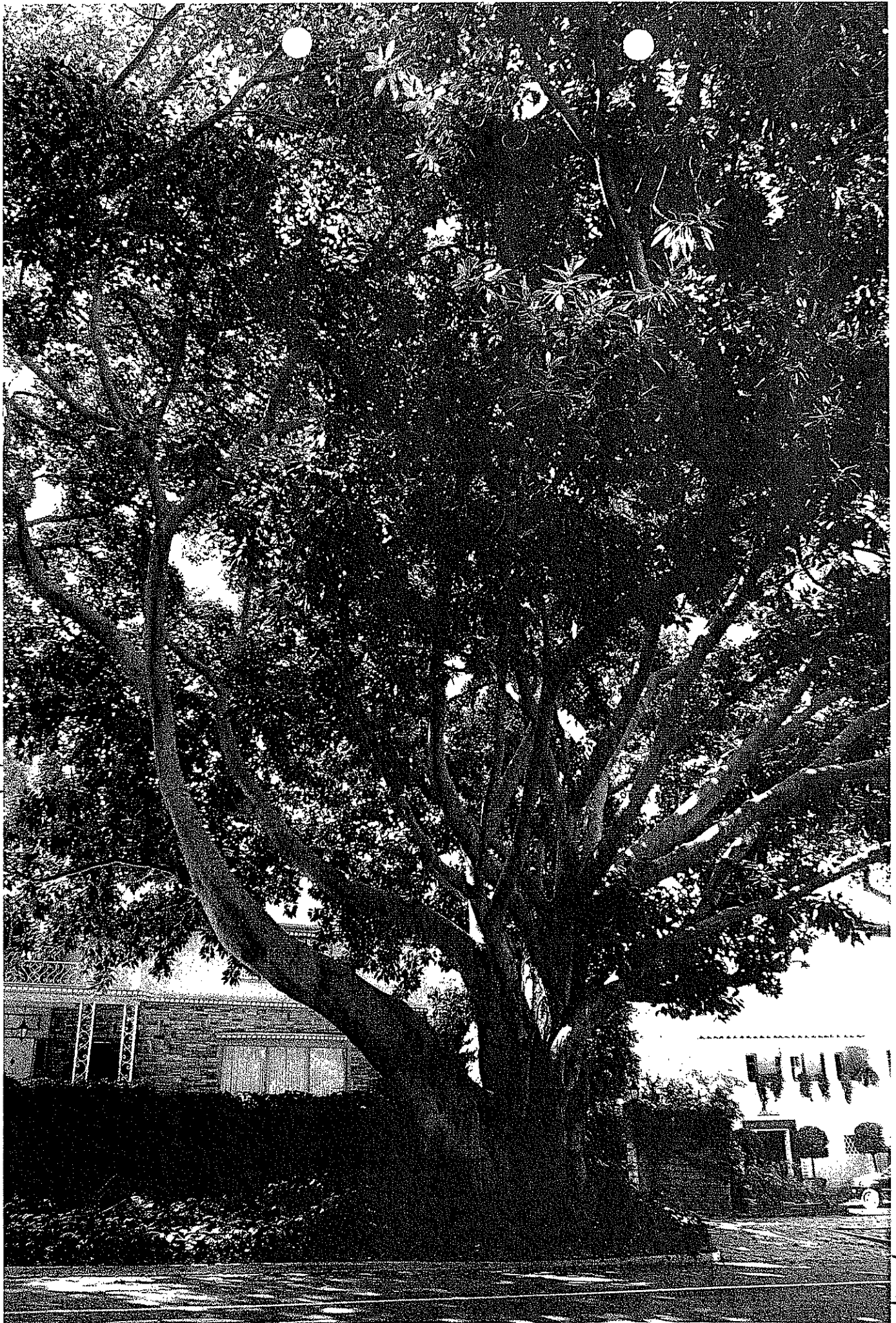
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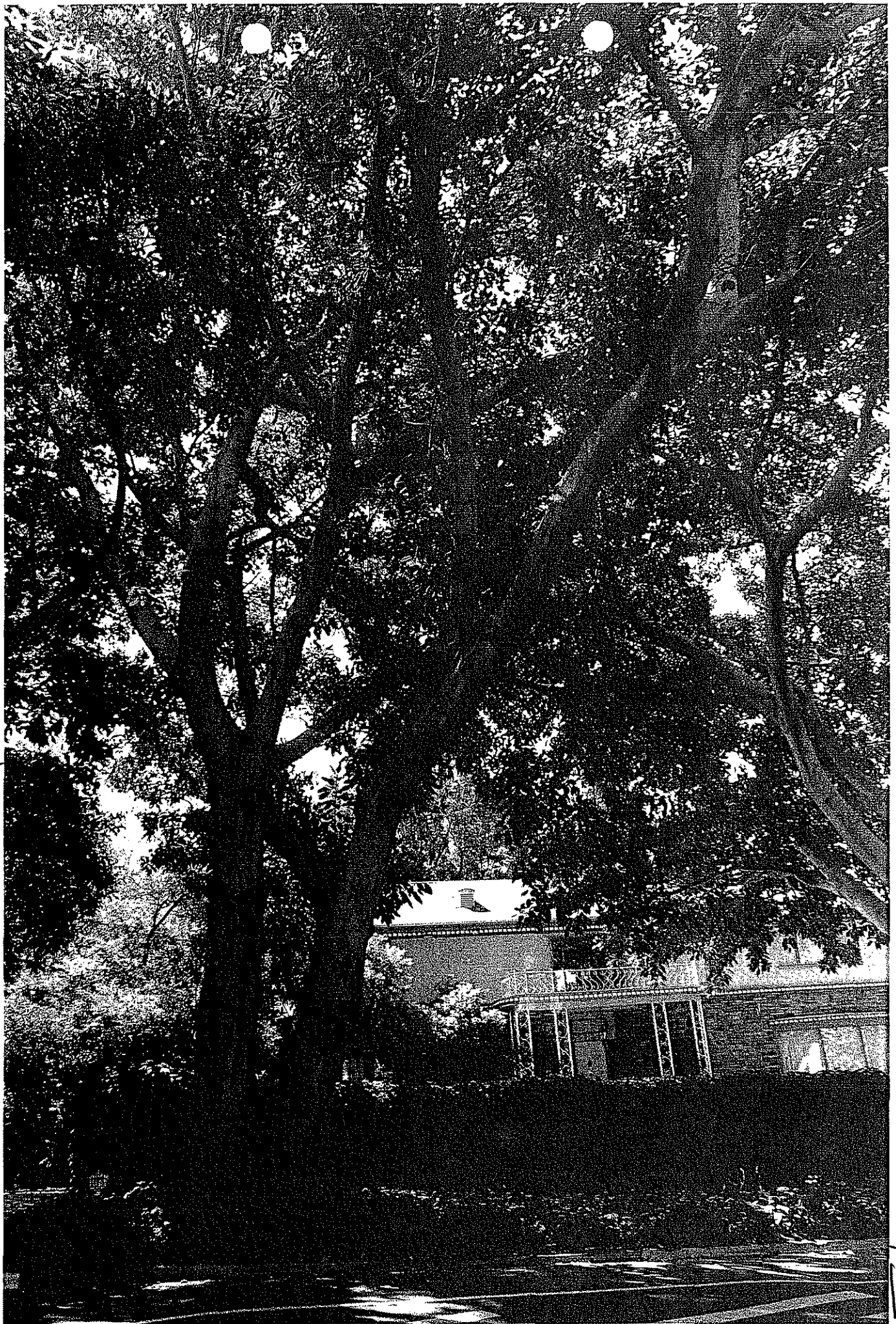
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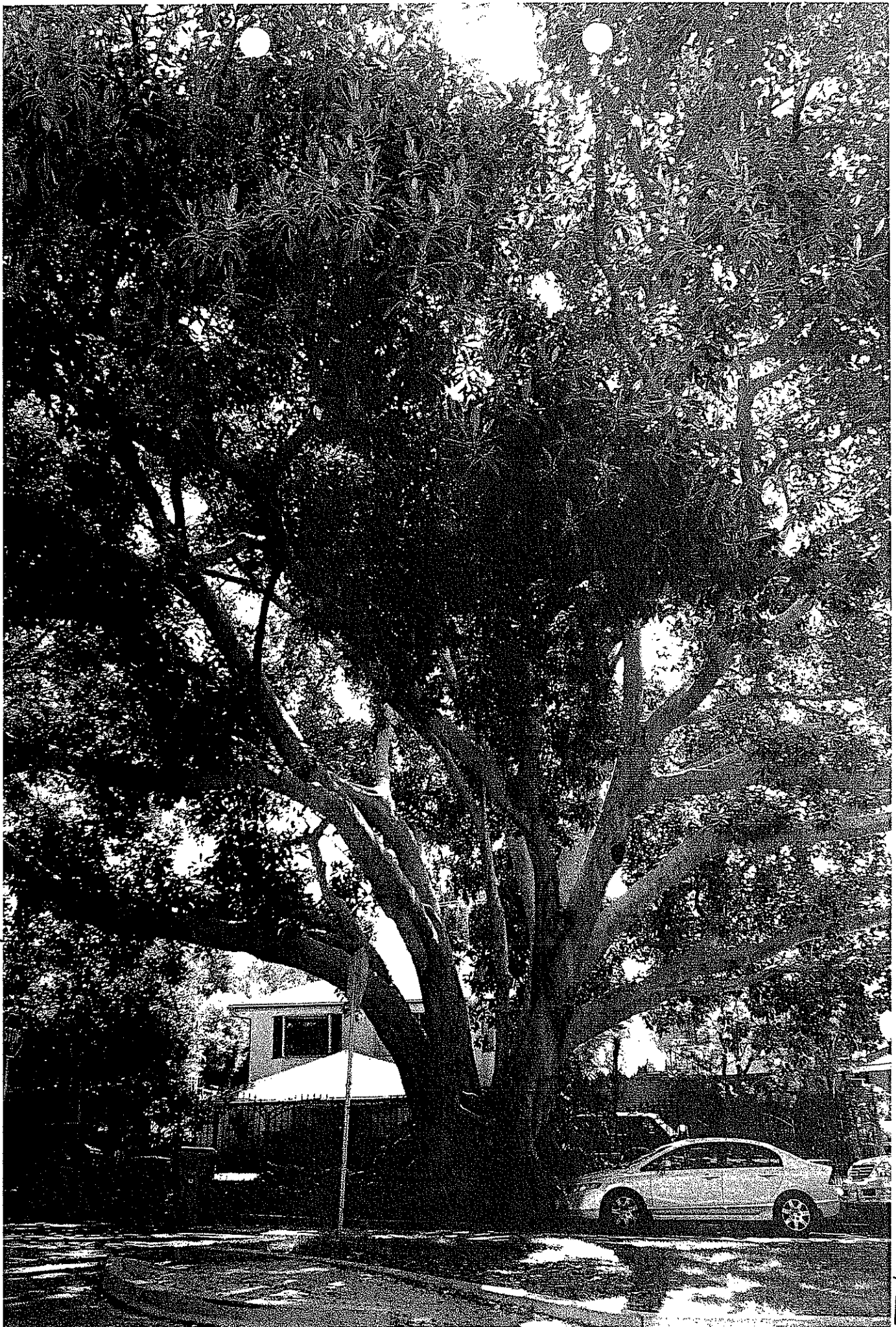
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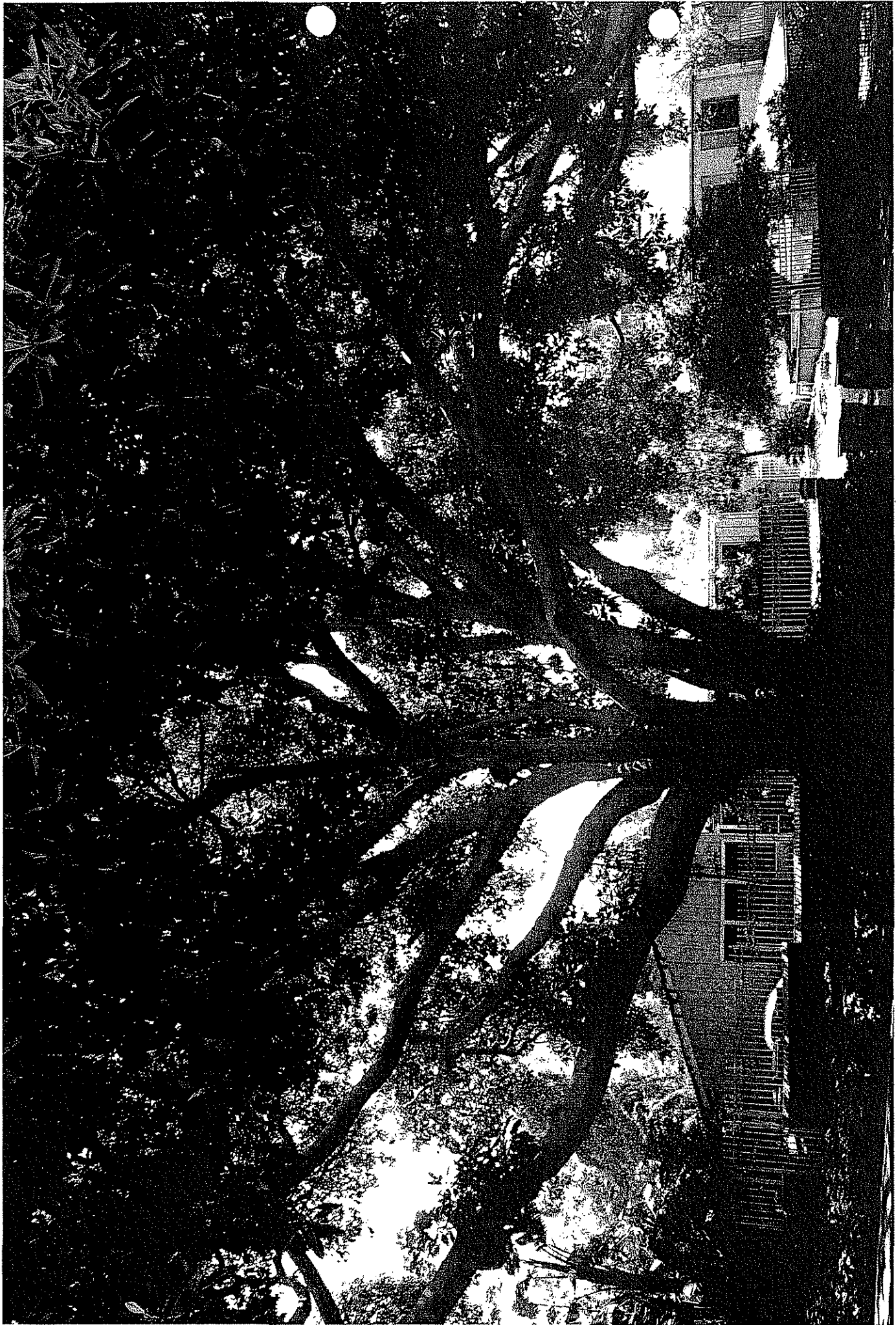
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2370 N VERMONT AVE

2400
NORTH
ELMWOOD
AVE



119



2410 N. VERMONT AVE / HILLHURST

#120



420
NORTH
ELWOOD
NE



50
74
104



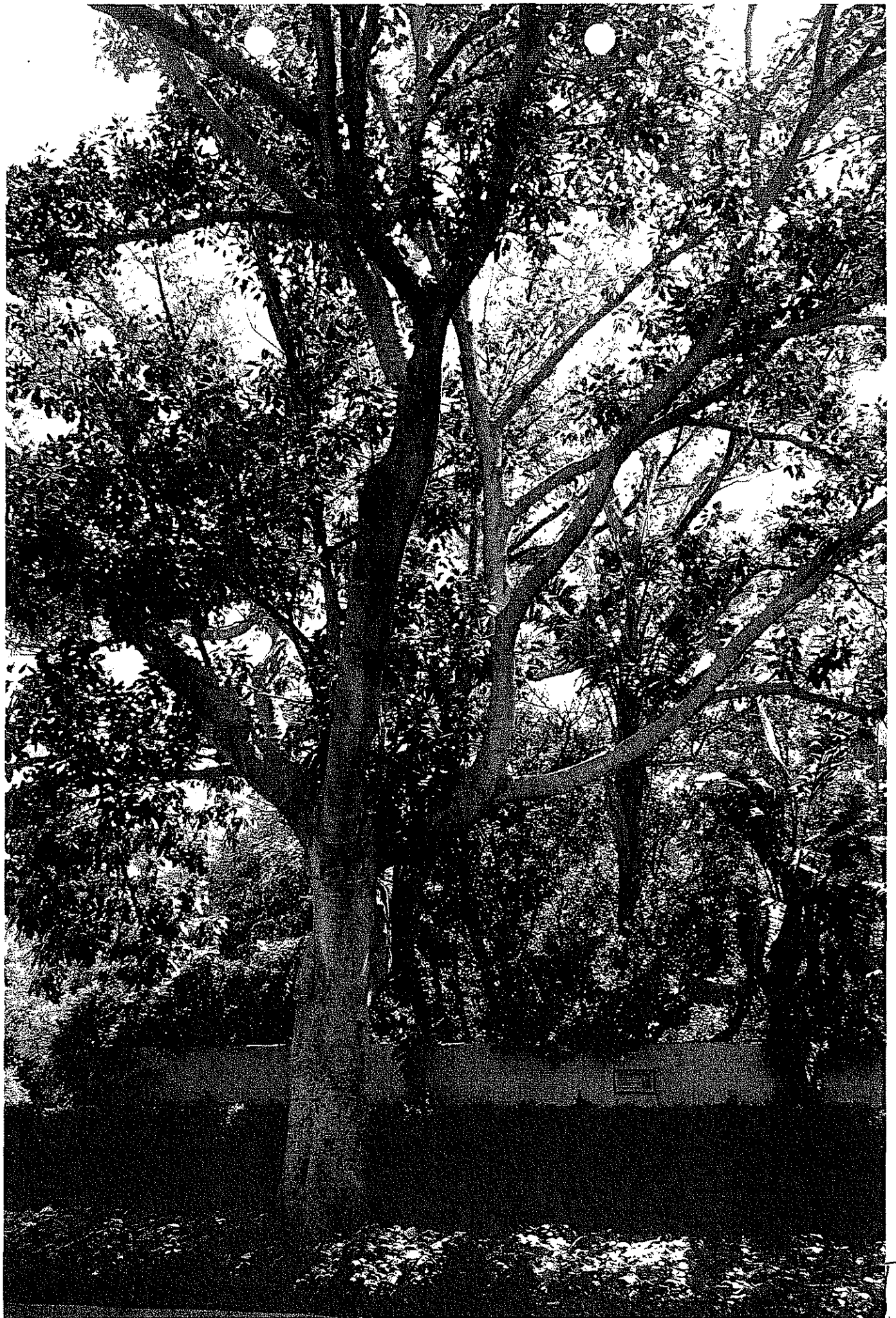
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23



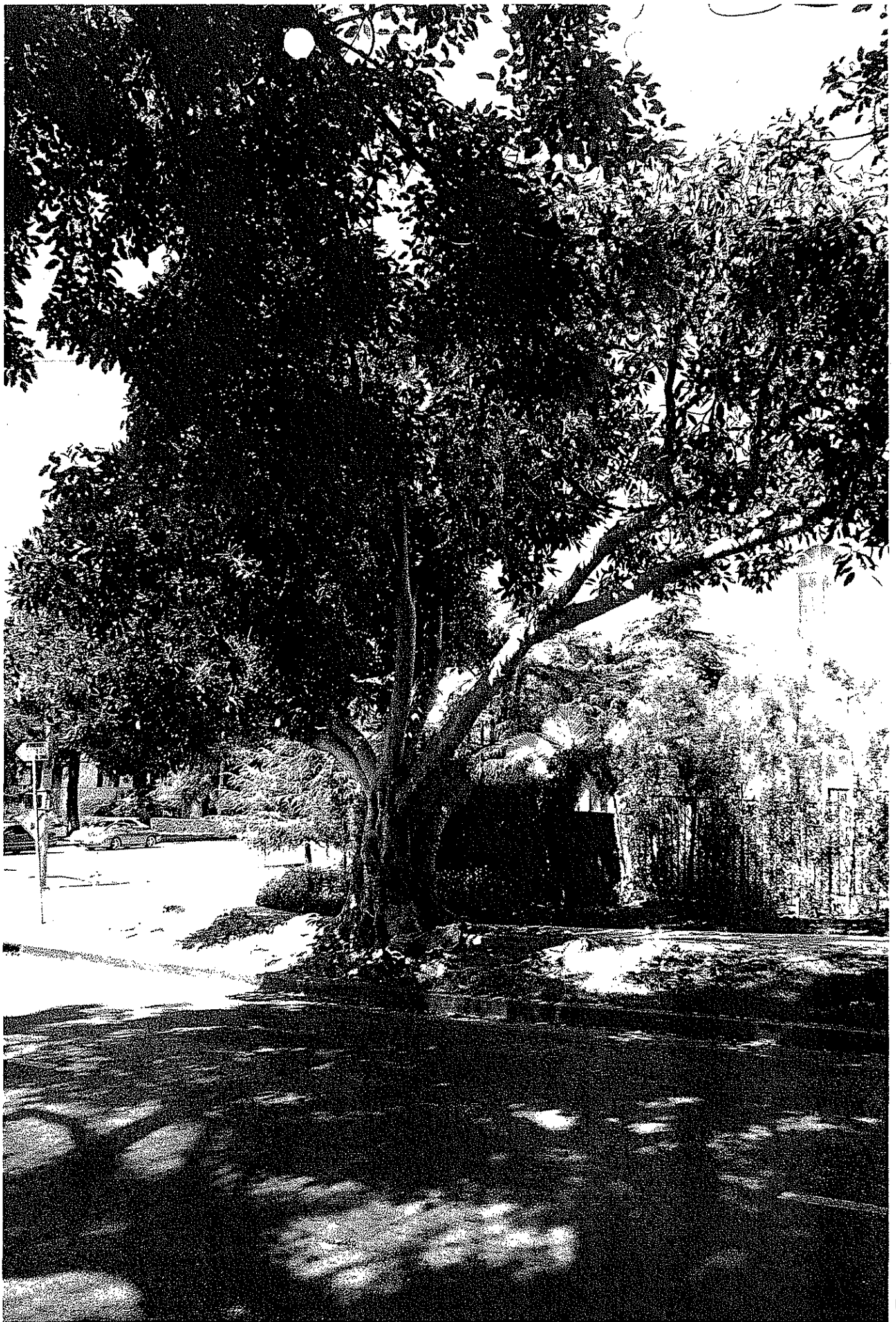
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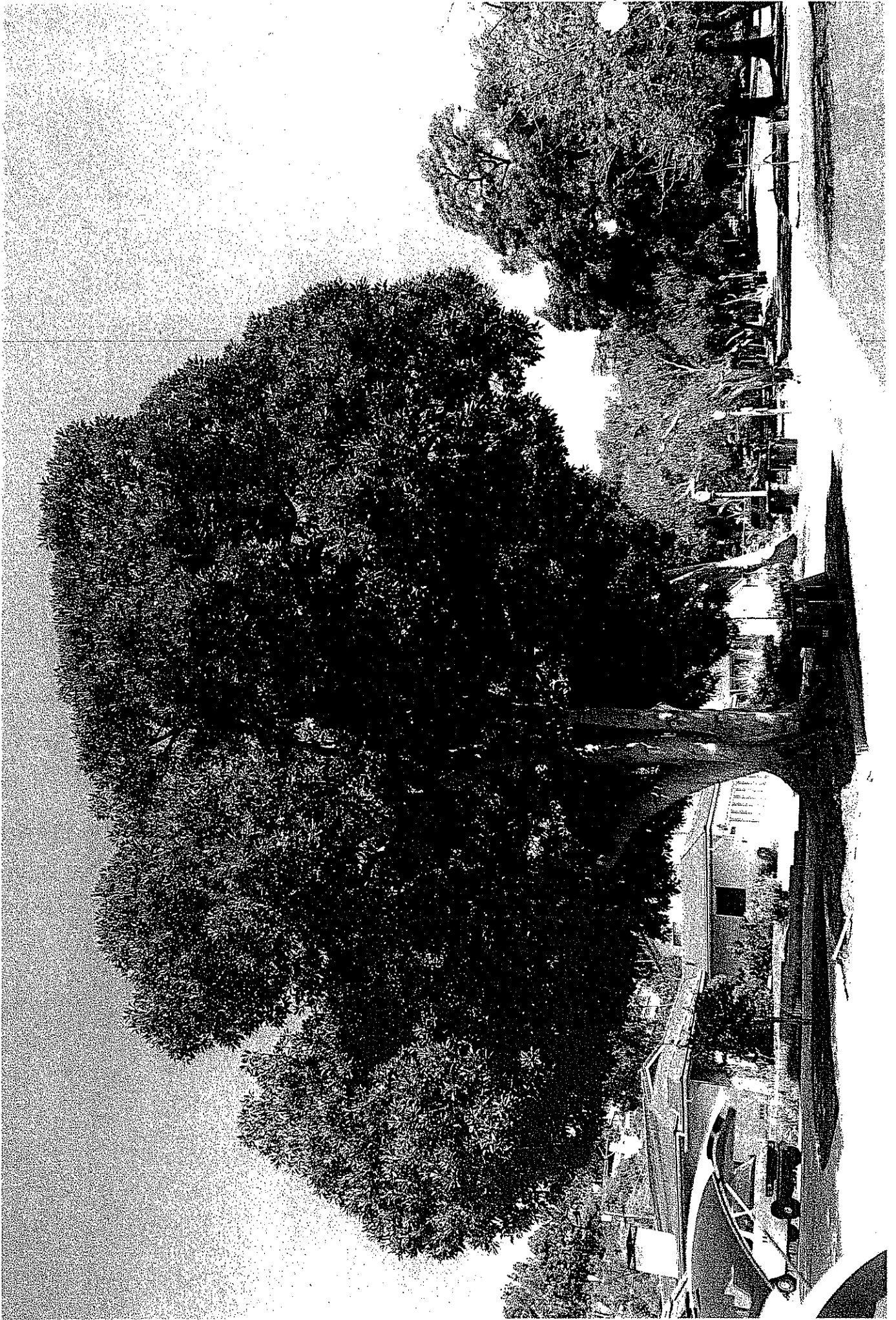
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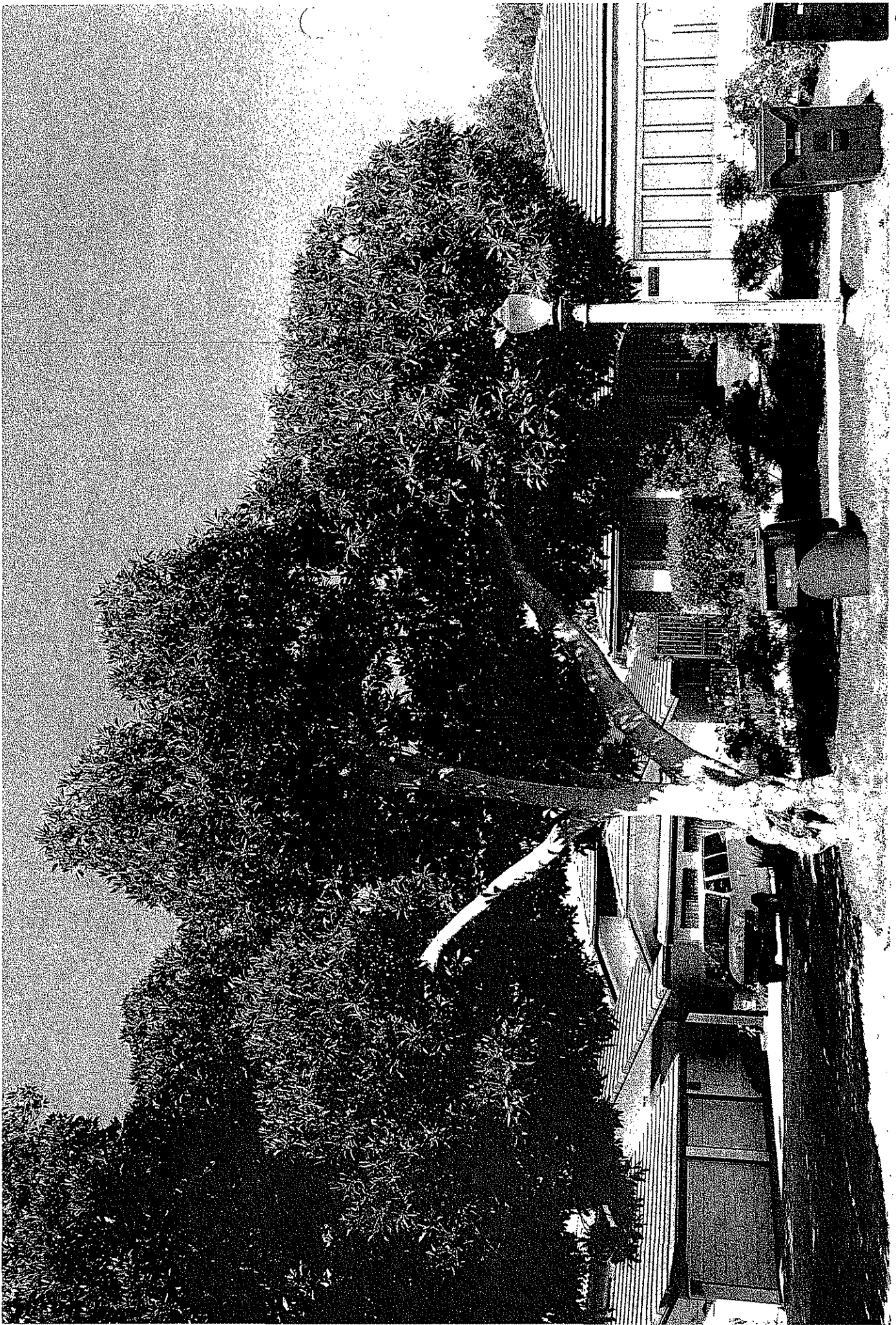
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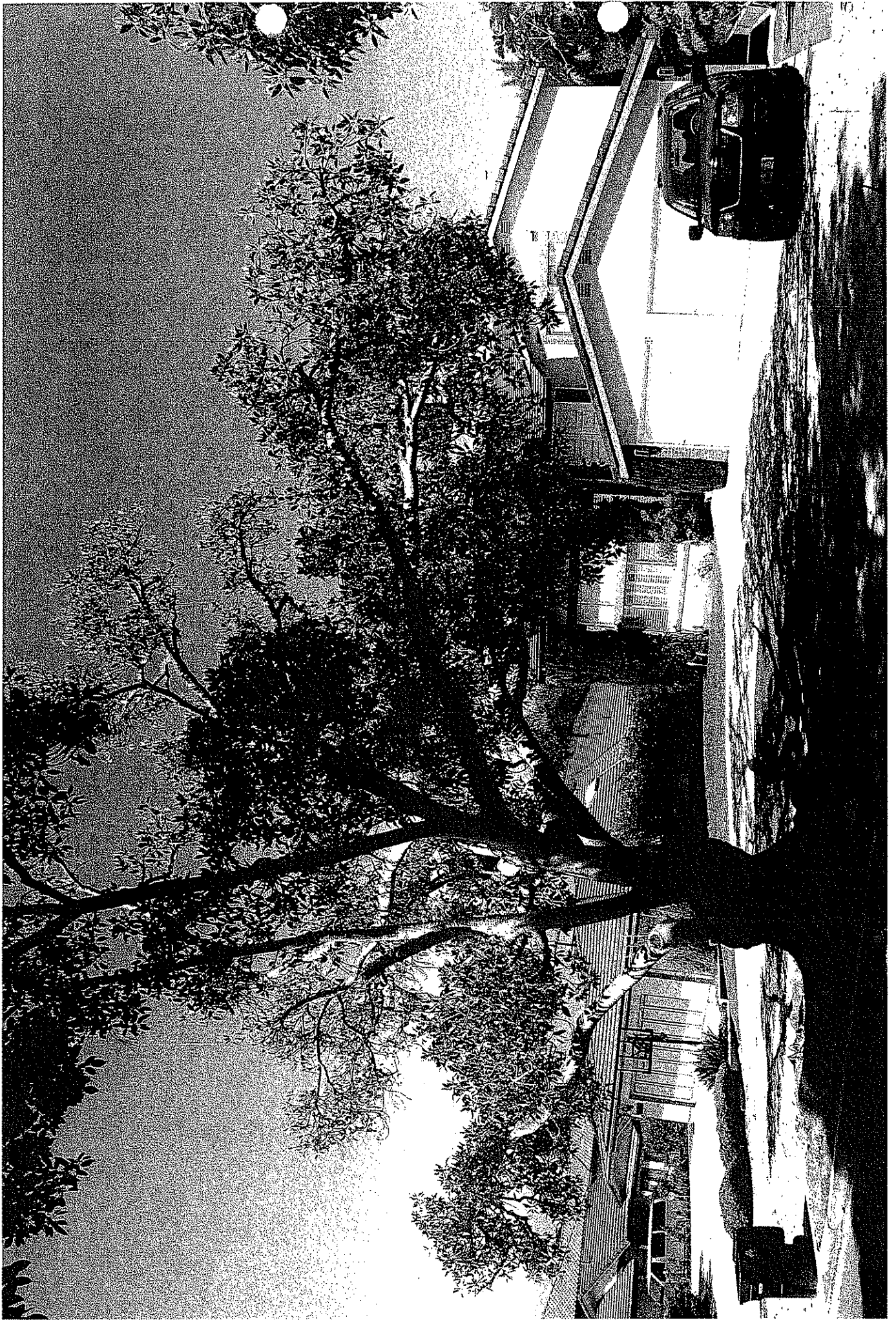
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[38]



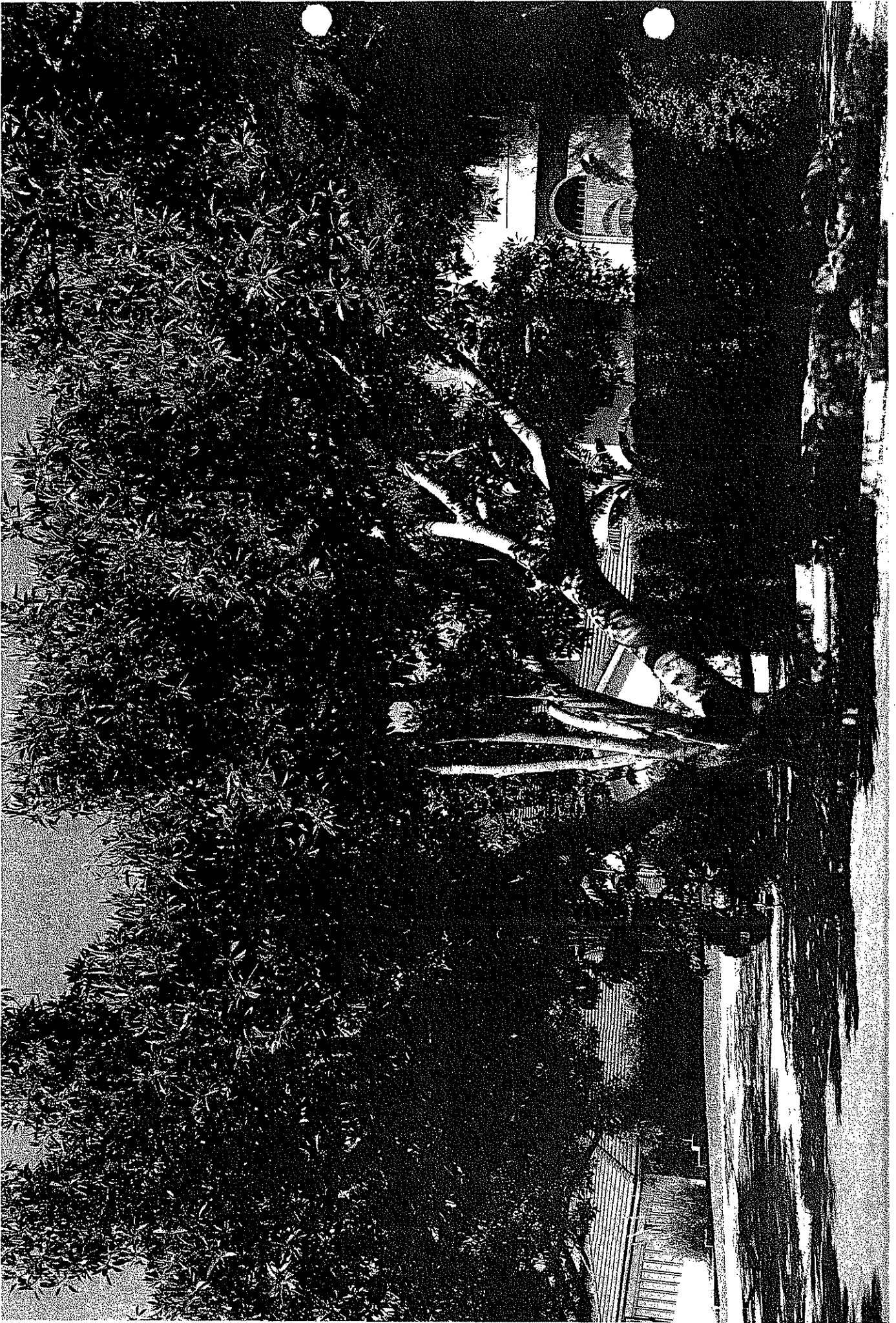
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37



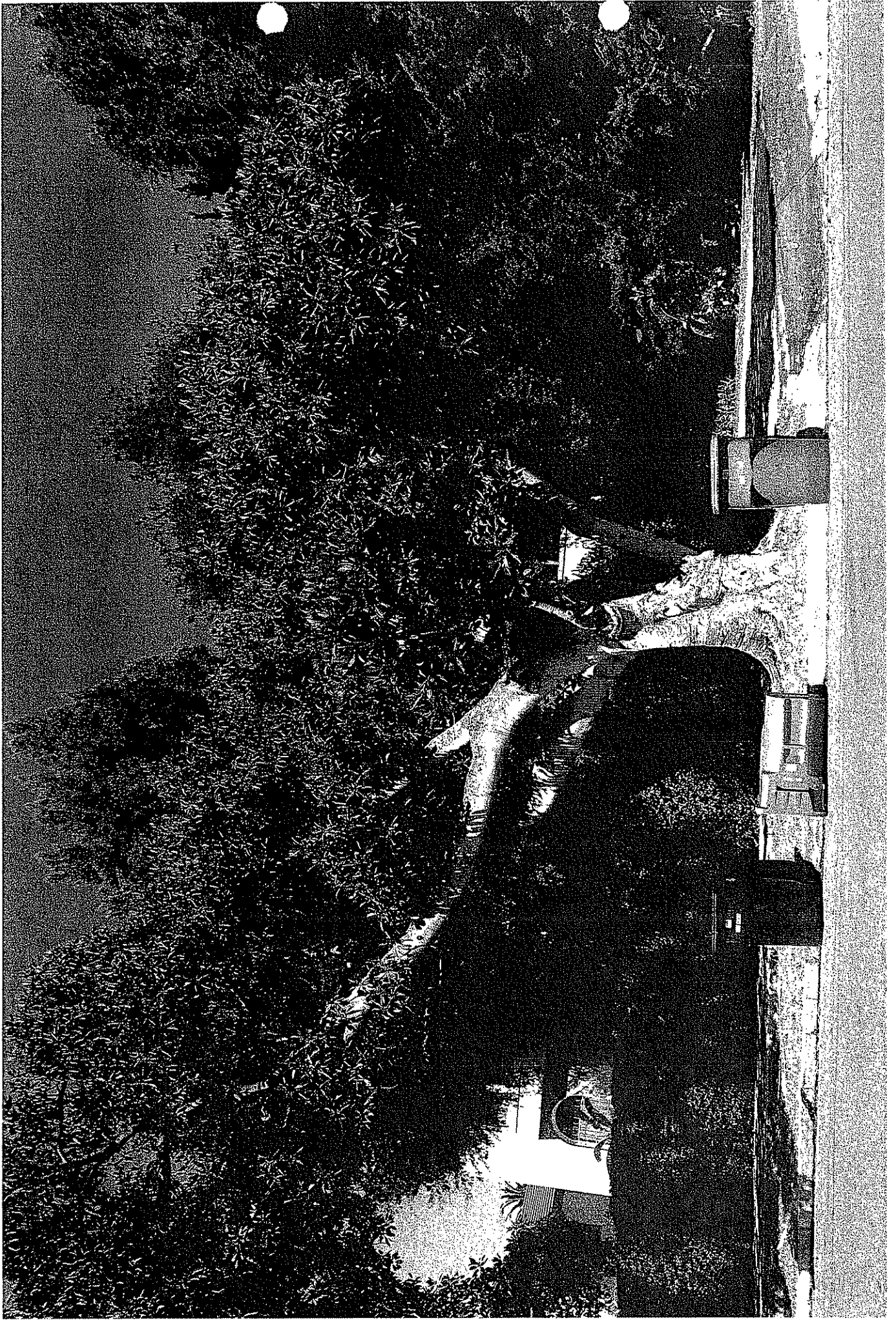
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36



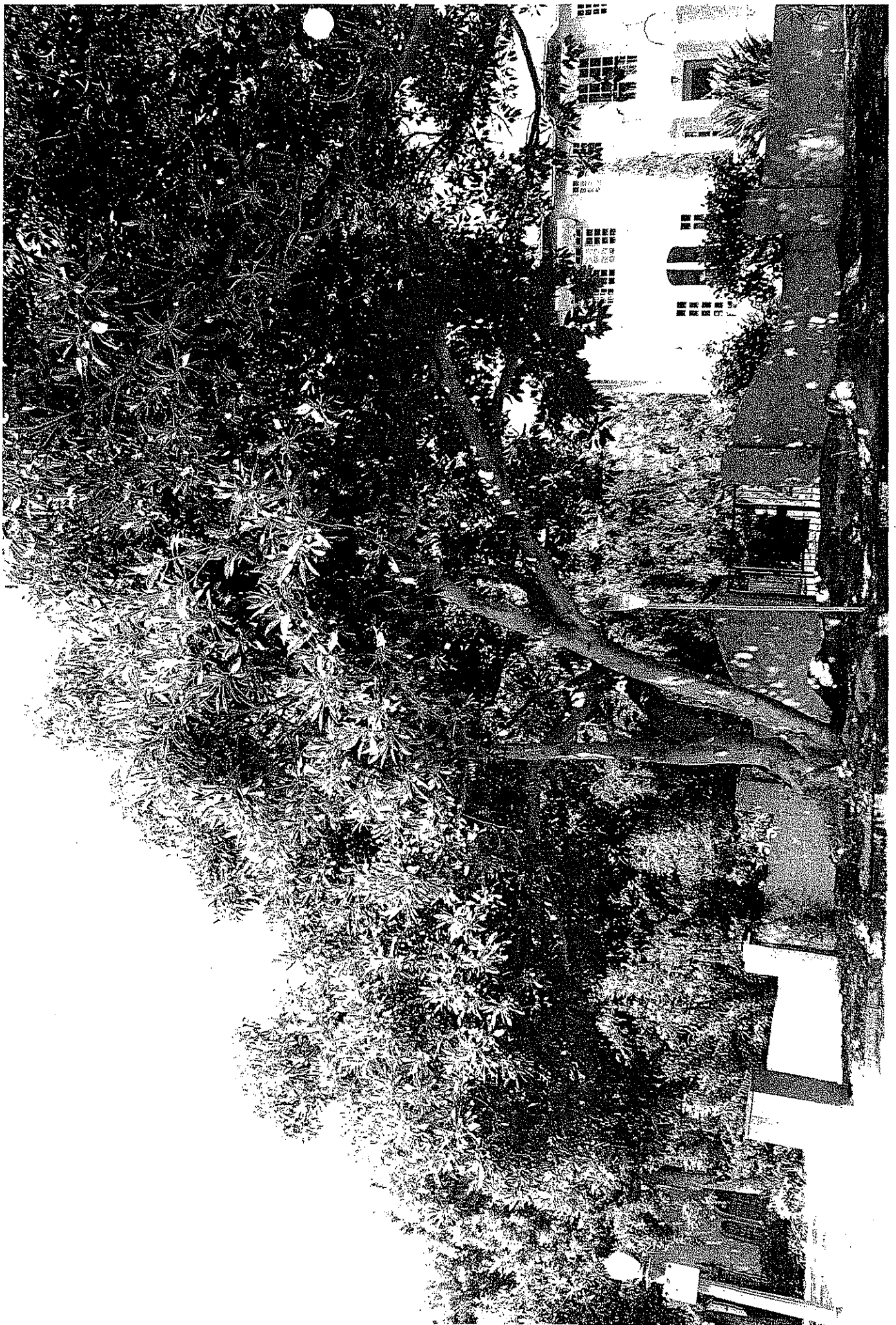
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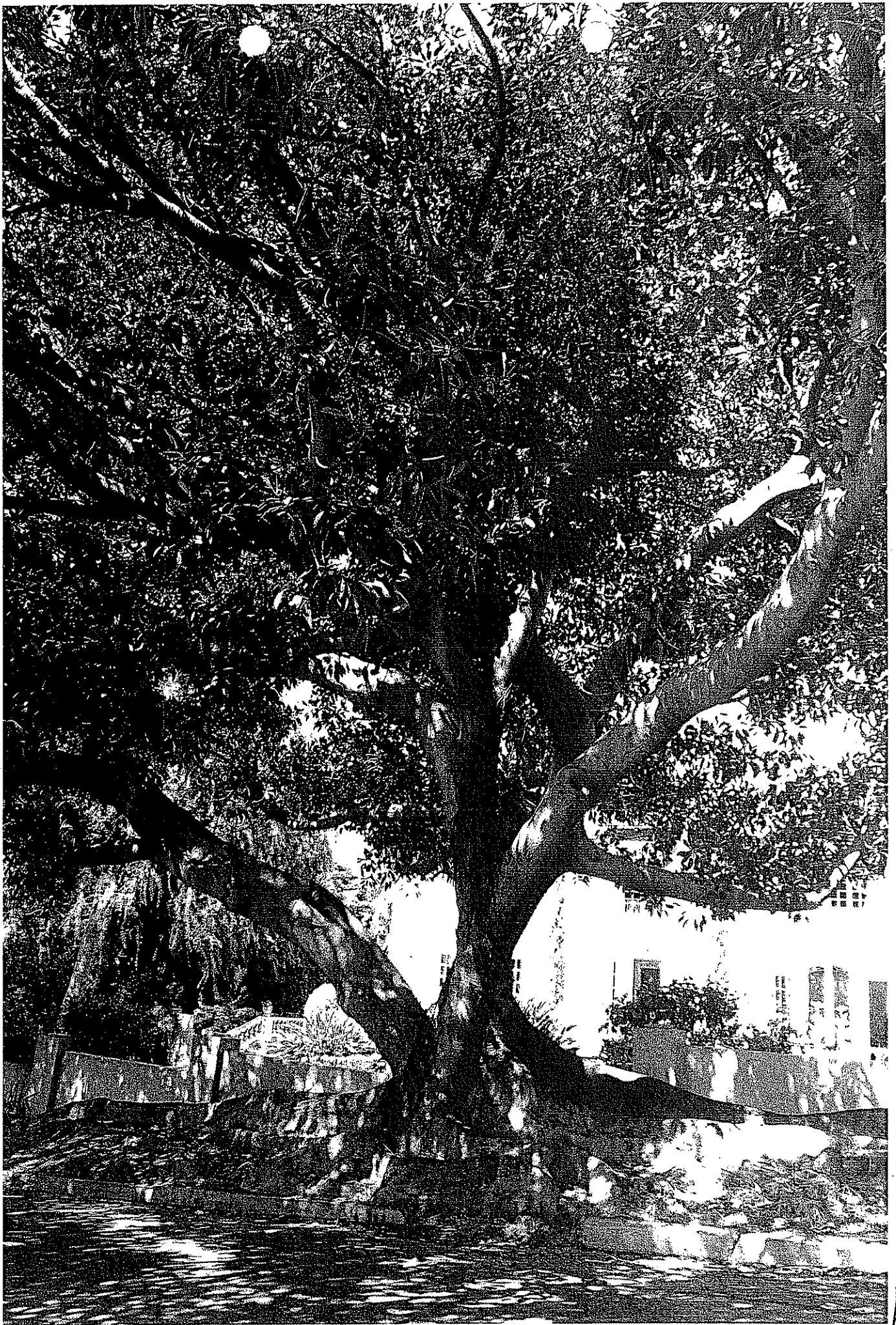
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2-315 NORTH VERMONT AVE A



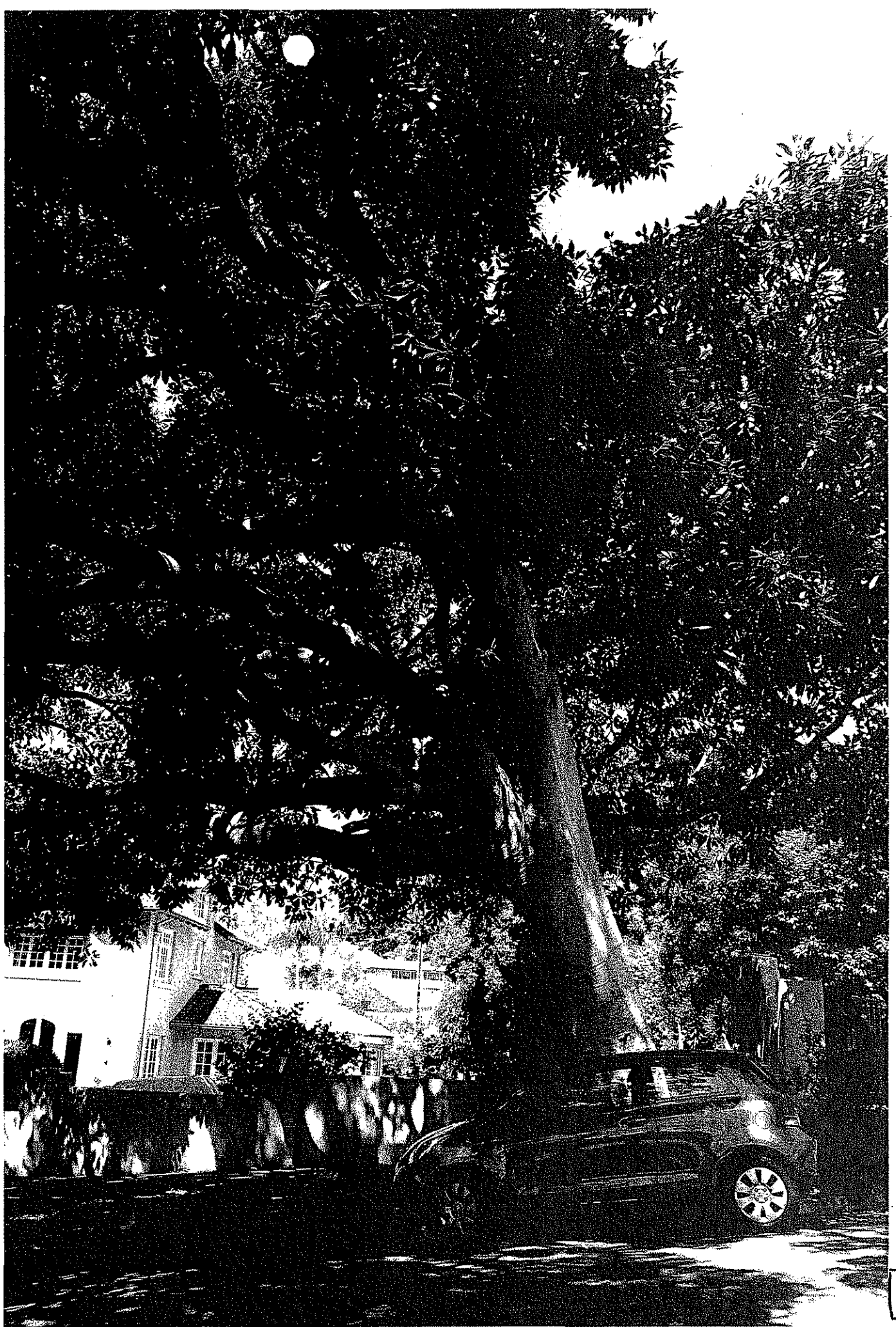
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#331



2325 NORTH WILMONT AVE

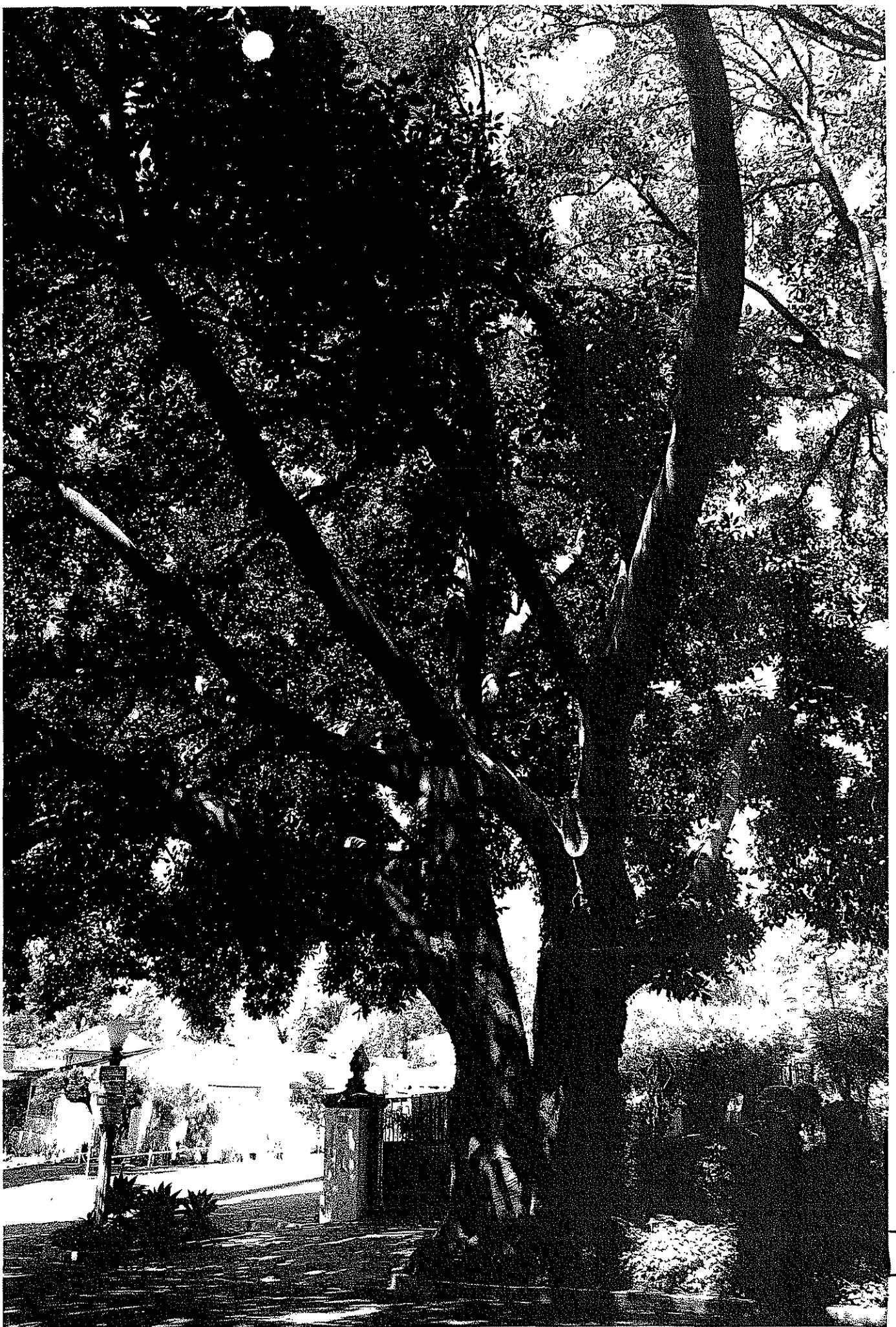
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2325 NORTH VERMONT AVE

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31



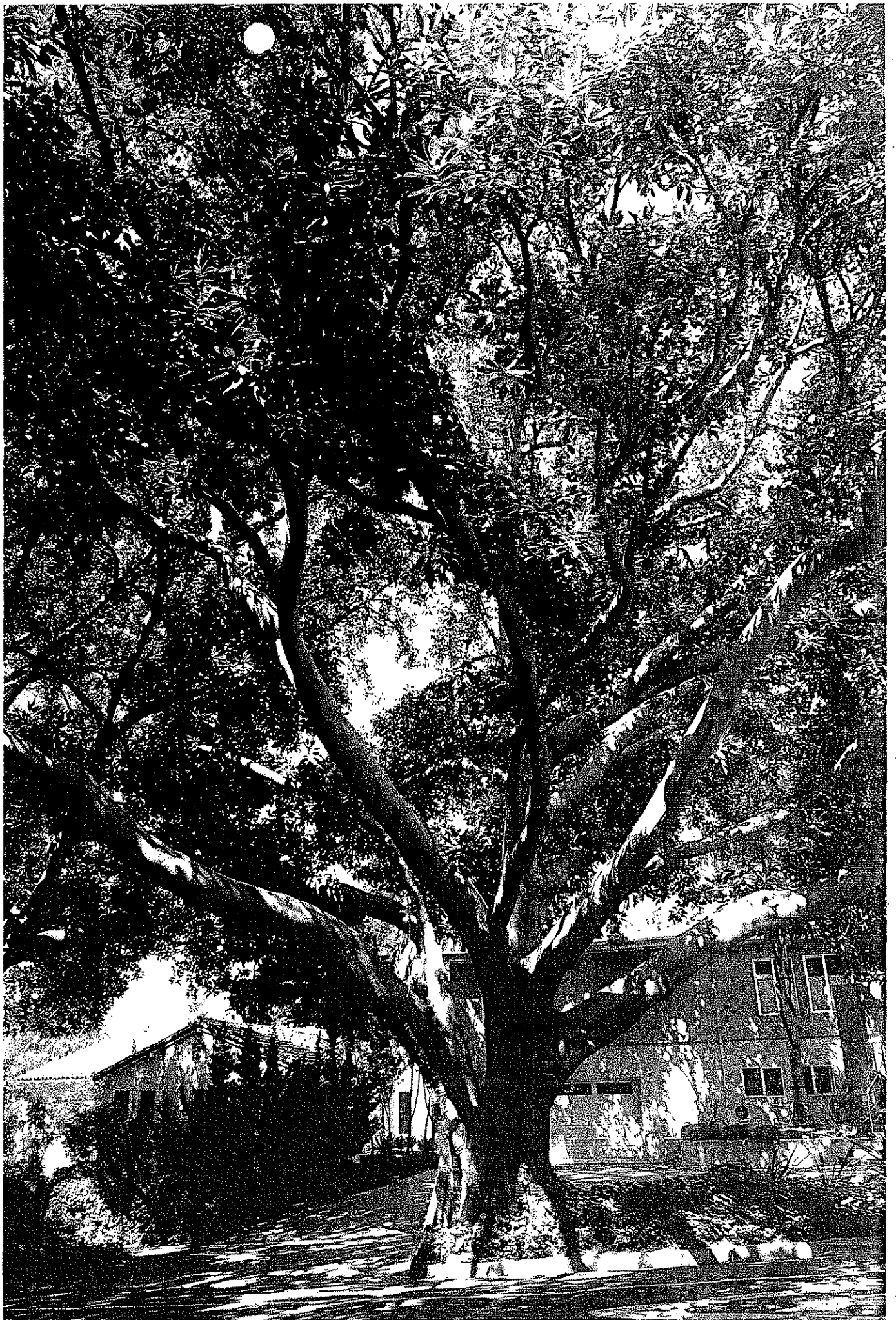
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2442 NORTH VERMONT AVE B

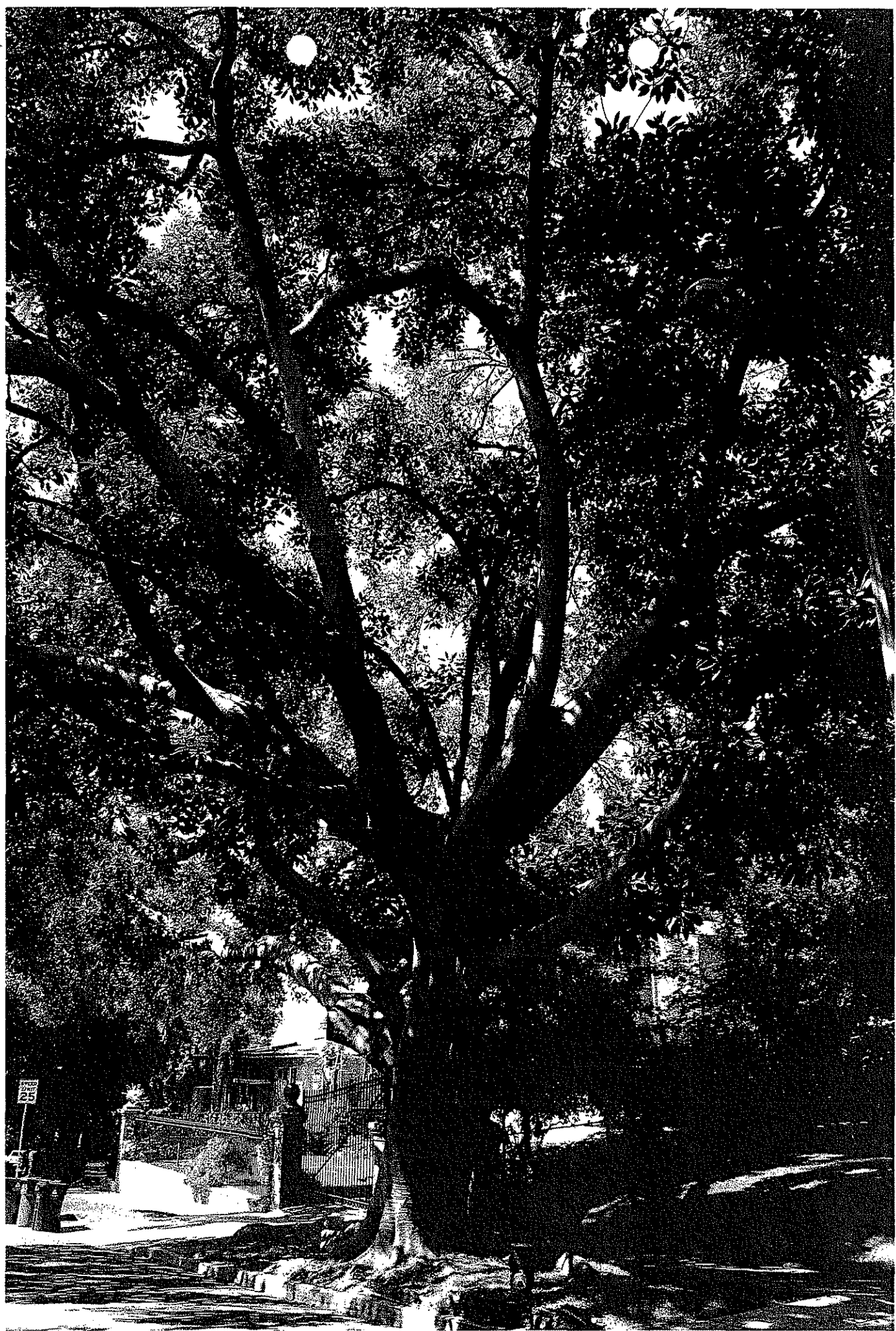


2443 NORTH WENWOOD AVE HA

29

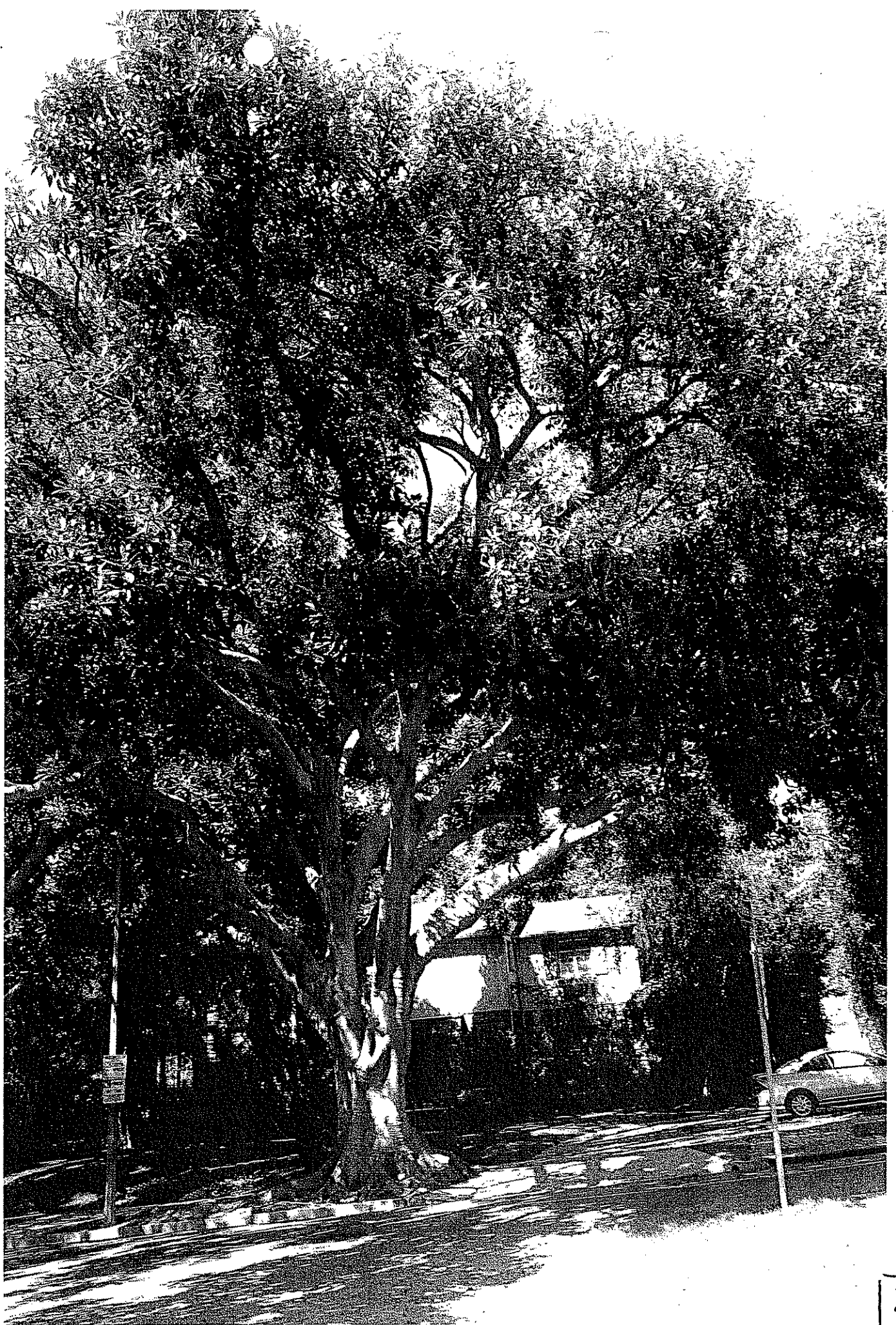


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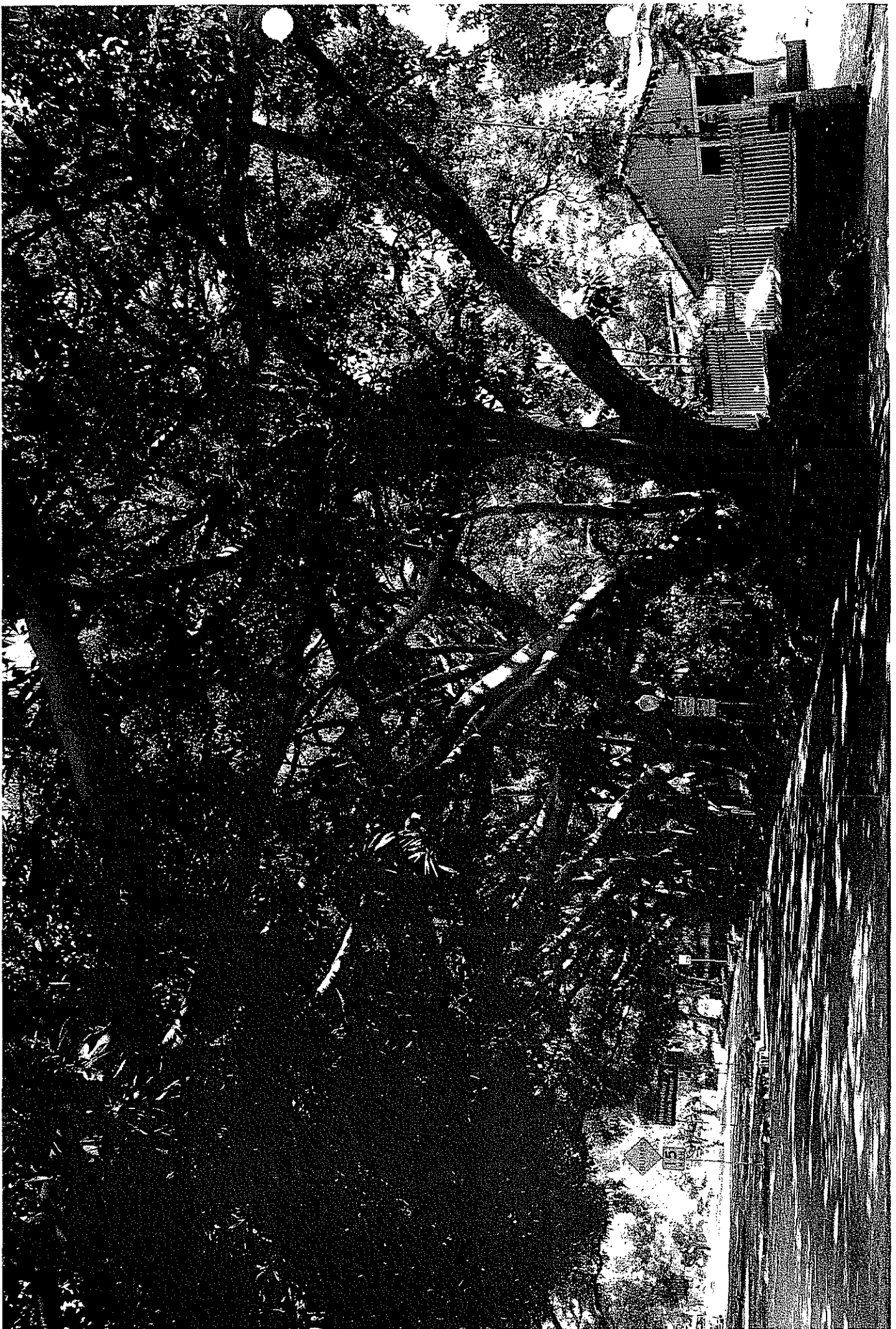
2449 NORTH VERMONT

23



2449 N VERMONT AVE





Ficus macrophylla

Moreton bay fig
Moraceae

Forest Starr, Kim Starr, and Lloyd Loope
United States Geological Survey--Biological Resources Division
Haleakala Field Station, Maui, Hawai'i

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OVERVIEW

Over sixty species of *Ficus* are cultivated in Hawai'i. Most species that are cultivated do not reproduce and spread from initial plantings because of the absence of their associated pollinator wasp. Without their associated wasp, *Ficus* trees are unable to reproduce. The pollinator wasp for *F. macrophylla*, *Pleistodontes froggatti* Mayr., was purposefully introduced to Hawai'i in 1921 (Wagner et al. 1999). The wasp successfully established and reproduction of *F. macrophylla* has been documented on Maui and Hawai'i (Oppenheimer and Bartlett 2000, Starr et al. 2002). This species has many invasive characteristics including prolific fruit production, small seeds that are bird dispersed, ability to invade both disturbed and native forests, and difficulty in control due to epiphytic growth and steep terrain. The pollinator wasp for *F. macrophylla* recently arrived in New Zealand, allowing this species to spread there as well, making it a potential threat to natural areas. On Maui, *F. macrophylla* is not as widespread as other more popular fig trees and controlling small populations near natural areas may be feasible.

TAXONOMY

Family: Moraceae (Mulberry family)

Latin name: *Ficus macrophylla* Desf. ex Pers. (Bailey and Bailey 1976).

Synonyms: *F. macrocarpa* Hugel ex Kunth & Bouche (Bailey and Bailey 1976), *F. magnolioides* (Riffle 1998).

Common names: Moreton Bay fig, Australian banyan (Bailey and Bailey 1976).

Taxonomic notes: The genus *Ficus* is made up of about 1,000 species from pantropical and subtropical origins (Wagner et al. 1999). Plants in the genus are all woody, ranging from trees and shrubs to climbers (Neal 1965).

Nomenclature: The species name, *macrophylla*, suggests the large size of the leaves.

Related species in Hawai'i: In Hawai'i, about 60 other species of *Ficus* are cultivated (Wagner et al. 1999).

DESCRIPTION

"Wide spreading, evergreen tree with aerial roots (some becoming props). Oblong to elliptic or ovate, leathery leaves, mid-green and hairless above, to 10 in (25 cm) long, are paler beneath, often with rust-red scales. Ovoid fig, to 3/4 in (2 cm) long, ripening from green to purple with yellow-green flecks, are produced only on mature trees in the open, usually in pairs" (Brickell and Zuk 1997). Neal (1965) adds that this species has an extensive surface root system and leaf buds enclosed in rose-colored sheaths, 2 to 4 in

long, which soon fall. "Large tree, to 50 ft in cultivation, to 200 ft in the wild. Leaves ovate to elliptic, 6-12 in long, acute, glossy above, silvery to rusty-dotted beneath. Figs axillary, globose, dark, reddish-brown to purple with paler spots, to 1 in diam." (Bailey and Bailey 1976). Seeds are minute.

BIOLOGY & ECOLOGY

Cultivation: This large banyan is cultivated for its impressive size as a specimen or avenue tree. In the United States, it has long been cultivated in California and more recently in Florida. In cultivation, the tree reaches lesser heights than in its native habitat and is said to be somewhat cold and drought tolerant (Riffle 1998). In the State of Hawai'i, over 36,000 trees were planted for reforestation between 1910 and 1960, mostly on Hawai'i and O'ahu, with fewer on Kaua'i (Skolmen 1910-1960). On Maui, *F. macrophylla* trees are observed in plantings in yards, old estates, parks, botanical gardens, and near buildings.

Invasiveness: In Hawai'i, *F. macrophylla* is spreading from initial plantings to adjacent areas. Numerous fruits are born on mature trees, attracting fruit eating birds that disperse the small seeds. Seeds often germinate in trees and grow as epiphytes, eventually replacing the host tree. *F. macrophylla* has been spreading in both disturbed and native forests. *F. macrophylla* will germinate and grow in a variety of host trees. Seedlings growing as epiphytes have been observed growing in adjacent forestry plantings, such as *Melaleuca quinquinervia*. Trees in residential areas nearby *F. macrophylla* plantings, such as palms, also have *F. macrophylla* seedlings growing in them. Young trees have also been observed growing in abandoned buildings. When *F. macrophylla* plantings are located near native forests, native tree species, such as koa (*Acacia koa*) and ohia (*Metrosideros polymorpha*), are often hosts of *F. macrophylla*. The host trees will eventually be strangled and replaced by the *F. macrophylla*. In New Zealand, Gardner and Early (1996) report that pollinator wasps, *Pleistodontes froggatti*, were first found in 1993 at Westfield, Auckland, then within the next month at several well separated places on the Auckland isthmus. It is uncertain whether the wasp made it to New Zealand on its own or as an accidental introduction. In New Zealand, fruit is readily eaten by blackbirds (*Turdus merula*) and many other animals including possums (*Trichosurus vulpecula*) (Gardner and Early 1996).

Pollination: The fruit (syconium or fig) and reproduction systems of species in the genus *Ficus* are unique. Each species of *Ficus* has an associated species of agaonid wasp (Hymenoptera: Chalcoidea: Agaonidae). *Ficus* species can only be pollinated by their associated agaonid wasps and in turn, the wasps can only lay eggs within their associated *Ficus* fruit. The pollinator wasp for *F. macrophylla* is *Pleistodontes froggatti*.

Propagation: In Hawai'i, seeds are viable. Most figs can be grown from air layers or cuttings.

Dispersal: Plants are initially spread by humans who grow the plant for ornament. Various birds observed by the authors foraging and roosting in other *Ficus* trees on Maui

include mynah birds (*Acridotheres tristis tristis*), blue faced doves (*Geopelia striata*), lace necked doves (*Streptopelia chinensis*), Japanese white-eye (*Zosterops japonicus*), and house sparrows (*Passer domesticus*), though there are probably more. Other animals, such as bats, pigs, rodents, parrots, and monkeys may be capable of spreading fruit.

Pests and Diseases: Brickell and Zuk (1997) report the following pests and diseases of *Ficus* spp.: mealybugs, scale insects, spider mites, root knot nematodes, and thrips occur under most environmental conditions, fungal and bacterial leaf spots, crown gall, twig dieback, and Southern blight.

DISTRIBUTION

Native range: *F. macrophylla* is native to tropical Queensland and northern New South Wales in Australia (Riffle 1998). In this area of Eastern Australia, typical average temperatures range from 68–86 F (20–30 C) in January and from 50–68 F (10–20 C) in July (Hammond 1986). Average annual rainfall in this region ranges from 20-80 in (50-200 cm) (Hammond 1986).

Global distribution: *F. macrophylla* is widely cultivated. It is grown in the United States in at least Hawai'i, California, and Florida. Apparently, Californians historically had a great interest in introducing and growing Australian plants for landscaping and therefore, *F. macrophylla* has been grown in California for much longer than in Florida (Riffle 1998). It is a drought tolerant banyan that is hardier to cold than most banyans and can withstand temperatures 28 F (-7 C) or above, though younger trees are more susceptible to cold (Riffle 1998). Trees grown in the continental United States do not grow as large as trees in their native habitat. It is cultivated and naturalized in New Zealand.

State of Hawaii distribution: *F. macrophylla* is cultivated and naturalized in Hawai'i. It was used in reforestation and mostly planted in the 1920's through 1930's with 4,092 trees planted on Kaua'i, 10,687 on O'ahu, and 21,727 on Hawai'i (Skolmen 1910-1960). Though not noted in Skolmen (1910-1960) trees also occur on Maui and Midway Atoll. Trees are probably grown on all the main islands, though statewide distribution is not confirmed. At Midway Atoll, there are two large mature trees near the West Beach area on either side of the golf cart path. The pollinator wasps were first noted by Nishida (1998). The wasps were still present in 1999 and 2001, but no seedlings or signs of reproduction were noted. These two trees were targeted for eradication to prevent future spread of another *Ficus* species on Midway (*F. microcarpa* is already spreading there causing serious damage to historical structures and strangling desirable trees). It is uncertain whether the control work has been executed or not.

Island of Maui distribution: On Maui, *F. macrophylla* is occasionally planted as a specimen or street tree near buildings and parks from sea level up to about 3,000 ft (914 m). Naturalized plants have been observed from close to sea level up to less than 2,000 ft (610 m). It is uncertain how high in elevation this plant is capable of invading. Plants seem to prefer mesic to moist habitat. A few plantings of single trees occur in Lahaina and naturalized trees were observed near Olowalu, possibly indicating that there are more

trees located in the gulches upslope. A planting in Flemming Arboretum is now the source of seedlings that are invading native mesic to wet forests to over 1,600 ft (488 m). According to Oppenheimer and Bartlett (2000), "Although *F. macrophylla* can be terrestrial, in most of the observations it seems to be epiphytic, at least when young. Eventually roots reach the ground, and the host tree will be smothered or broken by the sheer weight. *F. macrophylla* seems to favor *Acacia koa*, but small trees have also been noted on *Metrosideros polymorpha* var. *glabberima*, *Diospyros sandwicensis*, and *Schinus terebinthifolius*...Control methods are being considered before this taxon becomes more widespread, but it's epiphytic habit and preference for native trees as hosts makes herbicide options limited." Another area where plants are spreading from initial plantings is in the Ha'iku area. Several large trees are located in a landscape at an old estate. From there, seedlings and small trees are observed mostly growing as epiphytes in surrounding vegetation. A relatively isolated location of a naturalized plant was observed in Nahiku. This area is very moist, close to protected watershed forests, and the furthest east location on Maui to date. This may be a good site to assess for control.

CONTROL METHODS

Physical control: Small seedlings can be hand pulled.

Chemical control: "Fig trees are particularly sensitive to triclopyr herbicides as a basal or cut-stump treatment. Trees found growing on concrete or rock structures should be treated with herbicide while young to avoid costly structural damage. Use extreme caution when applying herbicide to figs growing as epiphytes to ensure that the poison does not contact the host tree. When exotic figs germinate high in the branches of large trees in natural forest communities, it may be extraordinarily difficult to get close enough to the fig to treat it." (Hammer 1996).

Biological control: Nadel et al. (1991) report several pests that could be looked at for biological control potential including various ants which were seen carrying off pollinator wasps from *Ficus* fruits, Hymenoptera and mites that may be parasites of the pollinator wasps, and staphylinids which were seen entering *Ficus* fruits and eating the pollinator wasps.

Cultural control: The public could be asked not to grow *F. macrophylla*.

Noxious weed acts: None.

MANAGEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

With the pollinator wasp present in Hawai'i, *F. macrophylla* currently is spreading and will likely continue to do so. The distribution on Maui is currently not as widespread as other non-native *Ficus* species, such as *F. microcarpa* and *F. platypoda*. Control work should be done in areas with limited distribution of *F. macrophylla* trees and in areas where *F. macrophylla* could cause most severe harm, such as in watersheds and protected areas. Control methods will need to be investigated to figure out how to deal with epiphytic growth on native trees in steep and wet terrain. The two trees on Midway should be eradicated if they have not yet done so. New locations of *F. macrophylla*

should be monitored so that control work can be done before the situation gets beyond management. *Ficus* wasps should be prohibited from entry to Hawai'i to prevent other *Ficus* trees from spreading beyond initial plantings and potentially causing harm to Hawai'i's native ecosystems.

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