Form No. 10-300 (Rev. 10-74)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

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RECEIVED
DATE ENTERED

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

1 NAME

HISTORIC
Richardson Store

AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

__NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN
Montoya
__ VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT
#1

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
New Mexico	35	Quay	037

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE	
__DISTRICT	__PUBLIC	__OCCUPIED	__AGRICULTURE	__MUSEUM
X BUILDING(S)	X PRIVATE	__UNOCCUPIED	X COMMERCIAL	__PARK
__STRUCTURE	__BOTH	__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

NAME
Mr. and Mrs. Ralph E. Richardson

STREET & NUMBER
P. O. Box 37

CITY, TOWN
Montoya
__ VICINITY OF

STATE
New Mexico

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.
Quay County Clerk's Office

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN
Tucumcari

STATE
New Mexico

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE
State Register of Cultural Properties

DATE
September 23, 1977
__FEDERAL X STATE __COUNTY __LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS
Department of Educational Finance & Cultural Affairs
Historic Preservation Program

CITY, TOWN
P.O. Box 1629
Santa Fe

STATE
New Mexico 87503

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
X EXCELLENT	__DETERIORATED	__UNALTERED	X ORIGINAL SITE
__GOOD	__RUINS	X ALTERED	__MOVED DATE_____
__FAIR	__UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Situated on the eastern New Mexico plains at the site of the village of Montoya, the Richardson Store is housed in an L-shaped, hip-roofed stone structure erected in 1928. Overshadowed by two high plateaus, Mesa Rica o the north and Mesa de las Palomas to the south, the store stands between a branch line of the Southern Pacific Railroad and the original route of U.S Highway #66 which has been superceded by the recent construction of four lane Interstate 40 several hundred yards to the south. Although the red soil of the surrounding plain (or llano) is crisscrossed by arroyos carved by occasional cloudbursts, the area's only reliable water supply is provid by the ubiquitous windmills and storage tanks intermingled among mesquite, junipers and cholla cactus, the indigenous vegetation. Shaded by several tall elms, the store location forms a cool oasis, a refuge from the region intense summer heat, often used as a picnic spot by passing motorists. The present building replaced an earlier one north of the railroad tracks within the original townsite of Montoya which has recently been taken over by the sprawling buildings and corrals of the T4 Ranch headquarters.

At the south edge of the old highway in the middle of a wide gravel apron, a tall flagpole stands alongside a garish Gulf Oil sign in front of the store. At ground level a smaller wooden sign identifies the building a a U. S. Post Office. Protected by a heavy portico which extends forward to cover two gasoline pumps, the store's 30' facade is composed of two plate glass show windows on each side of the entrance. The left window contains a large collection of locally gathered artifacts - geological specimens, arrowheads, bits of barbed wire and a big display of rattle-snake rattles. Groceries and picnic supplies occupy the opposite window. Both sides are decorated with painted advertisements for candy, cigars and sundries under large posters promoting the consumption of beef. At the building's northeast corner is a small addition, a pump house topped by a shed roof.

The portico is painted white, as is the building's west wall over which the legend "Richardson's General Store" has been stenciled in large block letters. All the walls are made of native red sandstone previously used in older structures across the tracks which were erected when Montoya was founded in the first years of this century. An integral part of the store the Richardson family residence extends across the whole south end of the structure, occupying a small area behind the store and extending into the entire short leg of the L. To provide more living space, a small addition has recently been put on the east end of the residential portion. East of the building and protected from the area's prevailing west winds, the Richardsons have landscaped a large area with native plants and shrubs. Formerly watered by a windmill-powered pump, this garden is often frequented by flocks of song birds. Behind the store a series of pens shelters a flock of chickens and several large guard dogs.

Recessed between the two display windows a wood framed glass door provides access to the store's interior, a large 75'x30' room. On a hot summer day the store is dim and cool because the front windows are shaded by the portico and other fenestration is limited to several small 18"x30" windows placed high in the side walls for security reasons. Lined on each

(See Continuation Sheet Page 1)

8 SIGNIFICANCE

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	X AGRICULTURE	__ECONOMICS	__LITERATURE	__SCULPTURE
__1600-1699	__ARCHITECTURE	__EDUCATION	__MILITARY	__SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
__1700-1799	__ART	__ENGINEERING	__MUSIC	__THEATER
__1800-1899	X COMMERCE	__EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	__PHILOSOPHY	X TRANSPORTATION
X 1900-	__COMMUNICATIONS	__INDUSTRY	__POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	__OTHER (SPECIFY)
		__INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES ERECTED 1928 BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Located in the heart of eastern New Mexico's ranch country, the Richardson Store is an excellent example of an early 20th century southwestern general store. Operated by one family since its founding in 1908, the store is the only commercial enterprise remaining at the site of the once prosperous village of Montoya. Its survival has been ensured by the willingness of the Richardson family to adapt to changing conditions in the area's economy. Opened during a short-lived homestead boom promoted by the arrival of a Chicago, Rock Island and Pacific Railroad branch, the store was originally a village trading center. As the town withered away because of dry years and low farm prices, the business has survived by successively accommodating ranchers, highway construction workers, and tourists who have formed the store's clientele at various times.

The village of Montoya was named for the huge Pablo Montoya land grant, a tract of over 600,000 acres, whose original southwest boundary is five miles north of the village site. A former Spanish soldier and Indian trader Montoya received the grant in 1824 from Governor Bartolomé Baca during Mexican administration of New Mexico. In 1901 the Rock Island railroad, seeking a route to California and, possibly the interior of Mexico, extended its tracks westward from Liberal, Kansas to Santa Rosa, New Mexico. There it joined the El Paso and Northeastern thus providing a link with the west coast via the Southern Pacific. Small communities began to grow along the new right of way often where section crews were established to maintain the roadbed. One of these points, twenty miles west of Tucumcari and 40 miles east of Santa Rosa, became Montoya. First called Rountree, it was renamed in 1902 and soon became the trading center for the influx of farmers who took up homesteads on the surrounding plains. Six years later, a new enterprise was added to the little town's growing business community when G. W. Richardson, an experienced storekeeper from southwestern Missouri, opened the store which he and his son Ralph have continued ever since.

Within a decade after the Richardson's arrival it was increasingly evident that the region around Montoya was unsuited for farming. The early 1920s brought unfavorable weather and low prices which led to a population exodus as former homesteads were consolidated by livestockmen who were able to hang on. While the community dwindled, however, a new opportunity presented itself to the Richardsons which provided a means for survival by supplementing the trade of the remaining ranchers. As early as 1918, the State of New Mexico began to make improvements to the wagon road connecting Tucumcari and Santa Rosa which was later incorporated in the U.S. highway network. As federal funds became increasingly available for construction of

(See Continuation Sheet Page 1)

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Tucumcari Weekly Review. May 14, 1964.
Cabeza de Baca, Fabiola. We Fed Them Cactus. Albuquerque, 1954.
Ellis, George F. The Bell Ranch as I Knew It. Kansas City, 1973.
Myrick, David F. New Mexico's Railroads....An Historical Survey. Cincinnati, 1970.

(See Continuation Sheet Page 2)

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY Approximately 1 acre.

UTM REFERENCES

	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
A	13	585260	3883820
B			
C			
D			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Beginning at a point on the south side of old U.S. Highway #66 which i also the northwest corner of the property and proceeding in a southerly direction along a certain fence line for a distance of approximately 200'; thence in an easterly direction for a distance of approximately 200'; thence in a northerly direction for a distance of approximately 200' to a point on the south side of old U.S. Highway #66; thence to the point of beginning.

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
John O. Baxter, Archivist

ORGANIZATION
State Records Center and Archives

DATE
June 5, 1978

STREET & NUMBER
404 Montezuma

TELEPHONE
827-2321

CITY OR TOWN
Santa Fe

STATE
New Mexico 87503

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL ___ STATE X LOCAL ___

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 Thomas (e) Merlan

TITLE State Historic Preservation Officer DATE 6-7-78

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 888-445

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#8

tourist alike in an atmosphere reminiscent of another era. The village of Montoya has almost disappeared, Route #66 has been absorbed by the interstate system, the Rock Island branch is now part of the Southern Pacific but the store continues, a significant example of merchandising in an earlier time.

#9

New Mexico State Business Directory. Denver, 1905, 1915, 1923.
Pearce, T. M. New Mexico Place Names, A Geographical Dictionary. Albuquerque, 1965.

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side with shelving, the plaster walls are topped by a pressed metal ceilin characteristic of 19th century construction. Show cases made of glass and dark wood run the length of the room which is floored with common fir stained dark brown. Several of the cases were formerly used in the origin store north of the railroad tracks. Standing between the cases is a large refrigerator, also made of wood and glass, which is used to store dairy products, meat and soft drinks. Dominating the room and standing at its center is a large coal burning stove which heats the structure on winter days.

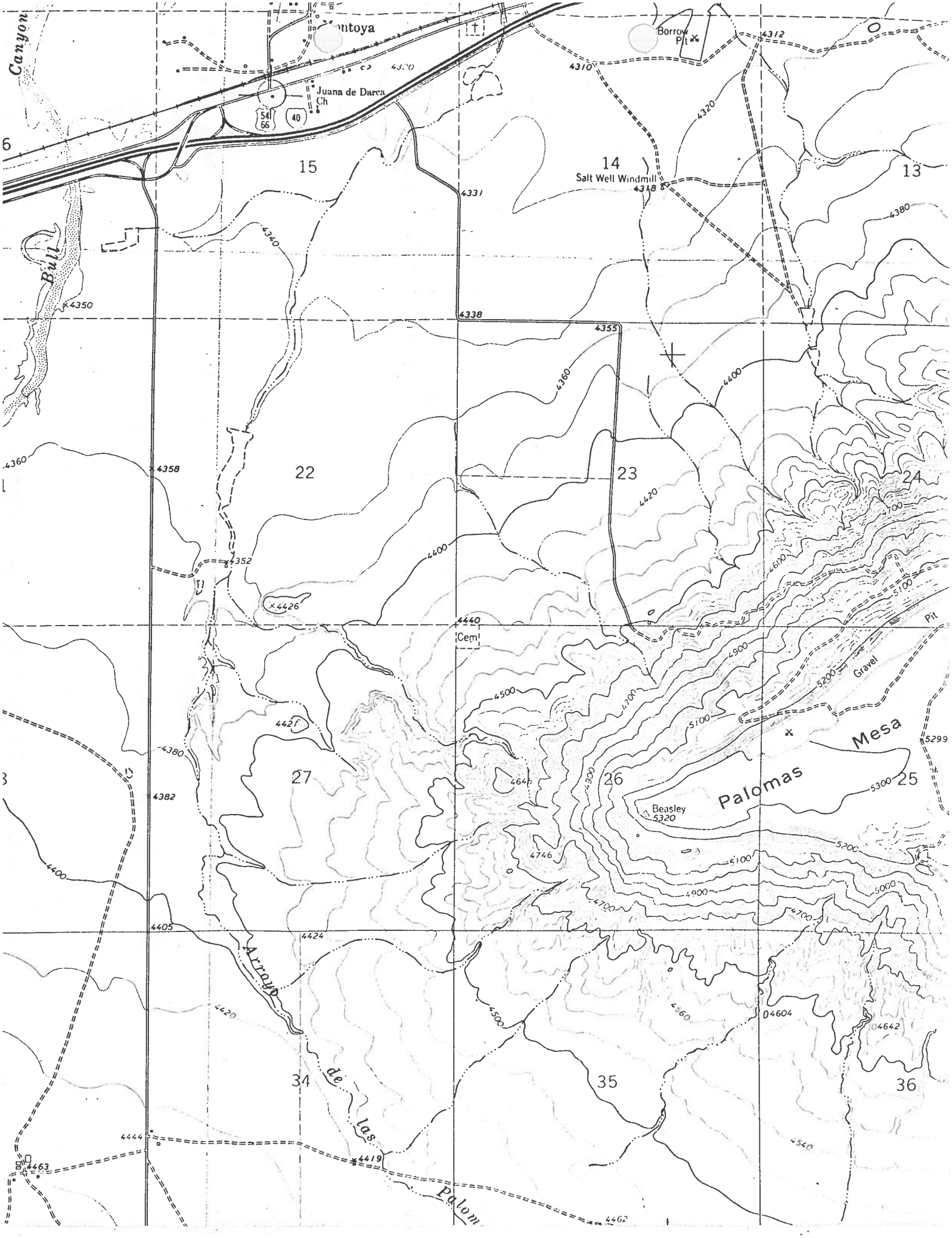
Displayed throughout the store in seemingly endless variety is the larg stock of goods necessary to accommodate its clientele. In addition to groceries, picnic items and auto supplies such as fan belts and motor oil which are used by both tourists and local residents, there is a large supply of merchandise for nearby ranchers. Saddle blankets, lariats, work gloves and western shirts are intermingled with galvanized wash tubs and feed buckets. Various kinds of pipe fittings and other repairs for the area's many windmills are also available as are greeting cards, insect spray and fencing tools. At the south end of the west counter is the post office, which consists of a grill covered window next to a bank of postal boxes opened by simple combination locks. The room is decorated with turn of the century appliances - coffee grinders, phonographs, sewing machines and oil lamps which are available in case of a power failure. Because of its solid construction and careful maintenance the Richardson Store is in excellent condition, ready to serve ranchers, tourists and other customers for years to come.

#8

this kind, the road became part of Route #66, a well-known thoroughfare fo tourists traveling between Chicago and Los Angeles. To take advantage of the increasing tourist trade, the Richardsons moved their store to its present location in a new building across the Rock Island tracks on the south side of the new highway.

With the passage of the Federal-Aid Highway Act of 1956 which had an avowed goal of expediting construction of a nationwide system of super highways, Route #66 became a part of Interstate 40. In the Montoya area, the road was reconstructed several hundred yards south of the original route and the Richardson Store was bypassed. Fortunately an interchange was provided which permits travelers to seek refreshment at the old mercantile establishment and relax in the adjoining picnic grove before continuing onward. The contrast between the heavy high speed traffic on the interstate and the quiet of the old store is remarkable. Today, Mr. Richardson continues to purvey his wide variety of goods for rancher and

(See Continuation Sheet Page 2)



Canyon
Montoya
Juana de Darca Ch
54 66
40
Borrow Pit
4312
4310
4320
15
14
13
Salt Well Windmill
4318
4331
4340
4380
Bull
4350
4338
4355
4360
4400
4358
22
23
24
4420
4352
4426
4440
Cem
4700
4600
5100
Pit
4900
5200
Gravel
4500
4421
4380
27
26
25
Palomas Mesa
5299
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Beasley
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4382
4746
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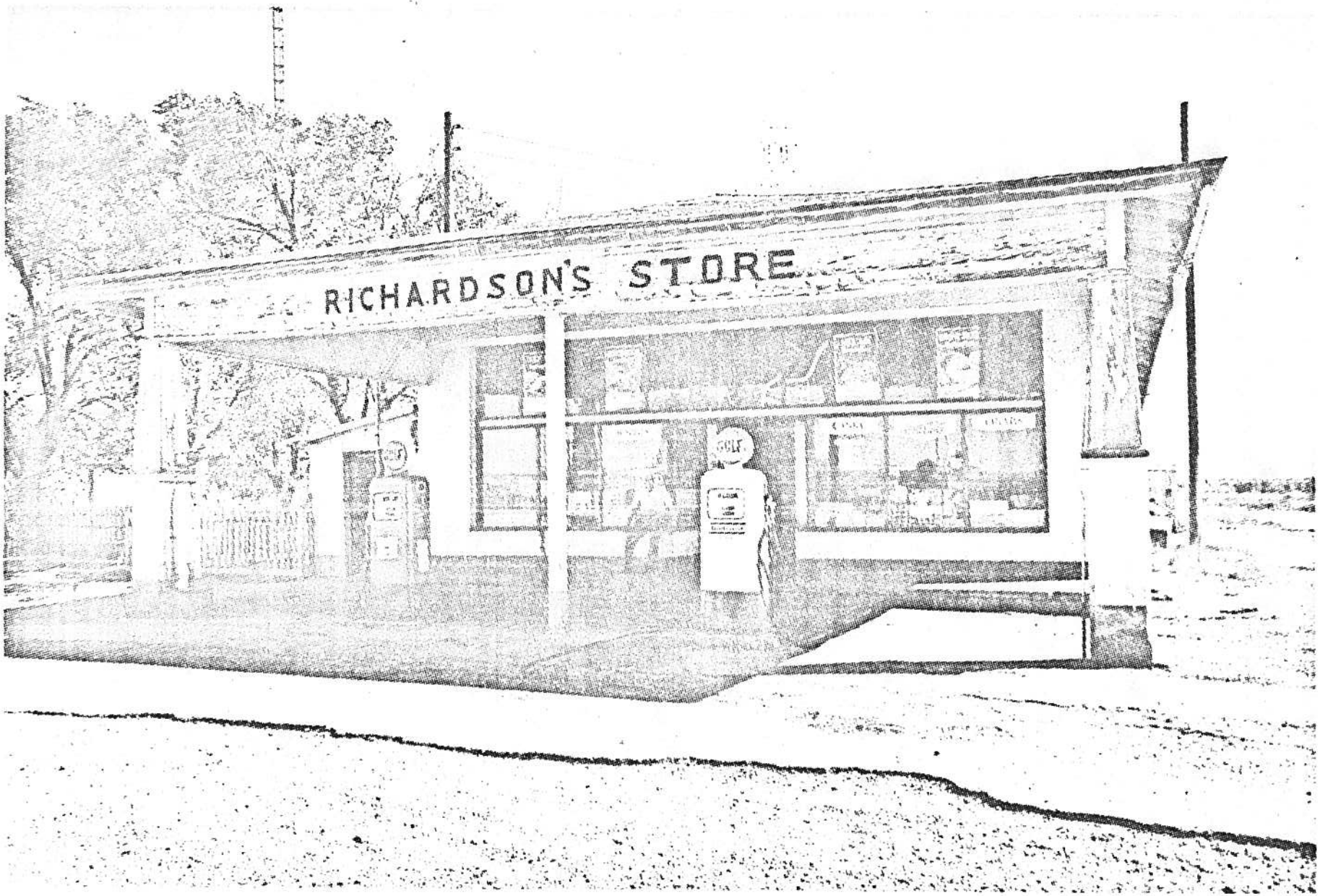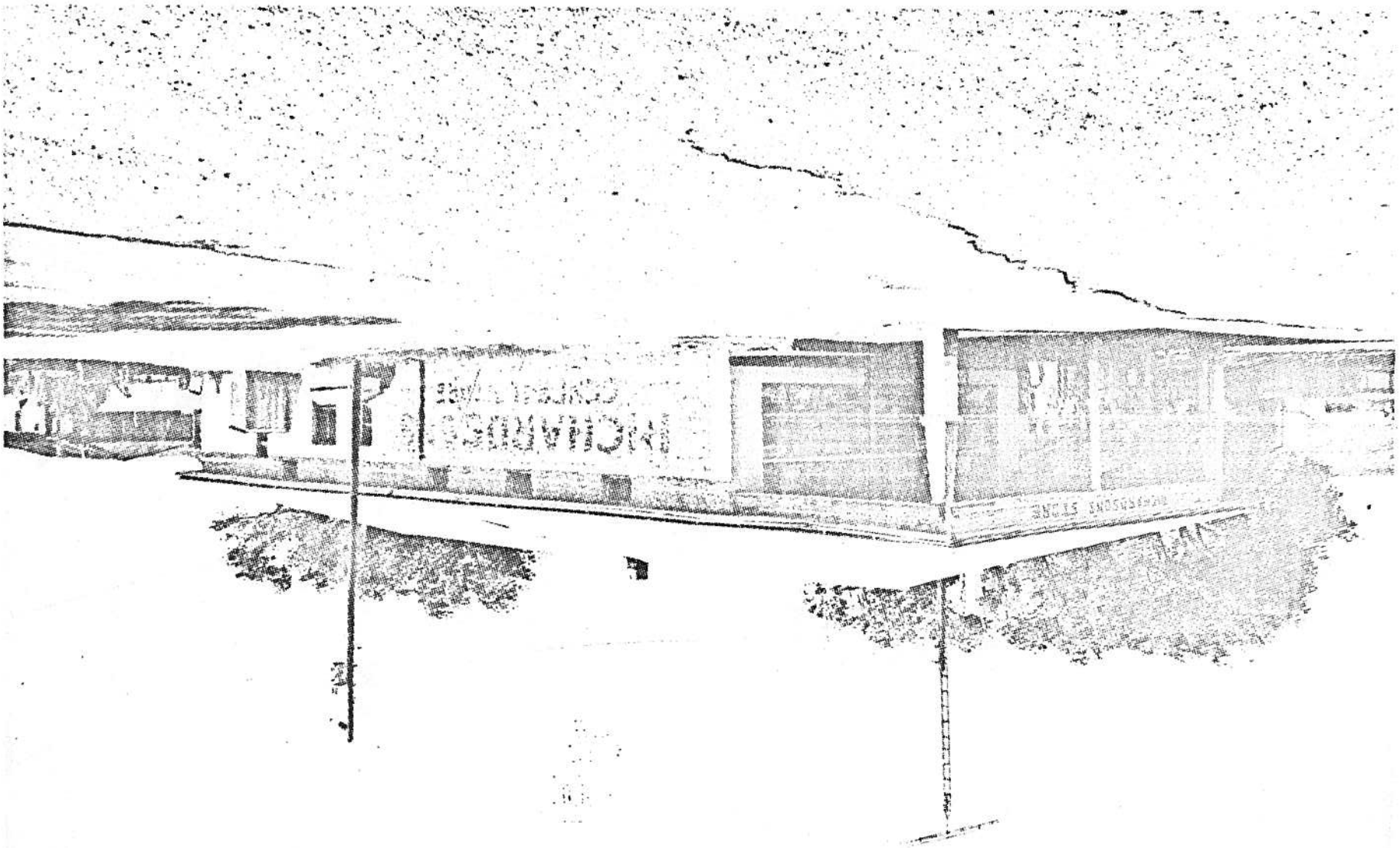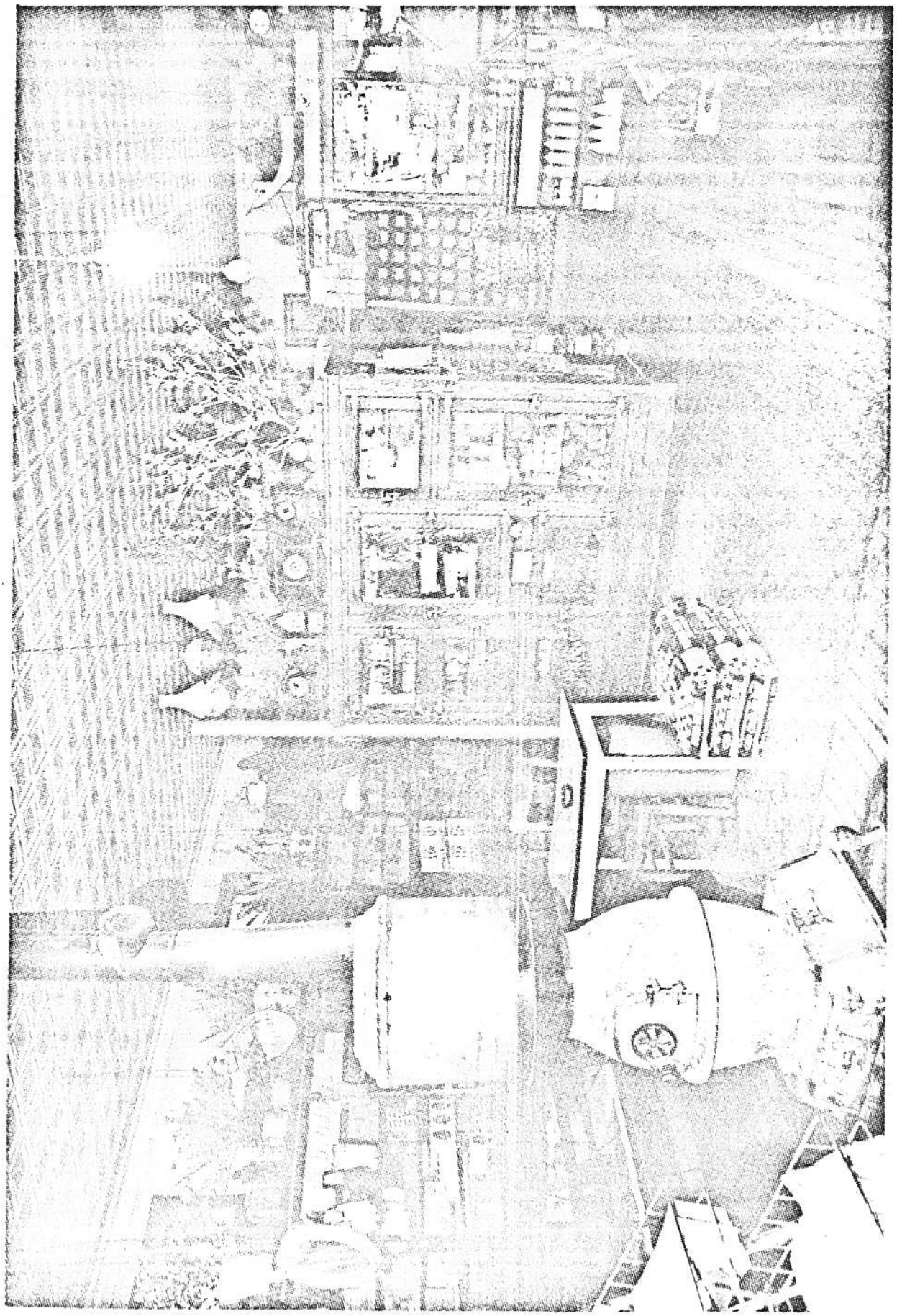
RICHARDSON'S STORE