

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*  
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

SE 0329

For NPS use only

received

date entered

Name

historic Mays General Store

and or common Gilbert General Store

2. Location

street & number Front Street, P. O. Box 45

N/A not for publication

city, town Gilbert

N/A vicinity of

state Arkansas

code 05

county Searcy

code 129

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> district	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	N/A <input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Vernon N. and Elizabeth A. Grove

street & number P. O. Box 53

city, town Gilbert

N/A vicinity of

state Arkansas

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Searcy County Courthouse

street & number Marshall Square

city, town Marshall

state Arkansas

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title N/A has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records

city, town state

## 7. Description

### Condition

excellent  
 good  
 fair

deteriorated  
 ruins  
 unexposed

### Check one

unaltered  
 altered

### Check one

original site  
 moved date \_\_\_\_\_

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

### SUMMARY

Mays General Store, a one story red brick structure, actually consists of two buildings identical in plan and elevations, that were joined in 1906. The south building was constructed in 1901 and the north building was added in 1906, at which time the north wall of the 1901 store was removed. Though their symmetrical front facades are identical in their configuration, the brickwork of each storefront is detailed differently. Thus, while the store has been one large building since 1906, its front elevation reads as two individual storefronts.

### ELABORATION

Erected for Billy Mays, the first half of Mays General Store in Gilbert was constructed in 1901. Because of his thriving business, Mays attached a second building in 1906, and by removing the north wall of the first building, achieved a large, undivided interior space for his store. The building has a flat roof that is gently sloped from the front to the rear. Each of the storefronts have slightly recessed central entrances with double wood and glass doors with three-light transoms. A fixed two-light window is positioned above each door transom. The angled walls of the recessed entrances have narrow one-over-one fixed windows with two-light transoms. Large four-light fixed windows rest on limestone sills on either side of the entrances. A continuous parapet joins the two storefronts, beneath which four buff brick designs embellish the 1901 storefront and a row of headers details the 1906 facade. The side elevations are continuous, uninterrupted brick walls without fenestrations. The rear of each storefront has a door with a two-light transom, flanked on either side by a four-over-four double-hung window.

The interior of the store was constructed with a wood ceiling and wood plank floor, the latter of which was replaced with concrete during the 1930's. The north and south walls are lined with hardwood shelves which are original, as are the tables, bins, display cases, glass show cases, cash register and safe, all of which are in use today.

Alterations to Mays General Store include the removal of the original porch and its replacement with a cement porch during the 1930's. Additions to the later porch include a tin roof in 1979 and oak steps and cedar handrails in 1981. Two partitions at the southeast corner of the store interior have been added to create a small office.

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

National Geographic, March, 1977

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property Less than 1 acre

Quadrangle name Gilbert, AR

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

### UTM References

A 

1	5	5	2	5	6	1	0	3	9	8	2	5	5	0
Zone			Easting				Northing							

B 

Zone			Easting				Northing							

C 

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D 

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E 

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F 

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G 

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H 

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### Verbal boundary description and justification

Lots 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20 of Block 9 of the original town of Gilbert, Arkansas

### List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state N/A code county code

state code county code

## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Vernon N. Grove (ed. by AHPP staff)

organization N/A

date July 28, 1983

street & number P. O. Box 53

telephone 501-349-2648

city or town Gilbert


state Arkansas

## 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national  state  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 

title State Historic Preservation Officer

date 7-29-83

For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

date

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> X commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> X 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates 1901/1906

Builder/Architect

**Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)**

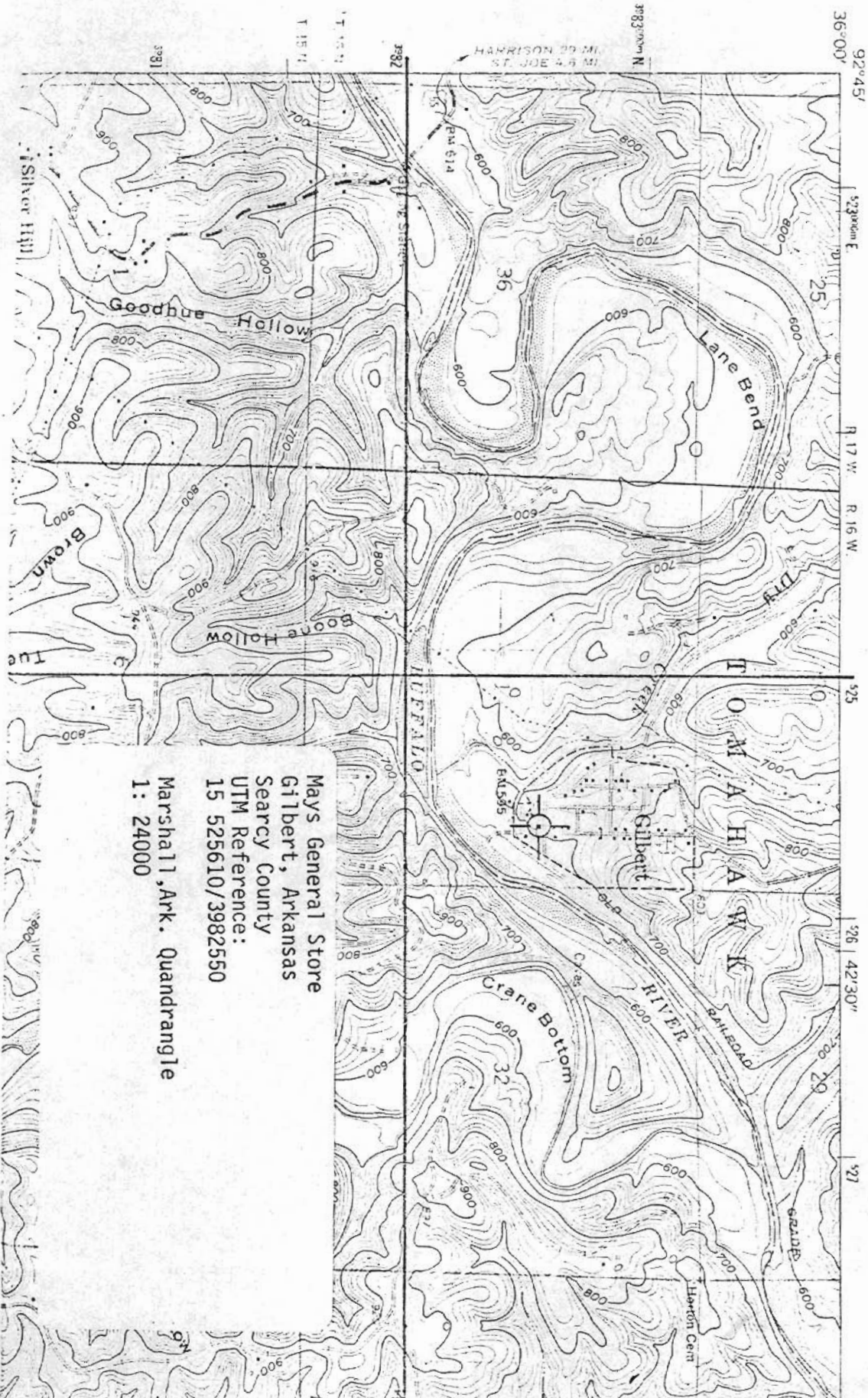
SUMMARY

The Mays General Store is the only commercial building remaining in the small community of Gilbert in north central Arkansas. Constructed in two phases, 1901 and 1906, by Billy Mays, the store originally served as an anchor around which other commercial buildings were constructed. A small building boom occurred in Gilbert in the early 1900's following a decision to make the town a stop on the Missouri and North Arkansas railroad line. The town's close proximity to the scenic Buffalo River had much to do with this decision, as well as the area zinc mines. The railroad caused such an increase in Gilbert's population that the town numbered 300 citizens by 1906. Mays' business prospered during the early decades of the 20th Century. Serving both the railroad and the farmers in the area, the store stocked feed, grain, tack, drygoods, groceries, and other assorted merchandise. Fuel such as kerosene, oil and gas for heating homes and powering machinery was a standard item as well. In the early 1920's the store was sold to Buck Mays and Tom Mite who continued to operate it as Mays General Store. However, by 1926 it was known as Baker's General Store following its purchase by W. Riley Baker. The Missouri and North Arkansas railroad ran its last train through Gilbert in 1945, and what had once been an active little trade center began to rapidly decline. The small shops and factories closed, leaving the general store as the only retail establishment by 1949. In 1950, the local post office moved into the store with Loucille Baker as the post-mistress. The 1890's mail boxes were moved from their original site into the store as well. W. R. Baker retained ownership until 1979 when Mike Mills bought the store and changed its name to Gilbert General Store. The store is a lone reminder of the impact the coming of the railroad had on the rural landscape.

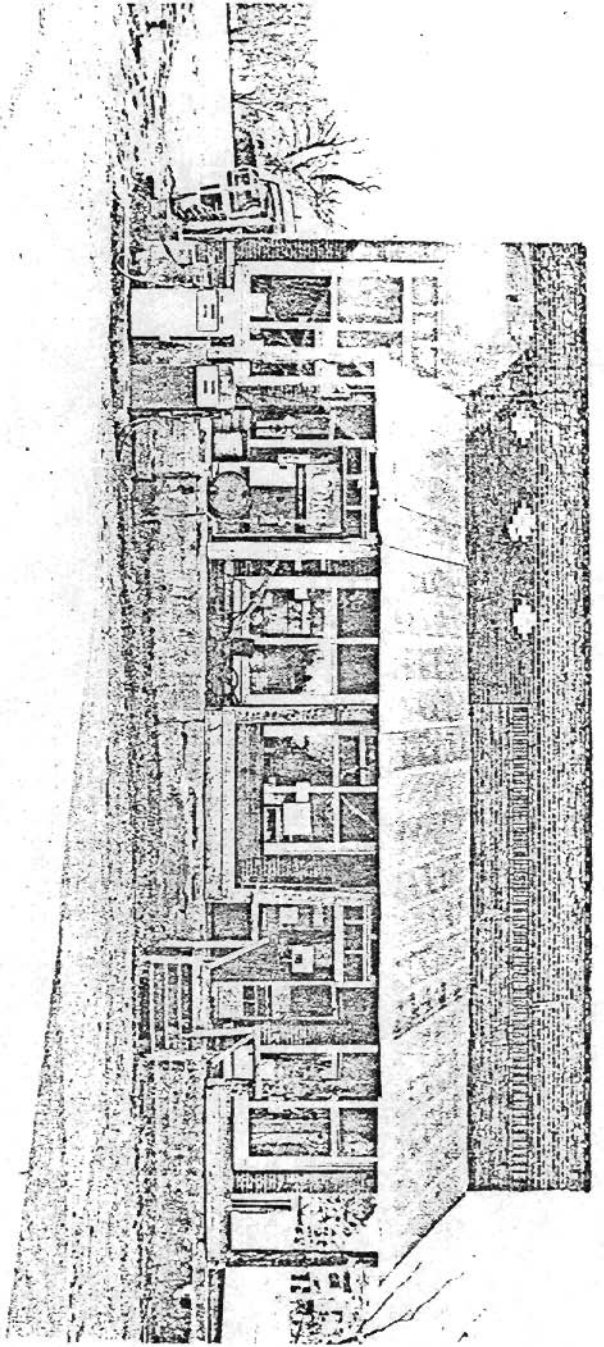


7456 111 SE  
(ST. JOE)

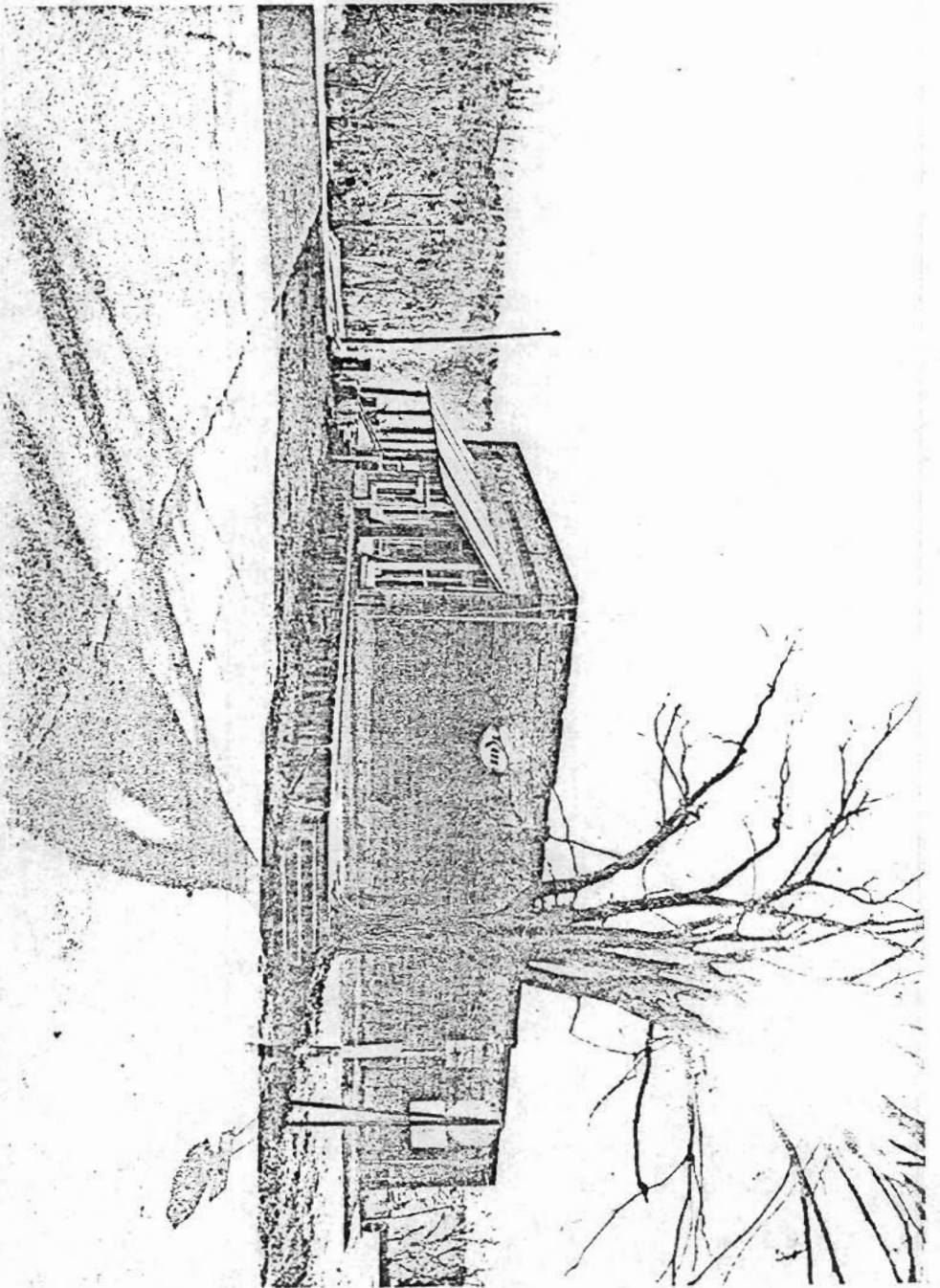
UNITED STATES  
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
GEOLOGICAL SURVEY



Mays General Store  
Gilbert, Arkansas  
Searcy County  
UTM Reference:  
15 525610/3982550  
Marshall, Ark. Quadrangle  
1: 24000



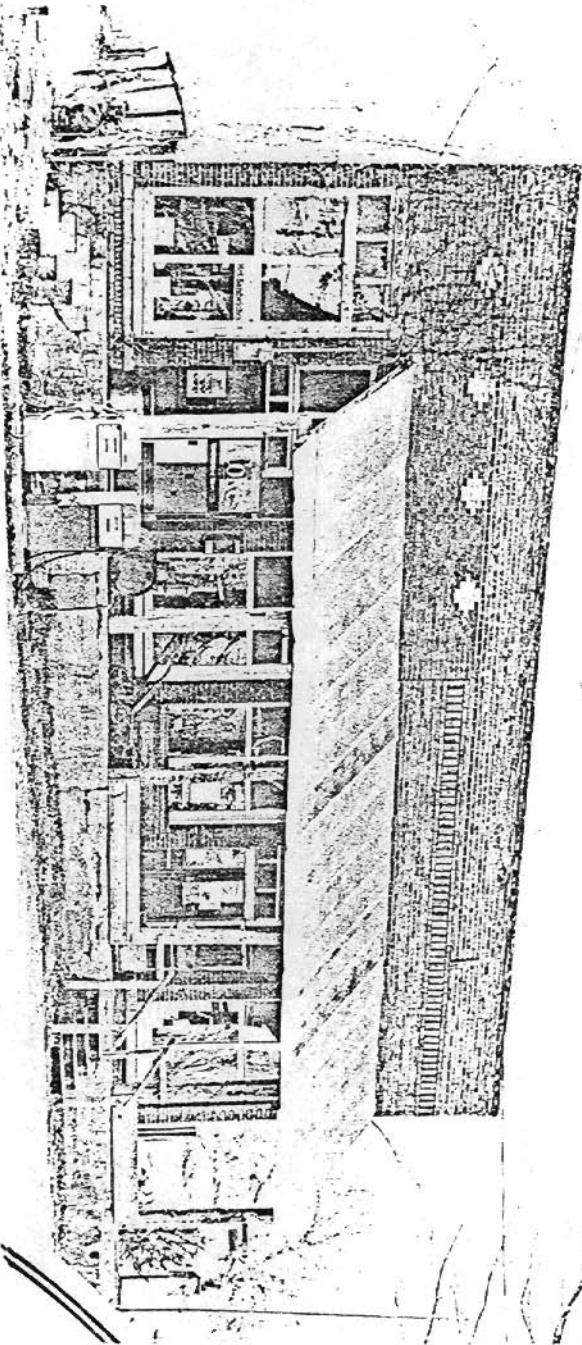
Mays General Store  
Gilbert, Arkansas  
Alice Jones, photographer  
November, 1982  
Negative on file at AHPP  
Viewed from the East



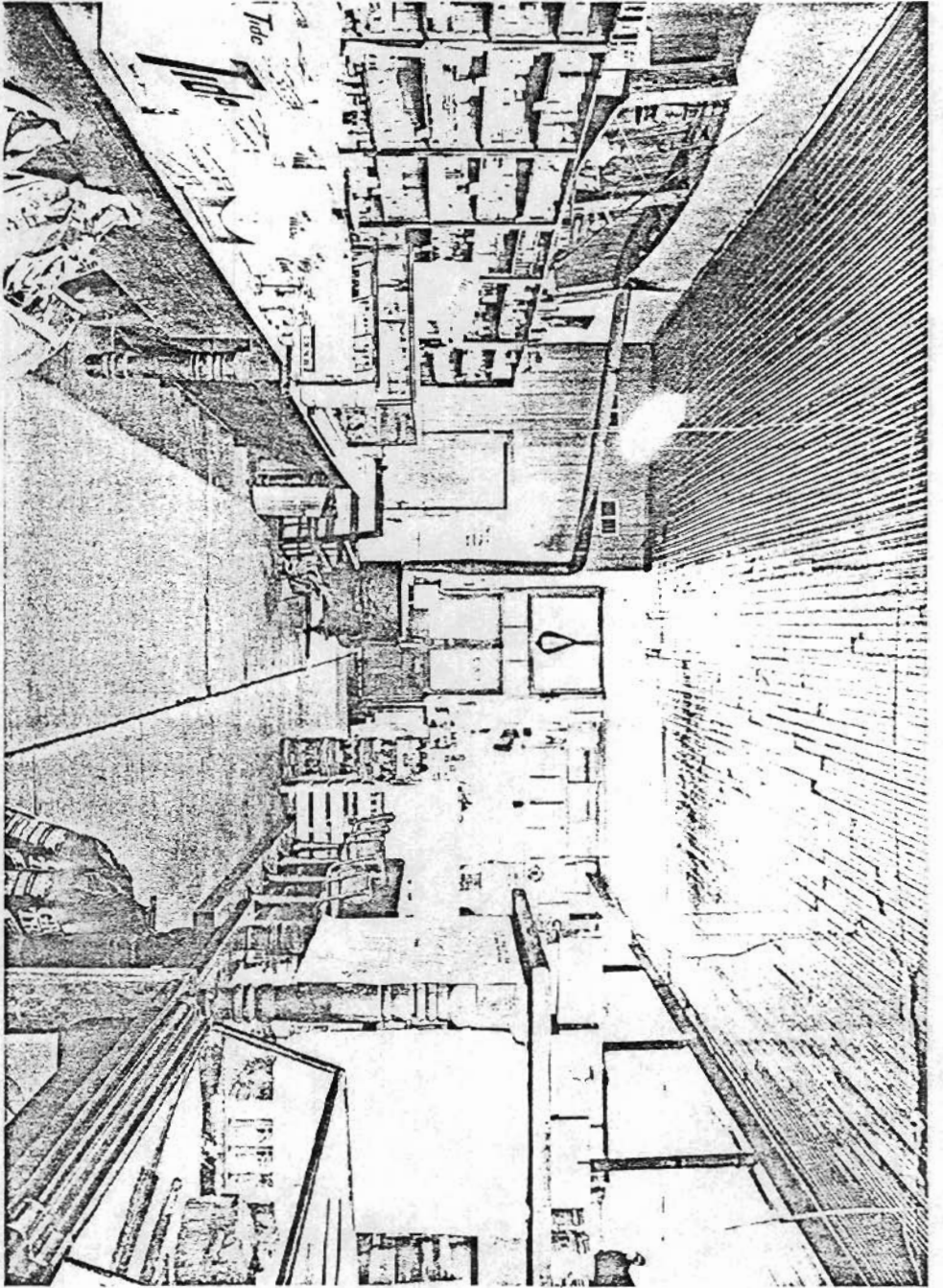
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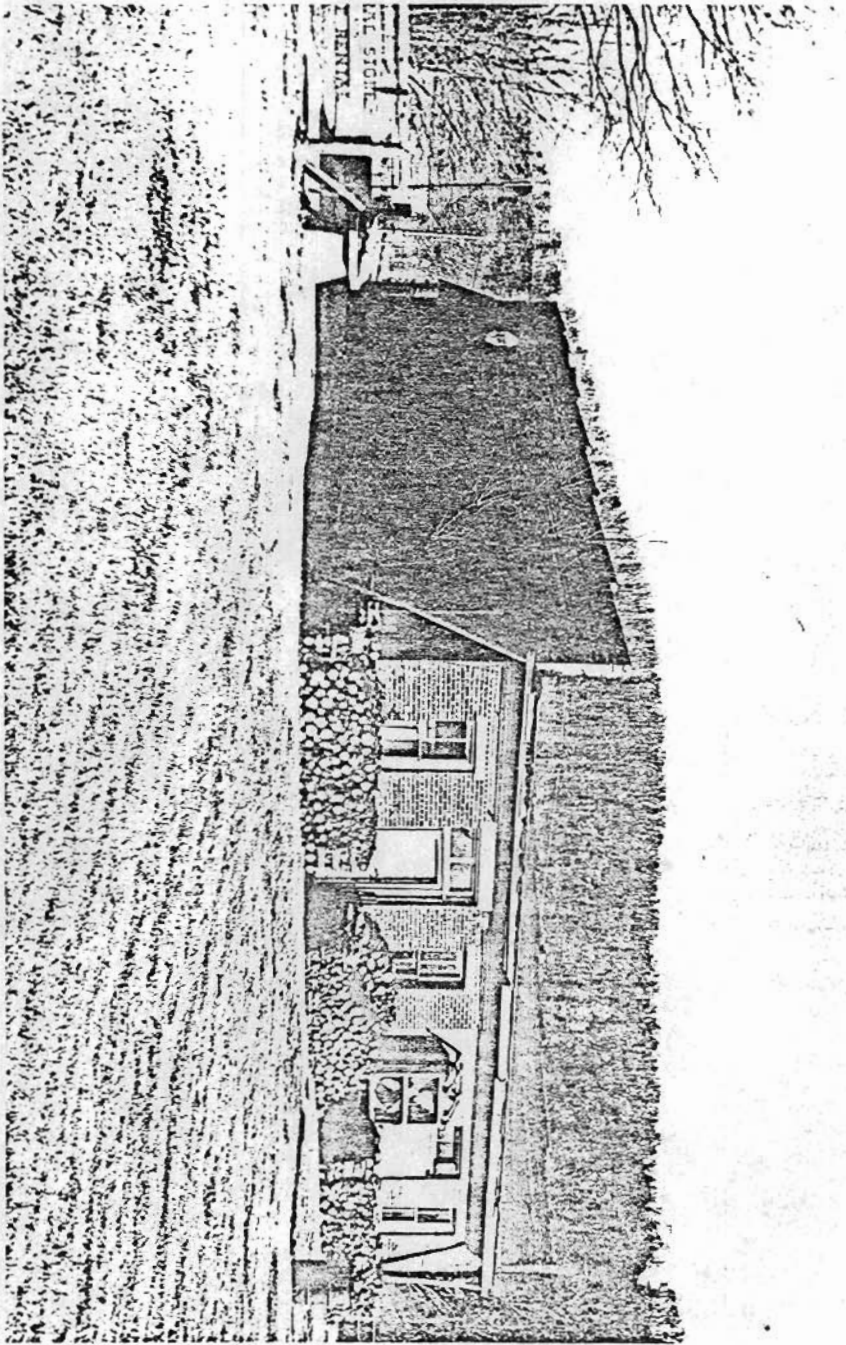
Mays General Store  
Gilbert, Arkansas  
Alice Jones, photographer  
November, 1982  
Negative on file at AHPP  
Viewed from the East







Mays General Store  
Gilbert, Arkansas  
Alice Jones, photographer  
November, 1982  
Negative on file at AHPP  
View of the interior



Mays General Store  
Gilbert, Arkansas  
Alice Jones, photographer  
November, 1981  
Negative on file at AHPP  
Viewed from the Northwest