

Home Interiors

Easy-care solid surface counters

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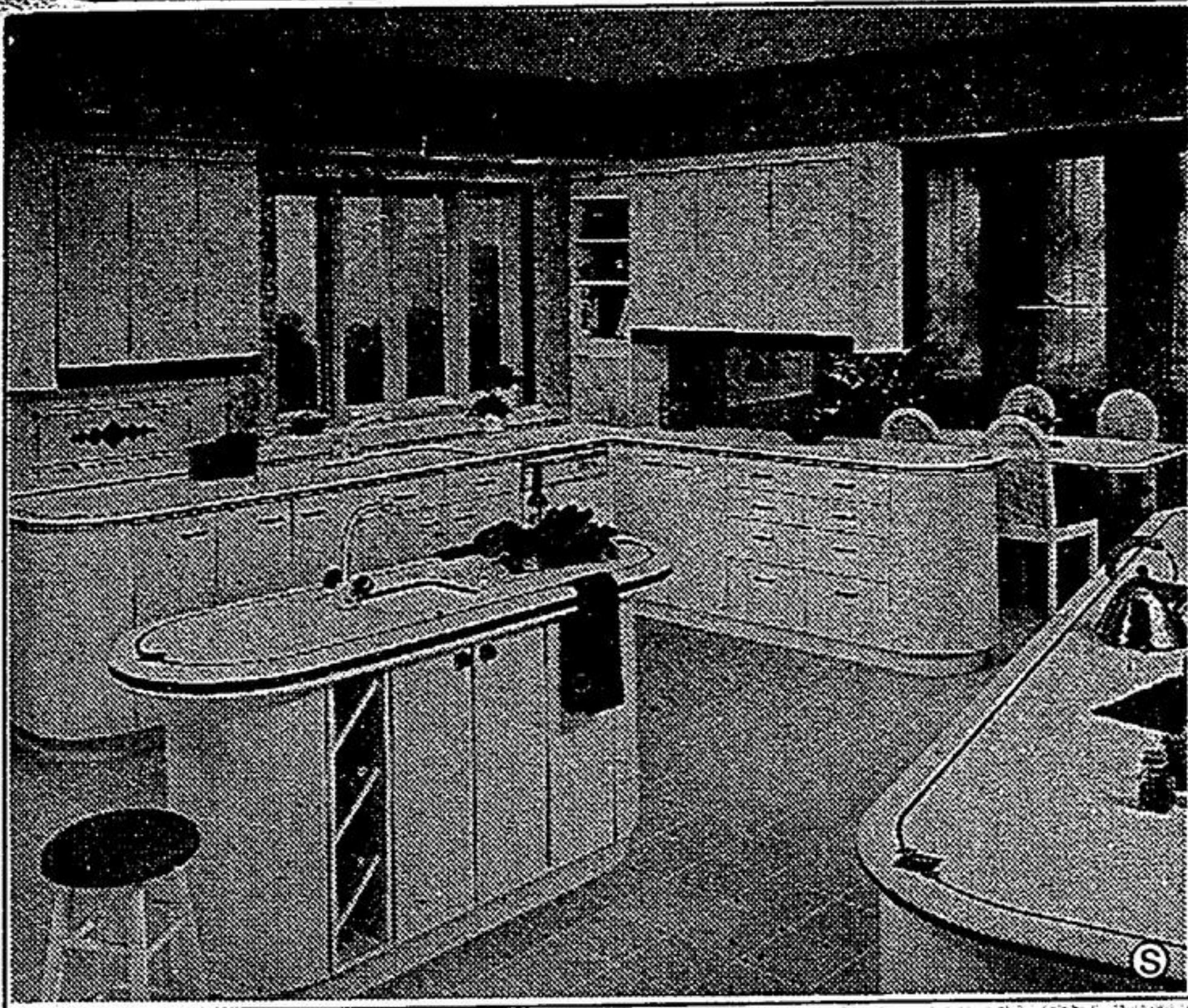
Even though minor cuts and scratches can be easily removed by the homeowner, deep cuts in solid surface materials will require a professional to make proper repairs. No countertop should be used as a cutting board. You can request that your fabricator include a cutting board to match the counter. It can be made from the area which is cut out for the sink or range.

Solid surface is a very easy-maintenance material, but any countertop needs thorough routine cleaning to keep it looking its best. The difference with solid surfacing is that your best tool beyond water with a household cleanser is an abrasive pad which keeps the top's overall finish consistent and clean. This procedure applies to a matte (satin) finish.

If you should select a higher polished (gloss) finish, you would use only water and cleanser. With a pol-

ished finish, you would not be able to make repairs yourself since the top has to be repaired and then repolished to restore the gloss. This is why the matte finish is recommended for heavy-use areas such as the kitchen countertop. Initially it may seem that many other materials are more afford-

able than solid surfacing. However, when you consider factors such as the life cycle cost and the fact that solid surfacing is repairable where most other materials are not, it begins to take on a different perspective. Solid surfacing adds to the value of your home, now and at resale.



Redoing the bath doesn't have to break the bank

It's the first room you enter every morning and the last one you leave at night. You should feel as comfortable in your bathroom as you do in your favorite sweater, and the best ideas do not have to involve expensive remodeling. Here are a few tips on perking up your bathroom without wiping out your budget.

Turning the tablecloths: Turn an old lace or crochet tablecloth into a shower curtain by hooking the holes in the weave right onto the shower curtain hooks. Hang a clear plastic liner on the inside to create a see-through effect to make the bathroom look open and airy.

Accessorizing: Accessories are instant room changers when chosen properly. Look for items that won't break when dropped. Look for colorful items and start a collection. By collecting a group of similar items, a disorganized hodge-podge of individual items just looks messy.

Bordering on beautiful: Buy a wall stenciling kit and paint a border along the ceiling or along the edge of the tile. Or purchase a few yards of border wallpaper. An inexpensive alternative is to purchase a roll of stripe patterned wallpaper and cut your own border.

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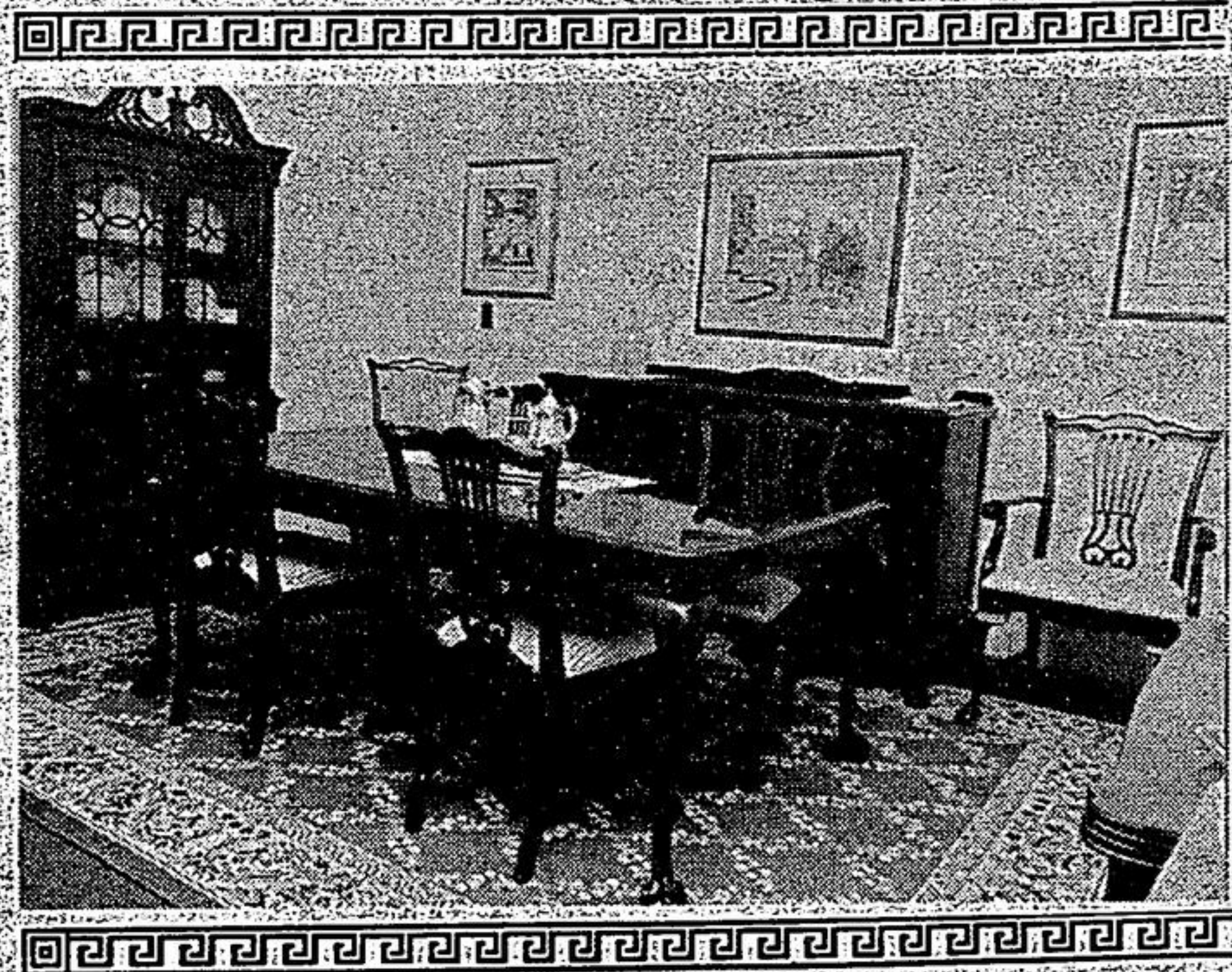
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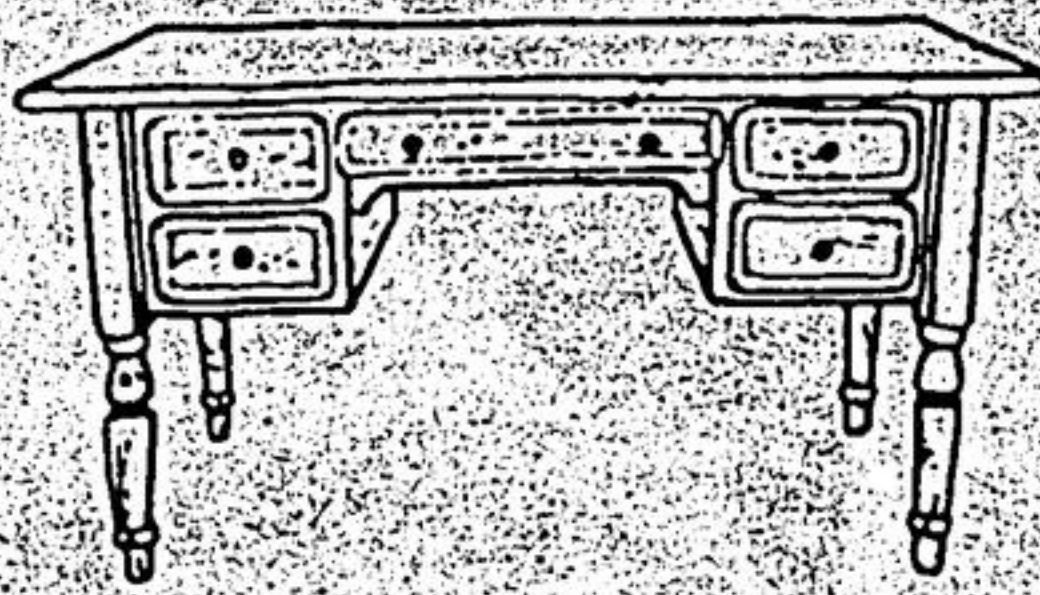
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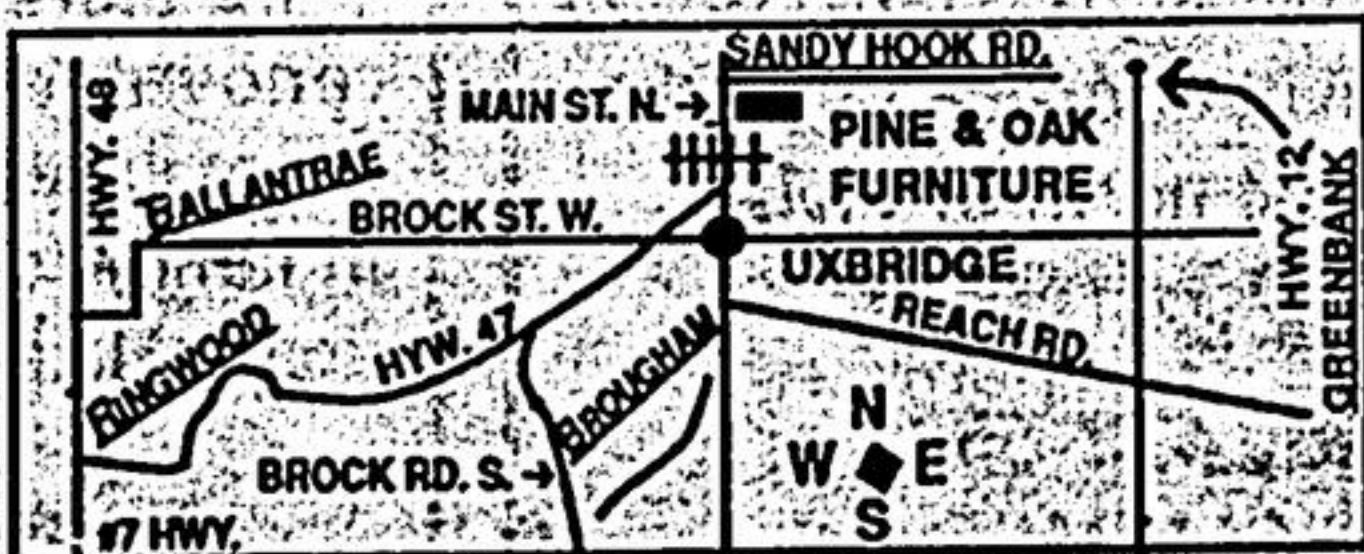
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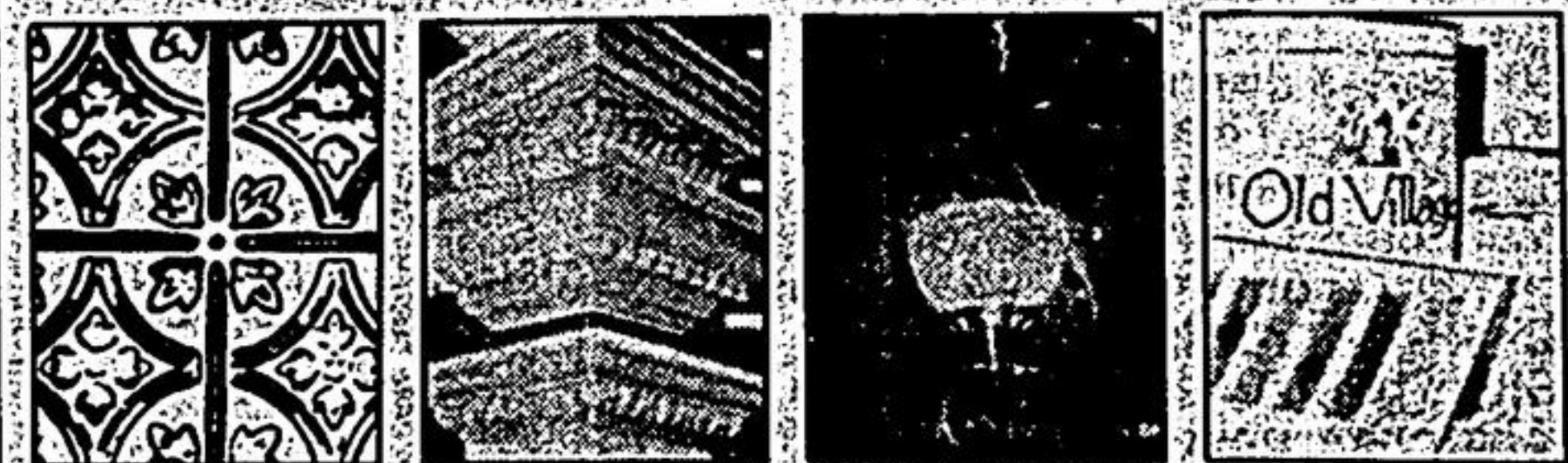
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