

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED DEC 28 1979

DATE ENTERED

MAR 3 1980

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

1 NAME

HISTORIC

Engels' Dry Goods Store

AND/OR COMMON

LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

114 S. Main

___ NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Luther

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

5

___ VICINITY OF

STATE

Oklahoma

CODE

40

COUNTY

Oklahoma

CODE

109

CLASSIFICATION**CATEGORY**

___ DISTRICT

 BUILDING(S)

___ STRUCTURE

___ SITE

___ OBJECT

OWNERSHIP

___ PUBLIC

 PRIVATE

___ BOTH

PUBLIC ACQUISITION

___ IN PROCESS

___ BEING CONSIDERED

STATUS OCCUPIED

___ UNOCCUPIED

___ WORK IN PROGRESS

ACCESSIBLE

___ YES: RESTRICTED

 YES: UNRESTRICTED

___ NO

PRESENT USE

___ AGRICULTURE

 COMMERCIAL

___ EDUCATIONAL

___ ENTERTAINMENT

___ GOVERNMENT

___ INDUSTRIAL

___ MILITARY

___ MUSEUM

___ PARK

___ PRIVATE RESIDENCE

___ RELIGIOUS

___ SCIENTIFIC

___ TRANSPORTATION

___ OTHER:

OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

Michael C. Engels

STREET & NUMBER

114 S. Main

CITY, TOWN

Luther

___ VICINITY OF

STATE

Oklahoma

LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTIONCOURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Oklahoma County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

320 Robert S. Kerr

CITY, TOWN

Oklahoma City

STATE

Oklahoma

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

Oklahoma County Commercial Sites Survey

DATE

1979

___ FEDERAL . STATE COUNTY ___ LOCALDEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

Shirk Collection, Oklahoma City University Library

CITY, TOWN

Oklahoma City

STATE

Oklahoma

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION

EXCELLENT DETERIORATED
 GOOD RUINS
 FAIR UNEXPOSED

CHECK ONE

UNALTERED
 ALTERED

CHECK ONE

ORIGINAL SITE
 MOVED DATE _____

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Engels' Dry Goods Store is a one-story red brick commercial building measuring 25' x 100' with no definitive architectural characteristics. The exterior is typical of territorial storefronts, however with entresol, original wooden window sashes, and hanging canopy. From the street, the building appears much as it did when constructed.

The interior of the store is in excellent condition, with the original 13' tall molded-tin ceiling, drop lights, overhead fans, and shelves of stacked dry goods. The north wall is covered with Coca-Cola posters and the others are plastered and painted. Typical of old, small town stores, the interior is dimly lit. When entering the store, the original furnishings overwhelm the visitor. On the immediate left is an antique gas-jet cigar lighter which has been burning since 1921. The lighter rests on an old marble-topped display case which was in the store in 1910. Behind the display case is a wooden bar and cabinet which at one time held glasses for the fountain. It too is original. Above the bar on the wall, and extending approximately 75' towards the rear of the store, is a superb collection of Coca-Cola promotional posters dating to 1913.

As customers walk into the store they also notice the drop lights and ceiling fans. The wooden blades of the fans have been removed and stored, but they could easily be reinstalled. Farther into the store customers find several tables and chairs which also are original furnishings dating to 1910. To the left is the old brass cash register which was purchased with redeemable cigar wrappers. It is in excellent and operable condition. Beyond the tables and counters are shelves for dry goods. The only noticeable difference from countless historic photographs of country stores are the new goods on the shelves.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)	
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION			

SPECIFIC DATES 1910-1979

BUILDER/ARCHITECT Unknown

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Engels' Dry Goods Store of Luther is unique in Oklahoma County, for the store has survived since 1910 in a well preserved and superbly authentic condition despite the ravages of urbanization, agricultural depression, and changes in transportation. In addition to its importance as a valuable relic from the past, the Engels' Store retains social significance. As it did in 1910, the store still serves the town of Luther as a focal point for conversation, refreshments, and relaxation. Moreover, just as it did in 1910, the small general store provides rural citizens with needed dry goods. The overwhelming importance of country stores to the development and social structure of rural Oklahoma is thus represented by Engels' Dry Goods Store.

Settled in 1895 following the opening of the Kickapoo tribal lands, Luther quickly became a trading center in the Deep Fork River Valley. By the early 1900s the Frisco and KATY railroads had connected the town to Oklahoma City, beginning a period of prosperity. Slowly, growing trade convinced many merchants to replace their wooden structures with brick or stone. By 1909 most of the buildings on Main Street were either brick, stone, or concrete block. In 1910 the store at 115 S. Main Street was occupied by Michael C. Engels.

Engels, who had migrated to Indian Territory in 1889, established a small dry goods store in his one-story structure. In his new quarters he stocked the shelves with dry goods, operated a fountain and opened his store to his fellow townsmen. Cooled by overhead fans, the citizens of Luther looked to Engels' store for a place to relax, have a Coke, buy needed supplies, and enjoy the conversation of neighbors.

In 1913 Engels started a tradition when he purchased a 50 gallon barrel of Coke syrup, for with it he received a promotional poster depicting four girls drinking Coke. He continued collecting a poster a year, until Coca-Cola posters covered the entire north wall of his store. Engels' collection and preservation of posters extended to most of the physical items in the store. To his death he retained the store's original furniture, wooden display cases, shelves,

(cont.)

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Edmond Sun (Edmond, Oklahoma), July 12, 1977, Sec. B, p. 1.

Interview with M. C. Engels, Jr., June 21, 1979.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY Circa 1 acre

QUADRANGLE NAME Luther, Oklahoma

UTM NOT VERIFIED
ACREAGE NOT VERIFIED

SCALE 1:24,000

UTM REFERENCES

A 14 663360 3947715
ZONE EASTING NORTHING

B _____
ZONE EASTING NORTHING

C _____

D _____

E _____

F _____

G _____

H _____

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Beginning at a point 10' due west of the northwest corner of the building, which is on the curb, proceed 120' east along the north

(cont.)

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Dr. Bob L. Blackburn, Project Director

ORGANIZATION

Oklahoma County Historical Society

DATE

August 8, 1979

STREET & NUMBER

3801 N. Shartel

TELEPHONE

405-528-5091

CITY OR TOWN

Oklahoma City

STATE

Oklahoma

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

R Glenn Jordan

TITLE

DATE

12/11/79

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

Bill Blovich
KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

March 3, 1980

ATTEST:

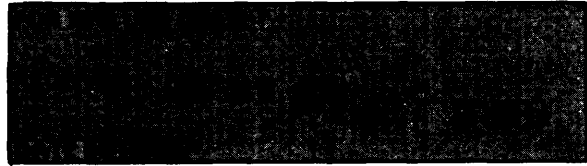
Rob Goosena
CHIEF OF REGISTRATION

DATE

2/27/80

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scales, hanging lights, and overhead fans. His collecting extended even to the brass cash register, which he obtained by redeeming cigar wrappers. Another prized possession was a gas-jet cigar lighter positioned next to the door. Customers could buy a nickel cigar, then cut and light it on the way out.

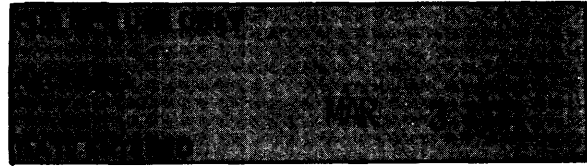
In 1921 Engels moved his store and all of its furnishings across the street to 114 S. Main. The move changed the store only slightly, for the two buildings were similar in design and the building at 114 also had been used as a store. From 1921 to the present the Engels family has operated the store in that location with little variation despite the changes affecting Luther. The prosperity which had prompted the optimistic plans of men like Engels gradually was replaced by stagnation and decline as the twentieth century progressed. The agricultural depression of the 1920s and 1930s compounded the economic problems. If not for rail connections and U. S. Highway 66, which passed through town, Luther may have disappeared from the map, as did more than a dozen other towns in eastern Oklahoma County.

This economic stagnation in part explains the survival of the Engels' Dry Goods Store in its original state. The town was too small for a retail chain outlet, yet far enough from Edmond and Oklahoma City to need a dry goods store and fountain. Yet, external factors do not fully explain the unique survival of this family-owned country store; the other factor has been the Engels family.

M. C. Engels' love of his store and its possessions was passed down to his children, who still operate the store today. Like their father, they have retained all the store's original furnishings, even though they have been barraged by antique collectors. The deep, narrow store thus appears today much as it did sixty-years ago, serving as a focal point for Luther's citizens, just as it did in 1910.

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CONTINUATION SHEET

2

ITEM NUMBER

10

PAGE

1

face of the building, which abuts with Lowman's Grocery Store, to a point 10' into the alley. Then proceed 25' south along the center of the alley to a point parallel with the south wall of the building. Then proceed 120' west along the south face of the building, which abuts with a vacant building, to the curb. Then proceed 25' north along the curb to the point of departure.