

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NR LISTED

SEP 03 1989

AHPP

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM

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1. Name of Property

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Historic Name: Old South Restaurant

Other Name/Site Number: PP0371

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2. Location

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Street & Number: 1330 E. Main Street (AR Hwy. #64)

Not for Publication: NA

City/Town: Russellville

Vicinity: X

State: AR County: Pope Code: AR115 Zip Code: 72811

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3. Classification

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Ownership of Property: Private

Category of Property: Building

Number of Resources within Property:

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>1</u>	_____	buildings
_____	_____	sites
_____	_____	structures
<u>1</u>	_____	objects
<u>2</u>	<u>0</u>	Total

Old South Restaurant
Name of Property

Pope County, Arkansas
County and State

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: NA

Name of related multiple property listing: Arkansas Highway History and Architecture, 1910-1965

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4. State/Federal Agency Certification

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As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this X nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property X meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. See continuation sheet.

Cathryn A. Slater

5-13-99

Signature of certifying official

Date

Arkansas Historic Preservation Program
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

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5. National Park Service Certification

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I, hereby certify that this property is:

 entered in the National Register
 See continuation sheet.
 determined eligible for the

Old South Restaurant
Name of Property

Pope County, Arkansas
County and State

National Register

___ See continuation sheet.

___ determined not eligible for the

National Register

___ removed from the National Register

___ other (explain):

Signature of Keeper

Date
of Action

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6. Function or Use

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Historic: Commerce/Trade Sub: Restaurant

Current : Commerce/Trade Sub: Restaurant

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7. Description

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Architectural Classification:

Streamlined Art Moderne

Materials: foundation Concrete Slab roof Asphalt Rolled Roofing
walls Porcelain Faced Aluminum Panels other

Describe present and historic physical appearance:

Summary

Located at 1330 E. Main Street (AR Hwy. #64) in Russellville, the Old South Restaurant was constructed in 1947 by William E. Stell, owner of the National Glass and Manufacturing Company of Fort Smith, for Russellville businessman Woody Mays. The streamlined Art Moderne design was integral to the modular diner package developed by Stell in the mid-1940s. The Old South Restaurant is square in plan, one story in height, and clad in porcelain coated aluminum panels. A band of neon highlights three sides of the building. Linear bands of fixed windows fenestrate the building and a protruding airlock houses the front entrance. The interior contains virtually all of its original fixtures including its stainless steel

counter and stools, glass and mahogany cabinets, padded booths, and ladies lounge area.

A large neon spectacular sign stands adjacent to the Old South Restaurant and is being included in this nomination.

Elaboration

Located at 1330 E. Main Street (AR Hwy. #64) in Russellville, the Old South Restaurant is a one-story, post-World War II modular diner designed in the streamlined Art Moderne style. Original porcelain clad aluminum panels cover the exterior and bands of fixed windows light the interior. A band of original neon girds the diner.

The Old South Restaurant presents its most elaborate face on its front, or northern façade, which is organized into an eleven bay arrangement. This consists of a protruding double door entry airlock off-set from the center of the façade, flanked on the east by a linear series of six fixed single-pane-plate glass windows and on the west by a series of four fixed plate-glass windows. Both the eastern and western end windows have radiused ends, which reinforce the gentle curves of the corners of the diner. The windows are cradled in their original aluminum frames. The entry air lock has double aluminum frame doors with single lights on the north, and single pane fixed windows on both the east and west facades. The airlock is clad in vertical ribbed aluminum panels and has gently radiused edges. A flat roof covers the airlock, protruding past the walls to create an overhanging flat ledge. This ledge intersects on both sides with a projecting ledge that spans the front of the diner and the east and west sides. Original pink neon tubing faces this ledge. A stepped, aerodynamic fin exhibiting the name of the diner in neon lights on both the east and west sides tops the airlock. On either side of the airlock just above the ledge are neon signs advertising foods that the diner is known for: k.c. sizzling steaks and fried chicken.

The east façade of the Old South Restaurant is very nondescript, containing only two fixed plate glass windows at the northern edge. **Three small,** rectangular kitchen vents punctuate this side also. The only decorative feature is the neon-faced protruding ledge.

The southern, or rear façade is very plain containing an original single panel exit door. A small addition clad in vertical wood siding is tacked on to the eastern end of the southern façade adding additional storage for the kitchen. A single panel door gives entry to this addition.

The west façade of the Old South Restaurant is divided into a seven-bay arrangement. Two fixed plate-glass windows light the northern end of this side, the northernmost window having a radiused end. Two fixed windows on

either side, the southernmost window having a radiused end, flank a single-panel exit door centered in the remaining expanse of the western façade. A smaller version of the stepped fin over the front airlock tops this side exit creating a shallow stoop. The neon-faced ledge spans this facade.

The Old South Restaurant was designed as a modular system to be built in a turnkey fashion. The building was constructed in six days on a concrete slab. Porcelain-faced aluminum panels cover the exterior, and although they have suffered deterioration over time, they are painted a color that mimics the original porcelain.

The interior of the Old South Restaurant is virtually intact. In the front diner area the original mahogany plywood paneling covers the walls. Original terrazzo flooring is throughout the restaurant. The stainless steel dining counter and stools, the padded booths, the mahogany and glass display fixtures, and the ladies lounge area is all original to 1947. The kitchen, with its stainless-steel fixtures has only been updated with new appliances. The two dining rooms feature the original terrazzo flooring, booths, mahogany and mirror coat racks, mahogany veneered accordion doors and cove lighting. The only alterations are the addition of wallpaper over the paneling in the dining rooms and the lowering of the ceiling. Other than those minor changes, the interior is virtually intact.

The only site feature is a historic large neon spectacular sign adjacent to the building advertising the restaurant.

When the Old South Restaurant was built in 1947 the area where it is located was pasture and farm land on the outskirts of Russellville. Over time the area developed and today the Old South exists amid strip commercial development, an oasis of good food and nostalgia, the only example of post World War II modular, Art Moderne architecture in Russellville.

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B. Statement of Significance

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Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties: statewide

Applicable National Register Criteria: C

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions): NA

Areas of Significance: Architecture

Period(s) of Significance: 1947

Old South Restaurant

Pope County, Arkansas

Name of Property

County and State

Significant Dates: 1947

Significant Person(s): NA

Cultural Affiliation: NA

Architect/Builder: Builder: William E. Stell
Architect: Glenn Pendergrass
Construction Supervisor: T. A. Martin

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above:

Summary

The Old South Restaurant is associated with the historic context Arkansas Highway History and Architecture, 1910-1965 and thus is being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion C with statewide significance as the only surviving example of a post-World War II modular, Art Moderne diner built in 1947. When it was constructed, the Old South Restaurant was located on an undeveloped stretch of Arkansas Highway #64, at that time the main travel route from Tennessee to Oklahoma. The diner quickly became an oasis for hungry and weary travelers, providing good food and a place to relax twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week.

Elaboration

The Old South Restaurant, located at 1330 E. Main Street (AR Hwy. #64) in Russellville, is being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion C with statewide significance as the only surviving example of a post World War II modular, Art Moderne diner. Constructed in 1947, the Old South Restaurant was the business brainchild of William E. Stell, owner of the National Glass and Manufacturing Company of Fort Smith, Arkansas. Born in Hugo, Oklahoma in 1894, William Stell moved to Dallas, Texas in 1914. In 1929 at the start of the Great Depression he moved to Fort Smith, Arkansas and started the National Glass and Manufacturing Company, which produced fixtures, furniture, and metalwork for restaurants and department stores. Always a forward thinking entrepreneur, Stell began developing a modular diner system in the 1940s. Utilizing the resources of the National Glass and Manufacturing Company, the talents of the company architect, Glenn Pendergrass, and the company's experience in restaurant design and construction for El Chico restaurants in Dallas, Texas, Stell developed a modular design for diners that could be produced by the National Glass and Manufacturing Company and offered for sale in a turnkey operation.

Old South Restaurant

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Mr. Stell constructed the prototype Old South Restaurant in Fort Smith in the mid-1940s as an experiment. To manage the diner and develop the menu, he brought in R. C. Strub from Schwab's in New York City. This restaurant remained a popular dining spot until it was demolished in the late 1970s.

Although it isn't known how many Old South Restaurant packages were sold, only one other was ever constructed in Arkansas. In 1947 Mr. Woody Mays, owner of Woody's Classic Inn and Coffee Shop in Russellville, ordered an Old south Restaurant package. In true turnkey fashion Mr. Stell had the diner set up and operational - including the menu - in six days. The Russellville Old South Restaurant opened its doors on April 4, 1947, and has been in continual operation since that time.

When it was constructed, the Old South Restaurant was located on the outskirts of Russellville on an undeveloped stretch of Arkansas Highway #64, at that time the main travel route from Tennessee to Oklahoma. By virtue of its location and the fact that it was open twenty four hours a day, seven days a week, the Old South quickly became a popular dining spot for travelers including such famous entertainers as Ernest Tubb, B. B. King, and the King himself, Elvis Presley. Even after the construction of Interstate 40 in the 1960s which by-passed the Old south Restaurant, it remained a popular spot for travelers and locals.

Woody Mays owned the Old South Restaurant form 1947 until 1950, selling to Roy and Beatrice Cornelius. Mr. and Mrs. Cornelius operated the diner until 1955 when their daughter, Mary Gay, took over. Mrs. Gay sold the Old South to Angus and Juliette Gosnell in 1957 whom in turn sold in 1961 to Lemoyne and Lorene Mackey. The Old South Restaurant has remained in the Mackey family since that time with nephews Rick and Ted Mackey being the current owners.

Today, the Old South Restaurant looks virtually the same on the exterior and interior as it did when constructed in 1947. Its streamlined design, rounded windows, metal skin, neon lights, aluminum fixtures, and padded booths typify its Art Moderne design. Even the menu offers many of the same items that were originally served, including the famous cream soups and salad dressing developed by R. C. Strub for the prototype Old South in Fort Smith. It is still open twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week serving the needs of travelers and locals. The Old South Restaurant is associated with the historic context Arkansas Highway History and Architecture, 1910-1965 and thus is being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion C with statewide significance as the only surviving example of a post World War II modular, Art Moderne diner.

Old South Restaurant

Pope County, Arkansas

Name of Property

County and State

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9. Major Bibliographical References

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Anderson, Will. Where Have You Gone, Starlight Café? Portland, ME:
Anderson & Son's Publishing Co., 1998.

McAlester, Virginia and Lee. A Field Guide to American Houses. New York:
Alfred A. Knopf, 1984.

Witzel, Michael Karl. The American Drive-In. Osceola, WI: Motorbooks
International Publishers & Wholesalers, 1994.

The Old South shall rise again. The Courier, undated article in the
Lifestyle section.

Old South to mark its 50th year. 1997. The Courier, 29 March, pp. 1A, 3A.

Old South makeover strives for nostalgia. 1995. The Courier, 30 April.

Long-time Stoby's manager buys Old South Restaurant. The Atkins Chronicle,
undated article.

Interview with Mr. William B. Stell, March 1999.

Interview with Mr. Hartsell Bartlett, March 1999.

Interview with Mr. Rick Mackey, March 1999.

Interview with Mr. Richard Bailey, March 1999.

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- _ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
- _ previously listed in the National Register
- _ previously determined eligible by the National Register
- _ designated a National Historic Landmark
- _ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey #
- _ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record #

Old South Restaurant
Name of Property

Pope County, Arkansas
County and State

Primary Location of Additional Data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other state agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other -- Specify Repository:

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10. Geographical Data

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Acreage of Property: less than one acre

UTM References: Zone Easting Northing Zone Easting Northing

A	<u>15</u>	<u>489360</u>	<u>3903680</u>	B	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
C	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	D	<u> </u>	<u> </u>

Verbal Boundary Description:

Part of the northwest quarter of section 10, township 7 North, range 20 West. 1408 East Main, Russellville, AR.

Boundary Justification: This boundary contains all the property historically associated with the Old South Restaurant that retains its historic integrity.

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11. Form Prepared By

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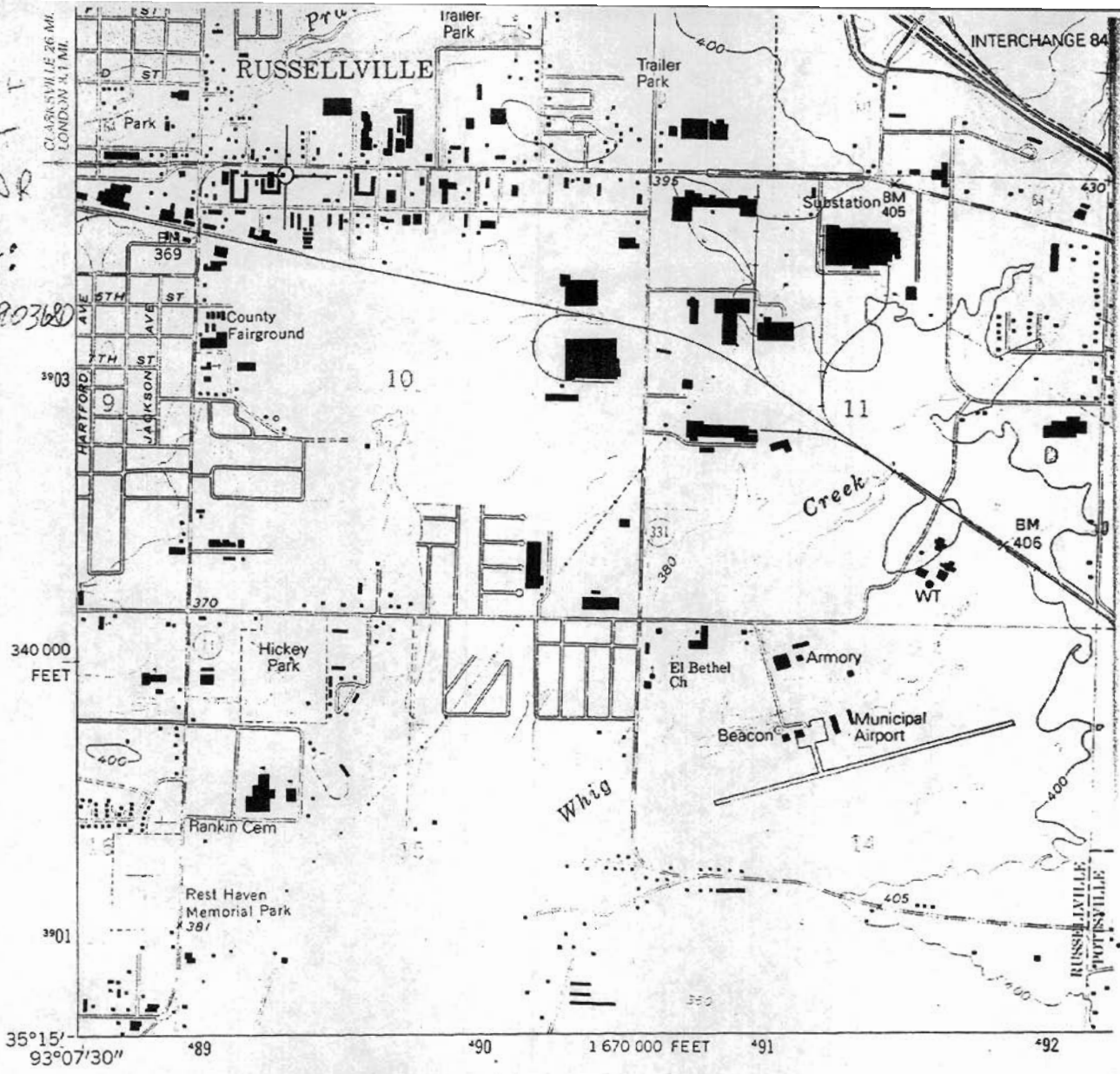
Name/Title: Randy Jeffery, National Register/Survey Coordinator

Organization: Arkansas Historic Preservation Program Date: 5/14/99

Street & Number: 1500 Tower Bldg., 323 Center St. Telephone: (501) 324-9880

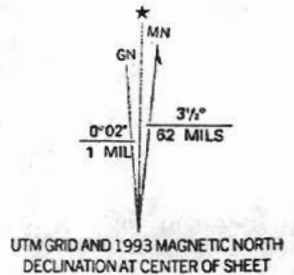
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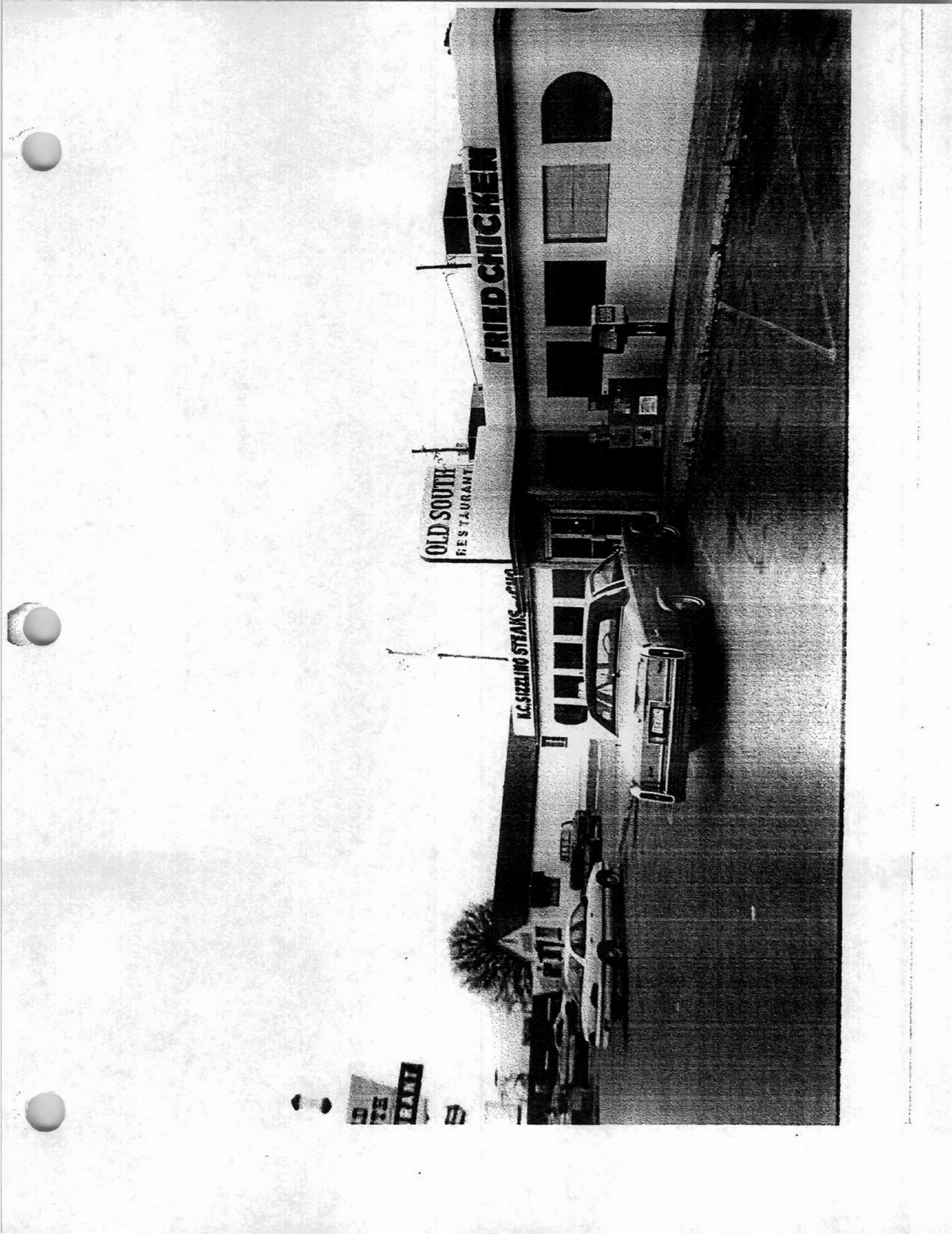
2ND SOUTH
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 IN REF:
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 7354 II NW

Produced by the United States Geological Survey
 Control by USGS and NOS/NOAA
 Topography by photogrammetric methods from aerial photographs
 taken 1960. Field checked 1962. Revised from aerial photographs
 taken 1989-90. Field checked 1992. Map edited 1993
 Projection and 10,000-foot grid ticks: Arkansas coordinate
 system, north zone (Lambert conformal conic)
 1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks, zone 15, shown in blue
 1927 North American Datum (NAD 27)
 North American Datum of 1983 (NAD 83) is shown by dashed corner ticks
 The values of the shift between NAD 27 and NAD 83 for 7.5-minute
 intersections are given in USGS Bulletin 1875
 Red tint indicates areas in which only landmark buildings are shown
 Unlabeled wells are gas wells





FRIED CHICKEN

OLD SOUTH RESTAURANT

K.C. SIZZLING STEAKS & CHOPS

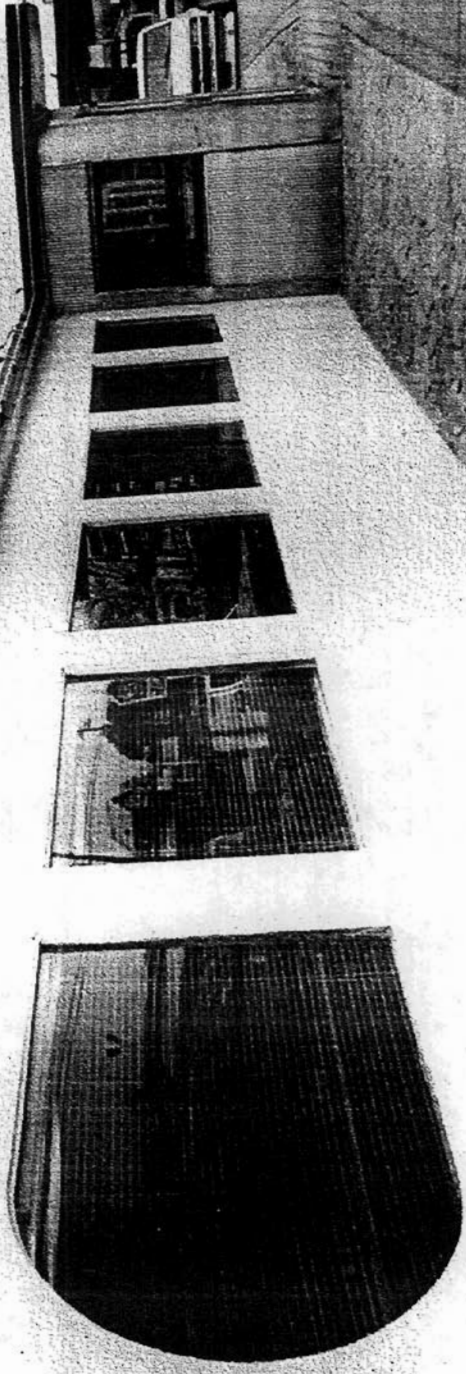
RESTAURANT

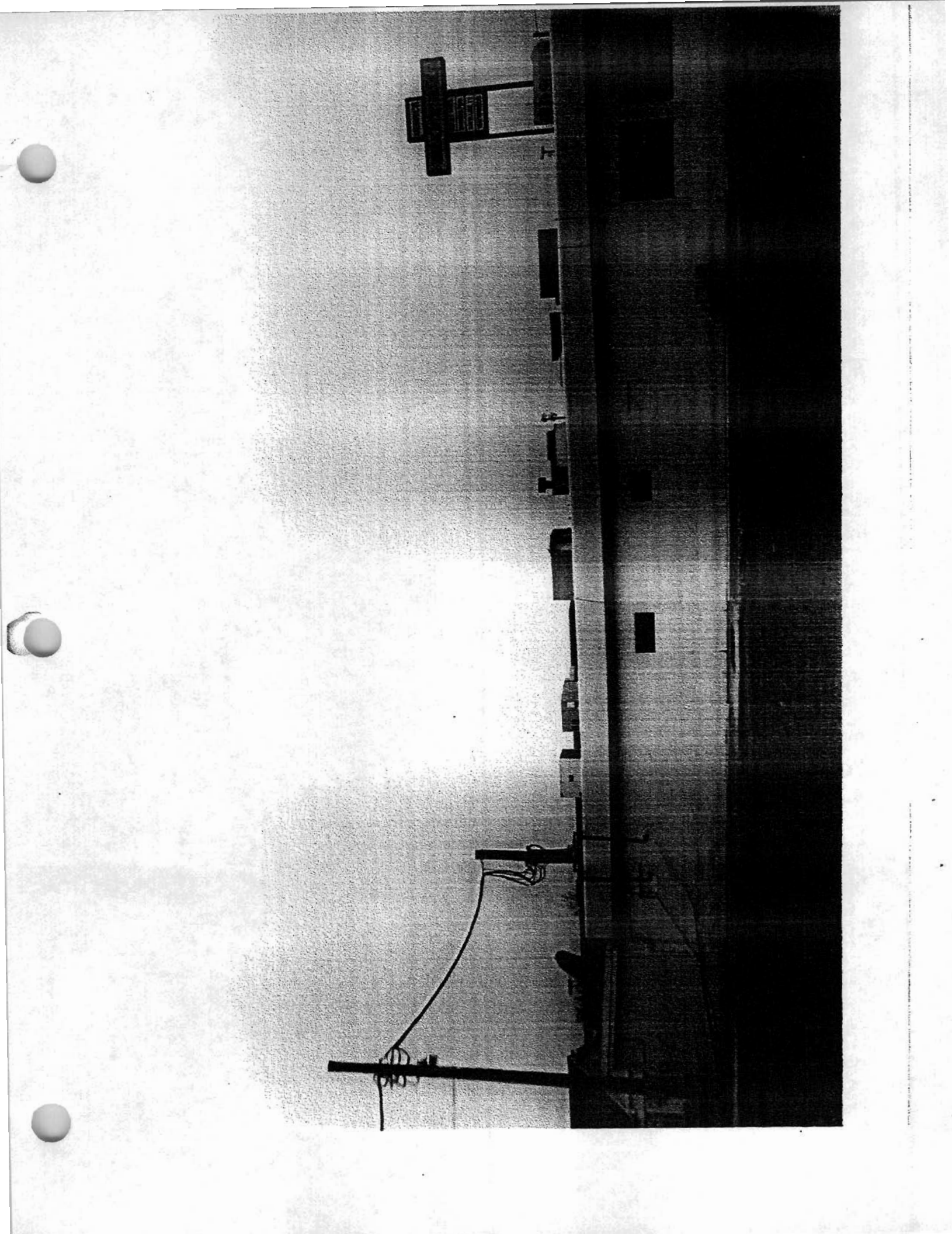
K.C. SIZZLING STEAKS & SAUSAGE

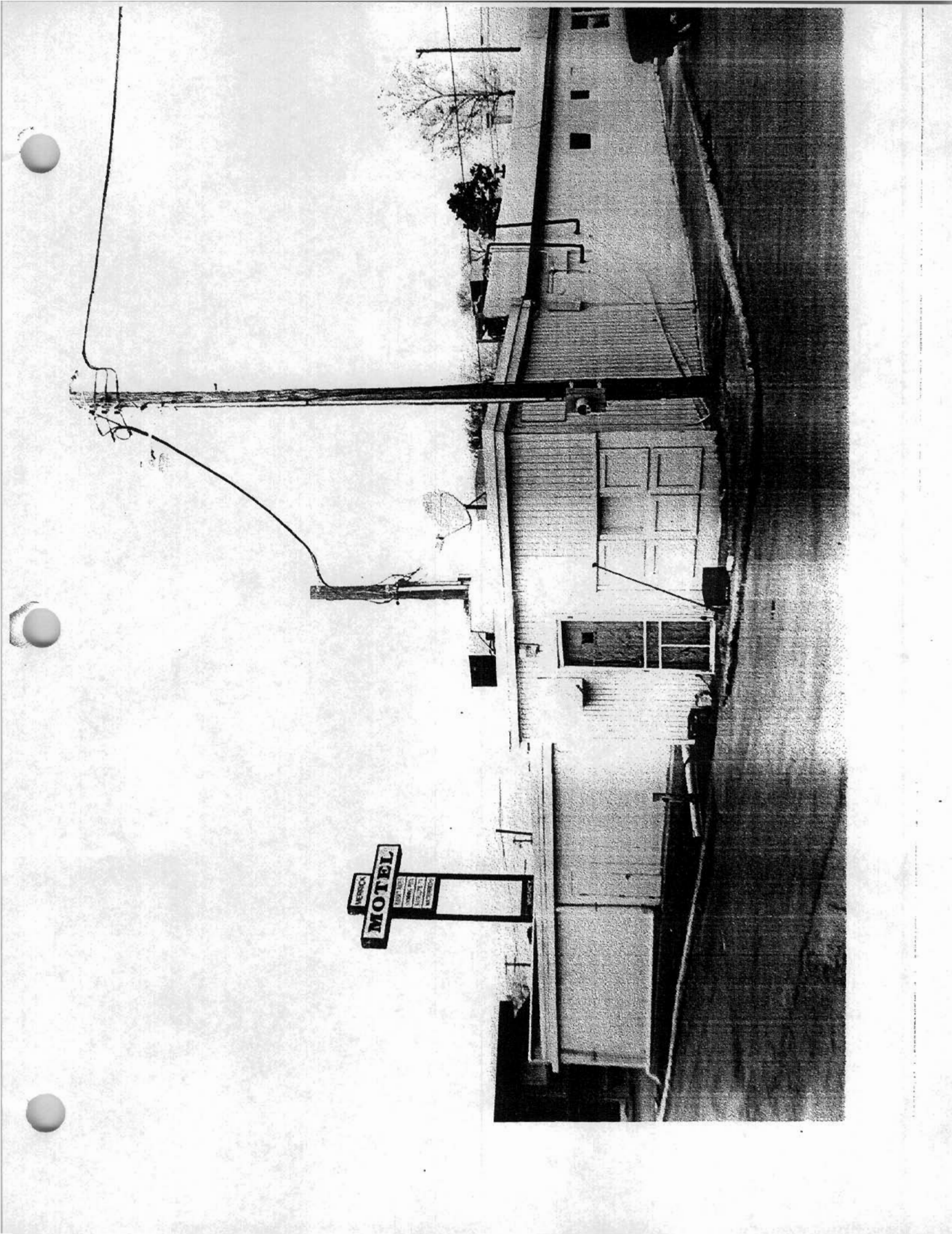
**OLD SOUTH
RESTAURANT**

**MERRICK
MOTEL**

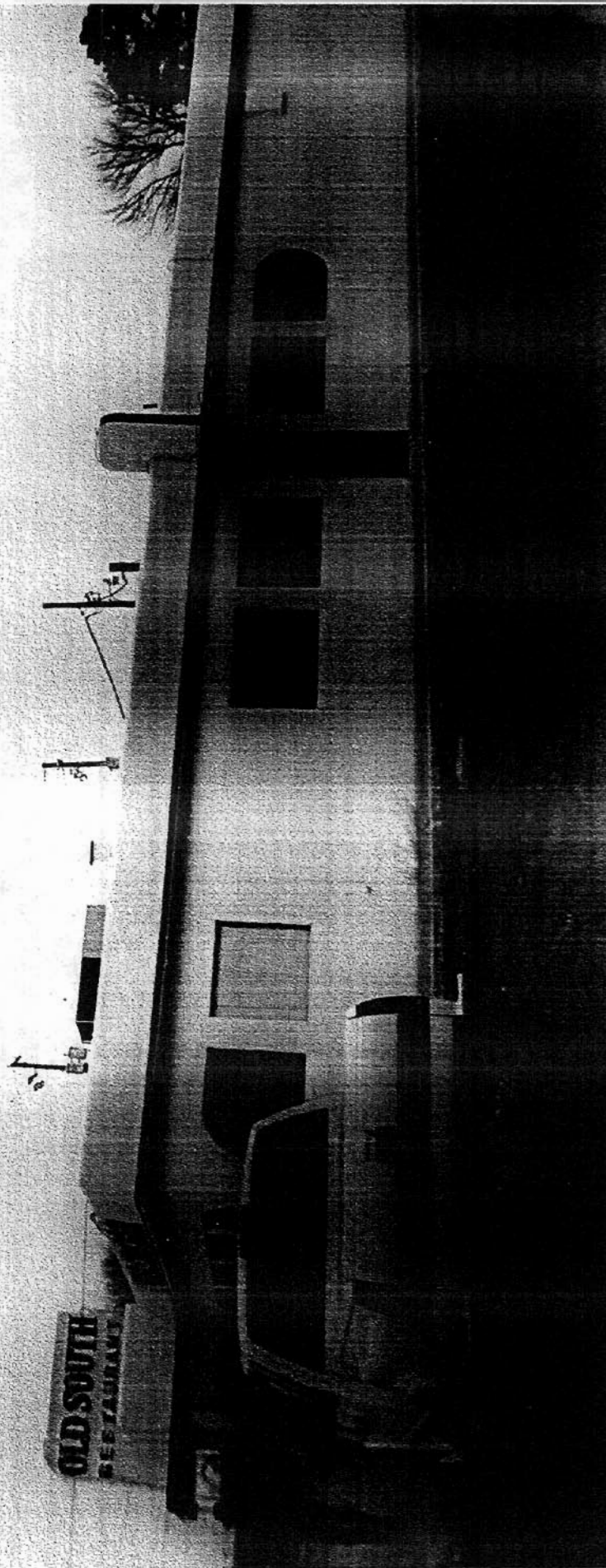
LOVE HILL
MERRICK
271-1111
MOTORHOTEL

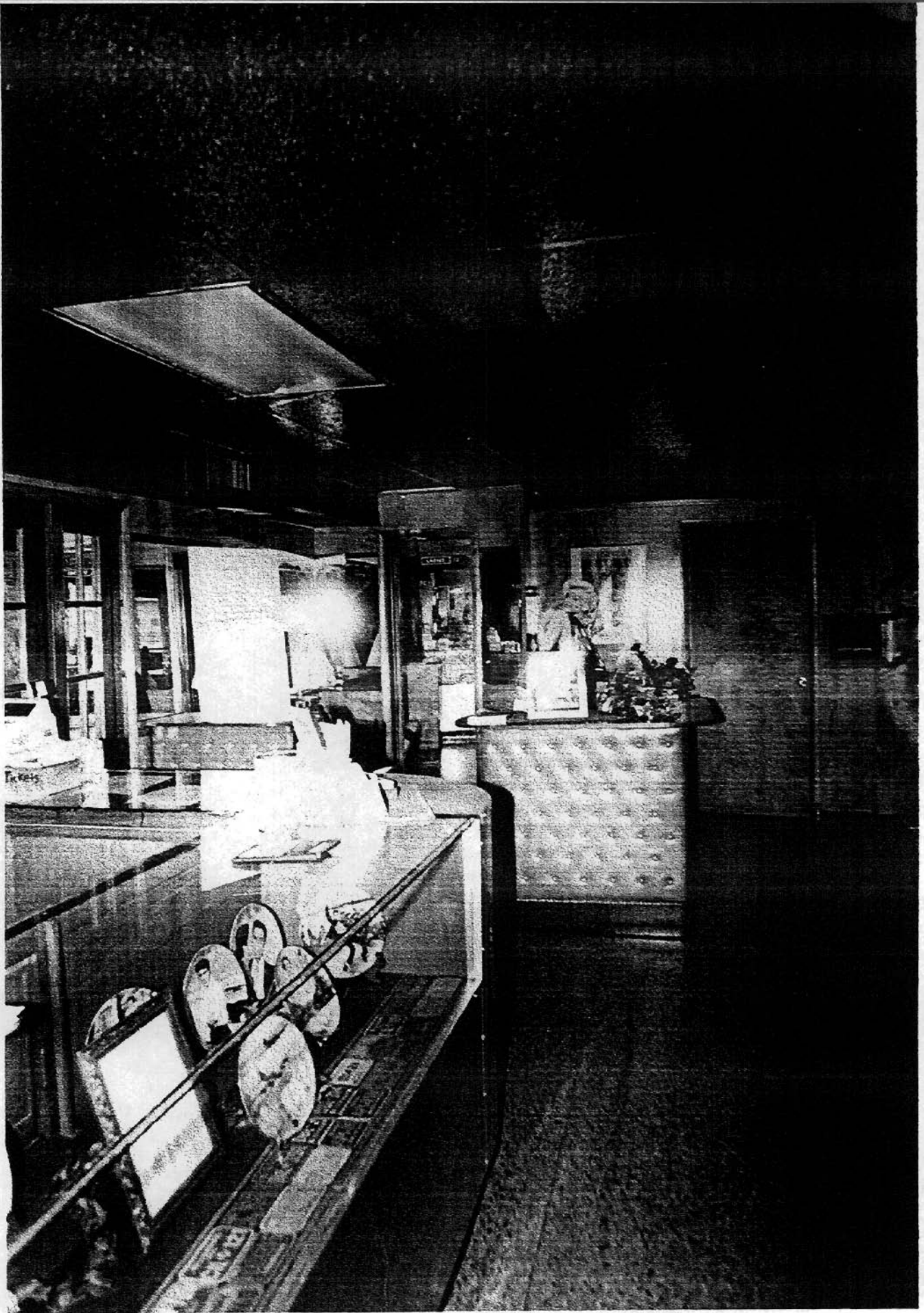




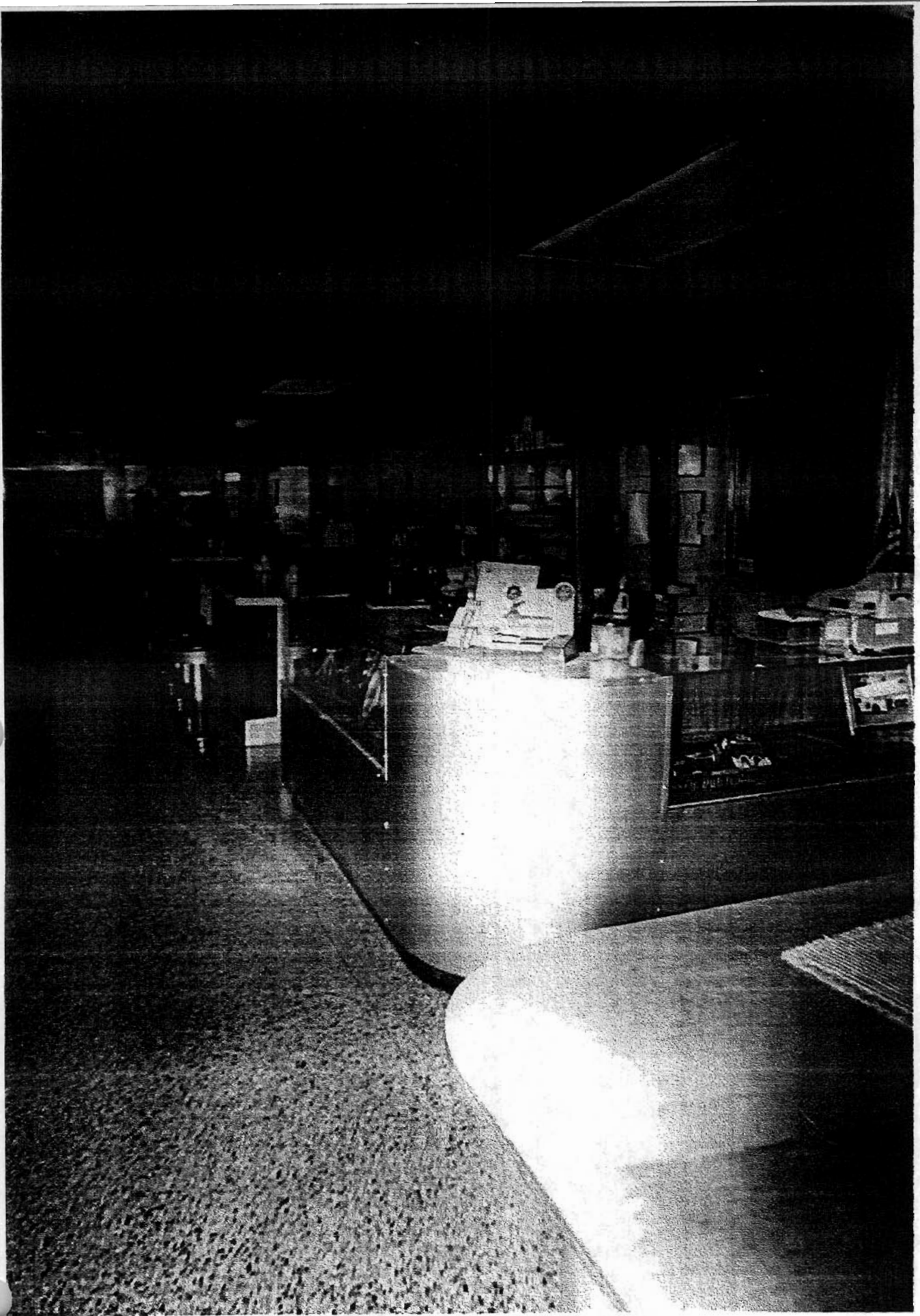


OLD SOUTH
RESTAURANT











OLD
SOUTH

RESTAURANT

famous FOR
STEAKS SEA FOOD

ARGER
ING

BRFAST

STATE & HIGHWAY
LAW ENFORCEMENT
WEST 1 MILE
DR. JOHN FULLIS
PHYSICIAN

