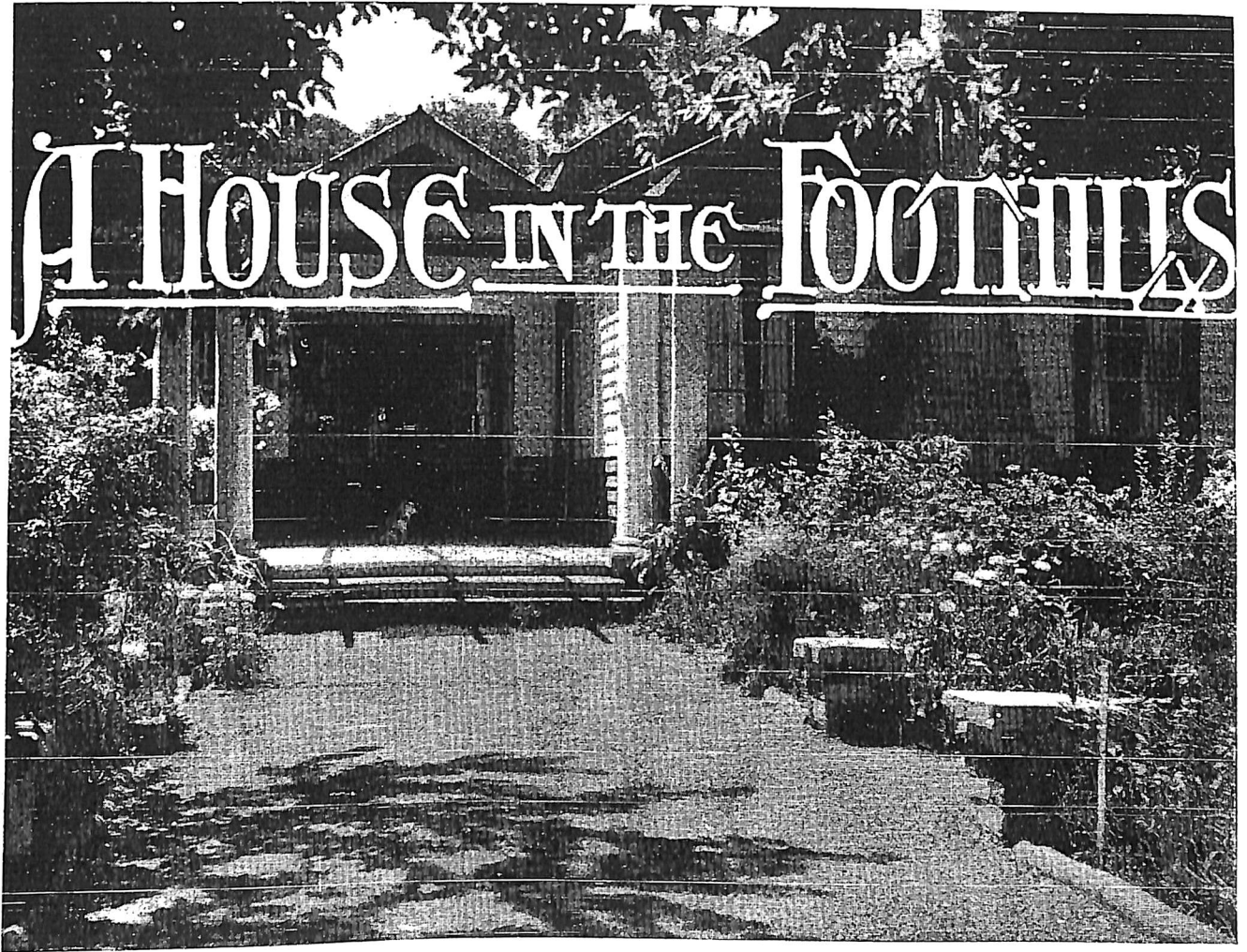


A HOUSE IN THE FOOTHILLS



Pictures by the Commercial Photographic Company.

The Delights of Making a Home.—By Henrietta C. Walker

A FOOLISH convention ordains that we should inveigh against house-hunting. In our heart of hearts there is no son of Adam or daughter of Eve who does not secretly enjoy looking for a habitation. When we are actually home-seeking, rather than house-hunting, a fresh zest is given the matter. It is just possible that car folk miss more than a little of the pre-war enthusiasm with which homes were looked for twenty years ago. You get through quite a lot of thinking and not a little argument while you are catching and harnessing a pony as a preliminary to testing the accuracy of the various agents' lists. Moreover, two people in a jinker can study conditions very satisfactorily. It was the result of many long, leisurely drives that brought us to a place in the foothills that gave us what we were looking for. The home of our desires was to stand high, but not too high. It was to be set in timber, but not smothered by it, and it must have a house of sorts.

What we saw on our quest provided a liberal education. There were big houses, with orchards up to their doors. There were little houses looking for trouble in big timber, and, whenever a happy chance led us to something nearly approaching what we were looking for in the way of position, garden, timber land, and house, it was so many miles from anywhere

that only a pair of hermits could have enjoyed its seclusion. There is truth in the saying that you can get anything you like if you want it badly enough, so Fate ultimately led us to our desired haven. A few acres of attractively timbered country, a few open paddocks, a very little orchard, a mere suggestion of a garden, and a very penny-plain house, built by a worthy contractor for himself to live in.

The fact that it took considerable time and trouble to convince the owner that he wanted to sell enhanced its desirability. No house could have been more innocent of charm. There was not—and to this day there is not—a front door. A very narrow, recessed verandah gave access to the front of the house, but the natural entry was via the kitchen. A collection of small rooms had each, almost without exception, the saving grace of excellent lighting. They were lofty enough to appear like a set of boxes. The advantage of this was instantly apparent when the subdividing walls were demolished and a few large rooms took the place of many small ones. The plan of the original house indicates the task that lay before us.

Time was when such a task would have involved so much in the way of expense that it would probably never have been undertaken. Small wonder that the modern home-maker is



The walls of the diningroom are panelled with walnut plywood. The ceiling is of ivory tinted plaster. The rich tones of Queensland maple furniture tone admirably with the old Indian carpet.

willing to pay tribute to plywoods and fibrous plaster. With these, many things become possible. Rooms can be made to expand and passages can be converted into living-rooms. Too lofty ceilings can be lowered, leaving an air space that vastly reduces the temperature of the room in summer time. A com-

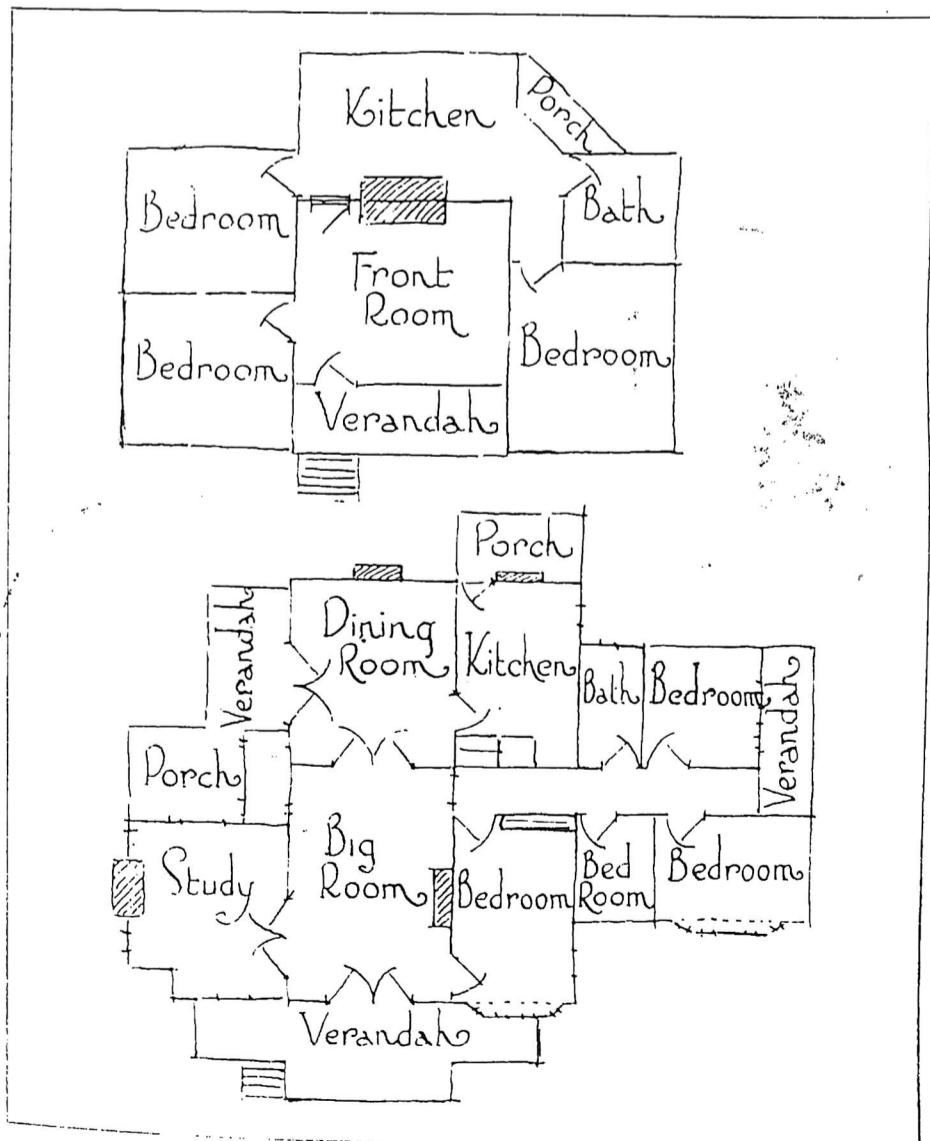
monplace room may be invested with dignity—and all with so little labor that the cost can be faced cheerfully by the average home builder.

The second plan shows how the original kitchen and “front room” merged into the living room, and how two insignificant bedrooms developed into a large and well-lighted study.

The arched ceiling in the living room is fitted in under the original ceiling. The double ceiling not only keeps the room cooler, but adds greatly to its appearance. This central room gives on to a wide verandah beyond which rise the Ranges. Two little rooms beyond it now constitute a big enough bedroom which also opens on to this verandah, and to this nucleus the rest of the rooms have been added.

Throughout the house single wooden doors have been replaced by double glass doors—a seemingly trifling thing which has done much both for comfort and appearance. This explains why one room merges into the other, giving a sense of size that is often far to seek in much more ambitious houses.

The evolution of a house is one thing, but the making of that house into a home is another. “We cannot buy with gold the old associations”—and the possession of a little quite modest furniture that had grown old in the company of two families was a big factor in creating a pleasantly-familiar atmosphere. The adding to this of a few of those “finds” that delight the soul of every home-maker was—and continues to be—an abiding source of pleasure. Both the dining room and the big room have an experienced old sea chest, and the living rooms all contain bureaus that bear witness to the charms of solid old cedar. Little new furniture has been added, but there have been several interesting transformations. Commonplace bookcases and writing desks, faithfully built, have been brought into line with older and better things. A compromise has been effected, and with it a restfulness that goes far to make the charm of Wombolano.

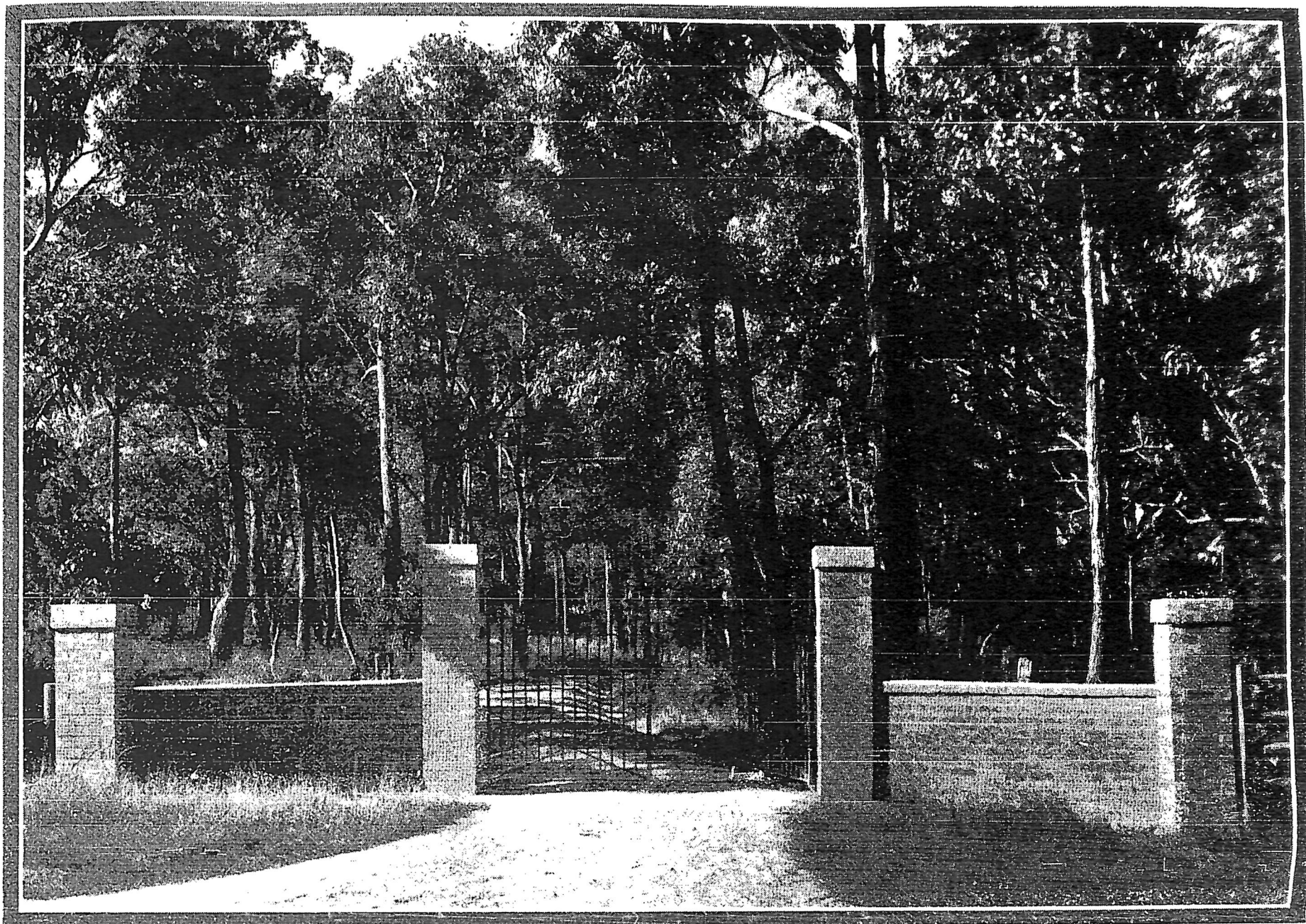




The big room is the centre of the house. Some excellent pictures show to advantage on the cream walls, while mellow old furniture, crystal, china, and bronze give it a character all its own.



Editor's Note: No description of Wombolano, to the development of which both Frank and Henrietta Walker have contributed would be complete without some pictures of their unusual garden, which like the house, has many interesting features. These pictures will appear in the next issue of the Home Beautiful.



Old bricks not being available, new ones were used for the walls flanking the entrance gates to Wombolano. A mellowed effect was given by washing them over with a solution of redgum and water.

BRICK-WORK IN THE GARDEN

Effects That May be Achieved and Benefits Gained by the Amateur Brick-worker

By HENRIETTA C. WALKER

THE value of bricks to the garden lover can hardly be over-estimated. From the aesthetic point of view they make ideal walls, their color toning in with almost every kind of foliage.

Their practical worth is considerable. Not only do they conserve moisture, but the warmth they retain is an important factor in promoting growth.

A satisfactory feature of brickwork is that age and experience are of advantage rather than otherwise to one's material. So long as bricks are sound they are all the better for being old. Their color is richer, and a little additional roughness adds to their appearance.

The quantity of bricks required to make a really useful wall is not very great. While a boundary wall may be anything up to eight feet high, the average sub-dividing garden wall need rarely exceed thirty inches in height. Thus allowing about 25 bricks to every running yard something like 1500 bricks would be required to make a 4½ inch wall some fifty feet long. This number of bricks would allow for squat pillars fourteen inches square and a coping nine inches wide.

The only addition to these bricks would be a liberal supply of sand and cement, and since neither of these is a costly item,

the question of labor is the only serious one that suggests itself.

It may be gratifying to many enthusiasts to learn that the amateur can lay bricks after comparatively little practice. Firm and level foundations are very necessary, and where the ground is naturally soft the use of concrete is essential.

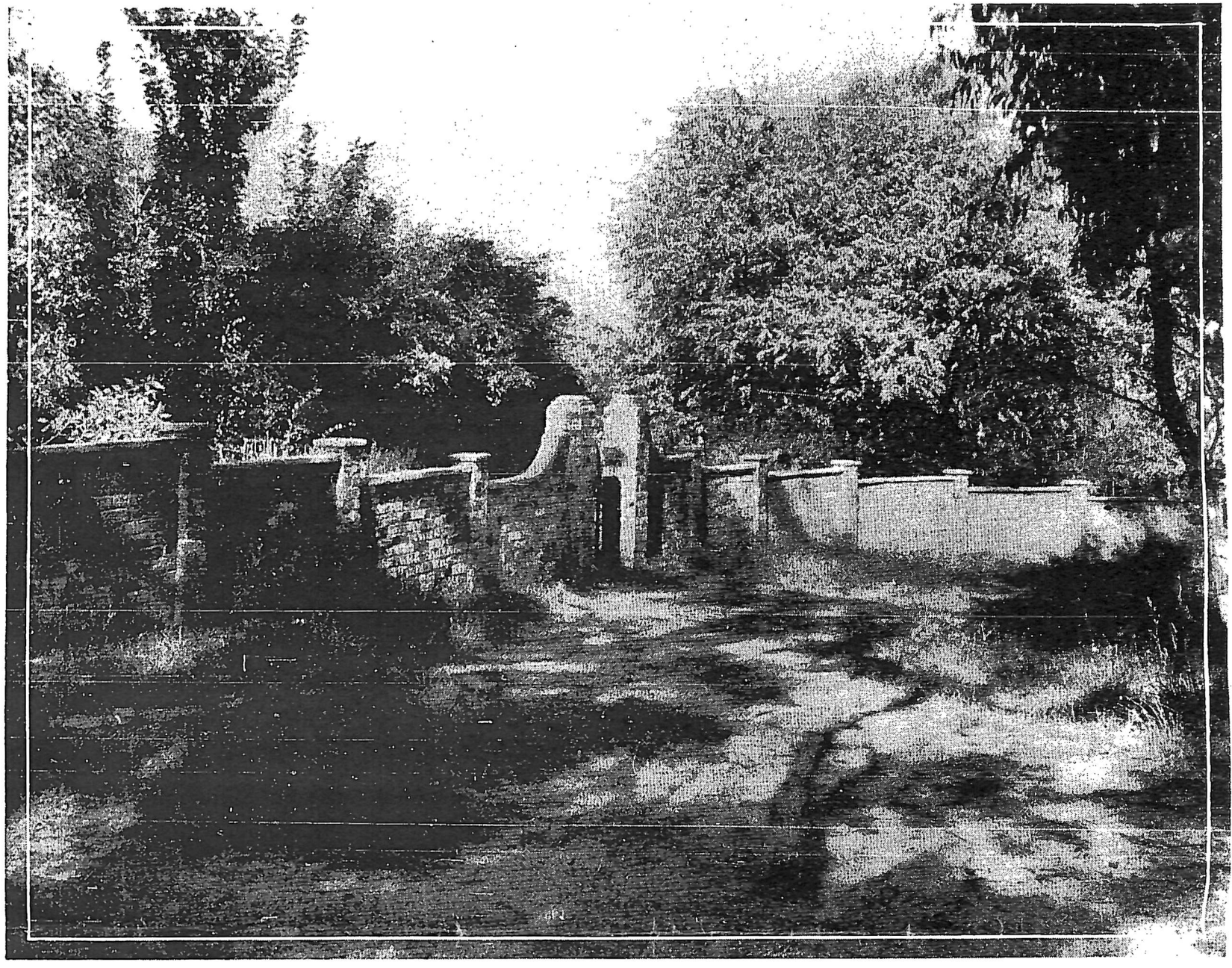
"Weepers" are important when building walls on sloping ground. These weepers are small interstices set at regular intervals in the lower portion of the walls. Their presence allows for necessary drainage and prevents the souring of the soil alongside the wall.

After the wall is set, the judicious placing of two or three large concrete jars will add considerably to its appearance.

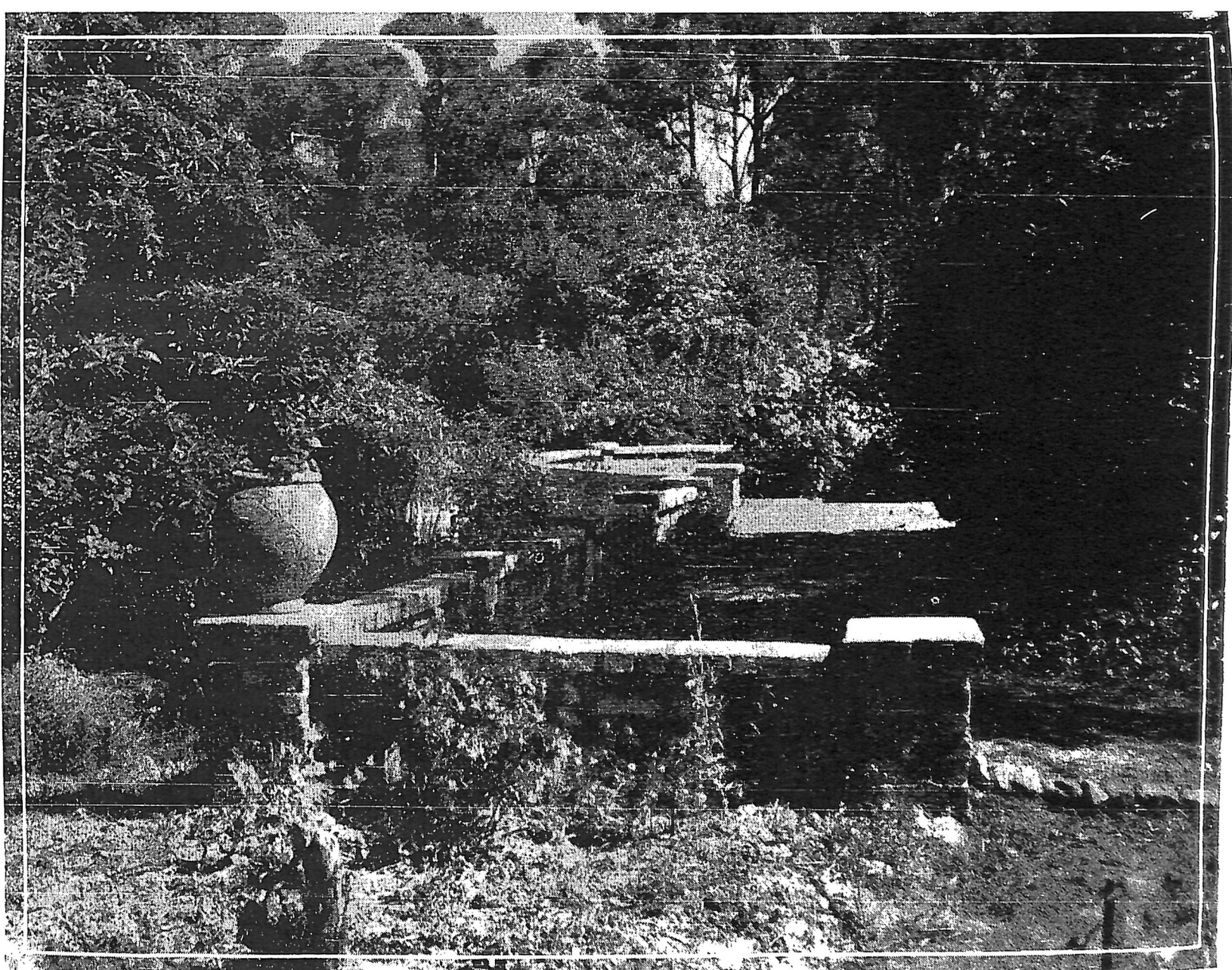
In a general way, however, shrubs and trees as a background and close growing plants and brilliant flowers about the wall itself are all that is necessary to make it a thing of lasting beauty.

A few hints to amateur brick-workers.

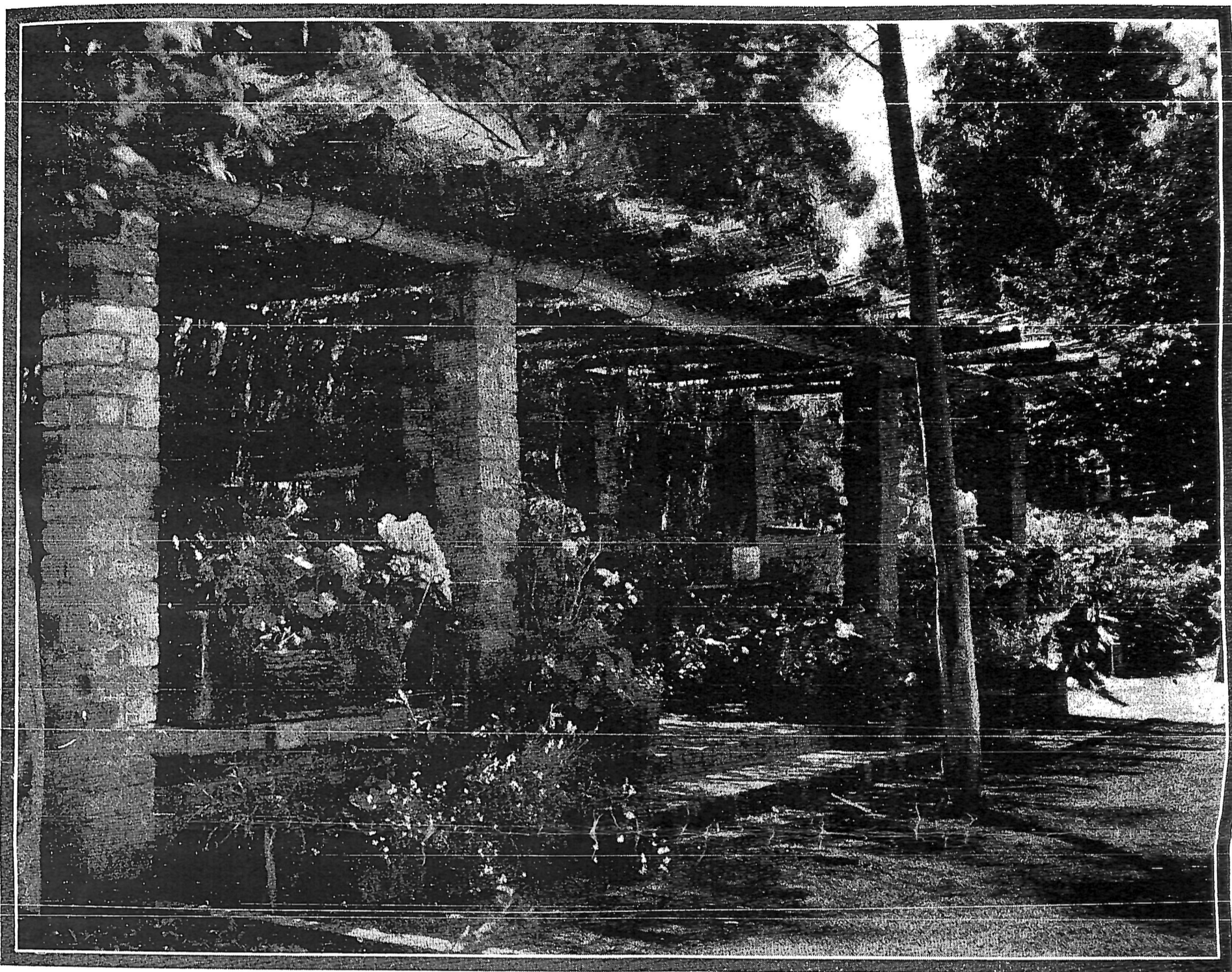
Secondhand bricks are tricky things to buy. Sometimes it pays to cart them and clean them, but a good deal depends upon their condition, the amount of cleaning required and



The mottled effect on this wall shows one of the advantages of using old bricks.



Heavy cement pots may be used with advantage on these low walls



Nothing better than old bricks and bush timber could be used for a bush house.

the cost of freight from the source to the job. In the case of Wombolano some thousands of bricks were available at 30/- a thousand delivered, and that may be taken as a fair average price. It is usually considered worth 10/- a thousand to clean them. It happened that the bulk of them were chimney bricks, so that a proportion were burned black whilst others were clinker blue and others again a rich red. This gave opportunity for some good color effects in the walling. In laying a wall the base for the first course must be sound. If the soil is sandy it will be necessary to go down to the clay or else put down a foundation of concrete. In any case this should be done for the pillars. A curved wall will not need so strong a base to rest upon as a straight one. Lime mortar is much cheaper and goes a long way, but cement mortar makes an everlasting job and is much to be preferred. Once the knack of using line, level and plumb bob is acquired there is no difficulty in keeping the work true, and there is a satisfaction all its own in doing brickwork.

Since the introduction of the walls the growth in the garden has increased remarkably.

