NPS Form 10-900
(7-81)

OMB NO. 1024-0018
EXP. 10/31/84

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only
received [redacted] 1983
date entered

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

1. Name

historic Country (woodframe grain elevators of the Oklahoma Panhandle TR)

and/or common same (13)

2. Location

street & number see continuation sheet N/A not for publication

city, town N/A vicinity of ~~congressional district~~

state code county Beaver and Texas code

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
___ district	___ public	X occupied	___ agriculture	___ museum
___ building(s)	X private	X unoccupied	X commercial	___ park
___ structure	___ both	___ work in progress	___ educational	___ private residence
___ site	**Public Acquisition**	**Accessible**	___ entertainment	___ religious
___ object	N/A in process	___ yes: restricted	___ government	___ scientific
Thematic group	N/A being considered	X yes: unrestricted	___ industrial	___ transportation
		___ no	___ military	X other: Not in use.

4. Owner of Property

name Multiple Ownership

street & number

city, town N/A vicinity of state

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Texas County Courthouse and Beaver County Courthouse

street & number 319 North Main Street (Texas County CH) 111 West Second St. (Beaver Courthou

city, town Guymon Beaver City state Oklahoma

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Oklahoma Preservation Survey has this property been determined eligible? ___ yes X no

date 1982 ___ federal X state ___ county ___ local

depository for survey records Preservation Office, Oklahoma Historical Society

city, town Oklahoma City state Oklahoma

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
___ excellent	X deteriorated	X unaltered	X original site
___ good	___ ruins	X altered	___ moved date N/A
X fair	___ unexposed		

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The nominated structures are the remaining wood-frame grain elevators of the Oklahoma Panhandle, located in Beaver and Texas Counties. Area contractors or railroad townsite companies built these elevators to serve local grain producers. Between 1900 and 1930 hundreds of these "local" or "county" elevators received grain directly from the producers and, then, the grain was either loaded immediately into railroad cars for shipment to the terminal elevators in Galveston, Fort Worth, New Orleans, or Kansas City, or the local grain dealers would store the grain in the elevators in hopes of getting a better price. Only one of the wooden elevators, located at Mouser, is still in use, and it is used primarily for storage. By the late 1920s wooden elevators were on the way out as larger cement, concrete, and steel elevators replaced them.

The Oklahoma Panhandle is located in the Great Plains region, an area noted for its flat treeless landscape and arid climate. The primary industries of the area are and have always been since the early 1900s cattle, wheat, and later, natural gas.

Several railroads have served the region over the years and influenced significantly th economic growth of the area as well as its settlement patterns. Two branches of the Chicago, Rock Island and Pacific Railroad (usually referred to as the Rock Island) cut diagonally from northeast to southwest across Texas County. The first Rock Island branch, built in 1902, runs from Liberal, Kansas, to Dalhart, Texas, while the second branch, constructed in 1926, ran from Liberal, Kansas, to Amarillo, Texas. The Missouri-Kansas and Texas Railroad's (Katy) Northwest branch made its way to Forgan in June of 1912 moving into the Panhandle in an east to west direction. The Beaver, Mead and Englewood Railroad carried rail service all the way to Keyes, Oklahoma, in Cimarron county in the 1920s and became a part of the Katy Railroad in 1931. The B. M.and E.railroad moved east to west as well (see sketch map).

The remaining elevators are located in townsites all along these several rail lines. On the Rock Island line from Liberal, Kansas, to Dalhart, Texas, the towns with surving elevators are Tyrone, Hooker, and Optima. The Rock Island from Liberal to Amarillo included the towns of Baker and Adams, while the B.M. & E. included Beaver City, Forgan, Floris, Turpin Baker, Hooker, Mouser, Hough, Tracey, and Eva. Knowles has the only remaining elevator on the Katy.

Between 1902 and 1932 local Panhandle contractors, such as Riffe and Gilmore Elevator Company, constructed many wood frame elevators which followed a relatively constant layout. All the structures were between 100 and 120" high, with a square base varying in size from 30 to 40' square. Ocassionally single story sheds were attached to one of the elevations of the elevator. All the elevators were constructed of wooden planks 2 inches thick and 10, 8, 6, or 4 inches wide, which were laid flat one piece above another and spiked together to form the walls and cribbing. The internal construction consisted of many separate cribs and the machinery necessary to move the grain to the appropriate storage areas. All the elevators also included a section designed to clean the grain. (See diagram 1). Each elevator had metal sheathing to protect the wood from weathering. An unloading area was built into each elevator where wagon drivers could drive their wagons into the structure and dump their loads. Each elevator was capped with a shed like structure, usually with an A frame roof and windows on each elevation. The capacity of the elevators ranged from 20,000 to 40,000 bushels and cost approximately 20 to 25 cents per bushel of capacity to build. The two major grains stored in the elevators were wheat and milo.

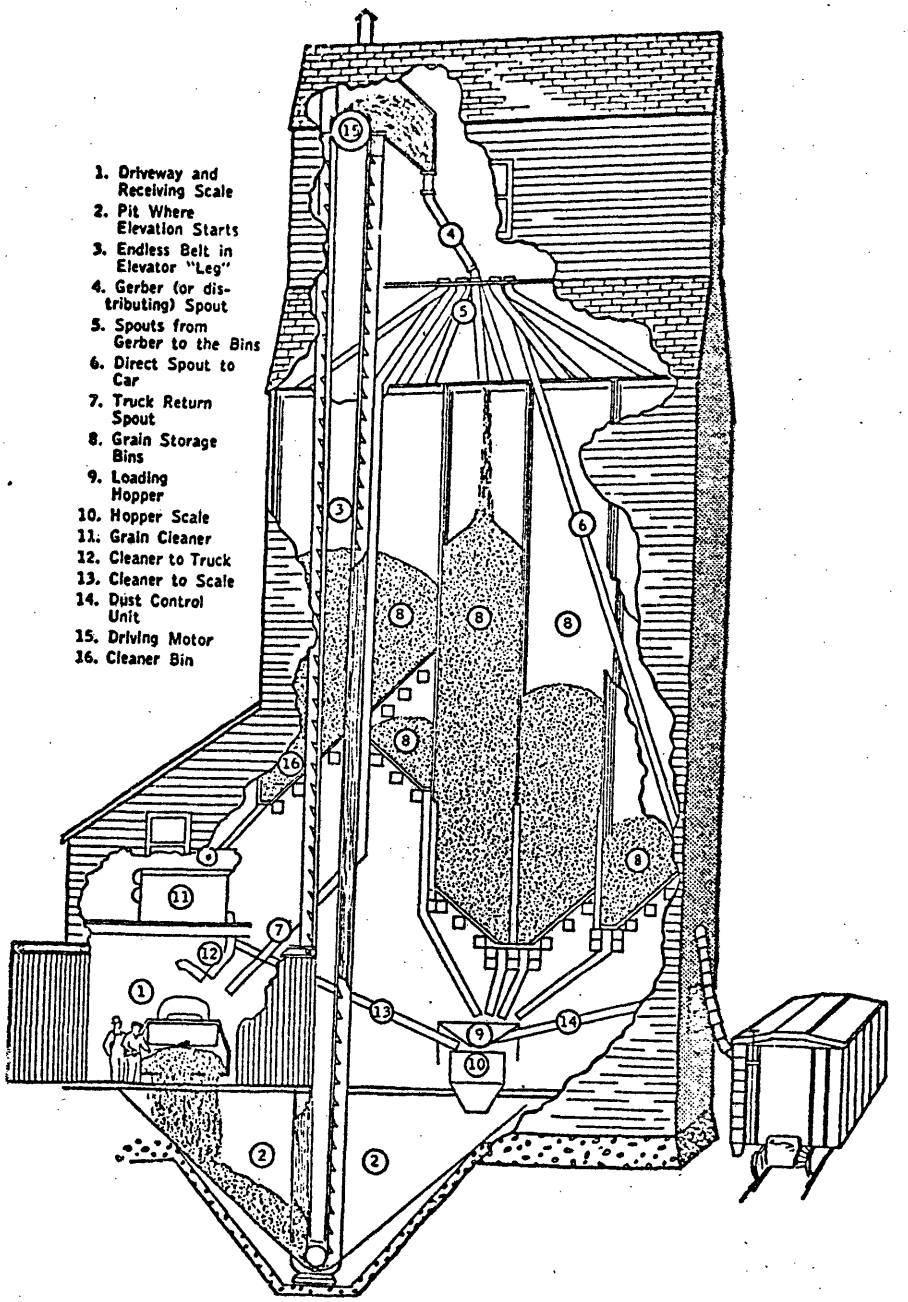

FIG. 37.—Operational parts of a country elevator

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	X engineering	___ music	___ theater
___ 1800–1899	X commerce	___ exploration/settlement	___ philosophy	X transportation
X 1900–	___ communications	___ industry	___ politics/government	___ other (specify)
		___ invention		

Specific dates 1906 **Builder/Architect** N/A

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The wooden county grain elevators of the Oklahoma Panhandle are significant because they served a vital function in the storage, processing and marketing of the areas tremendous grain production. The "sod-busters" of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century brought an end to the open range cattle grazing that had been the basis of the Great Plains economy. By the late 1920s, 64 percent of the southern Great Plains inhabitants were dependent on cash crops, usually wheat, for a living. In 1921, 1924, 1926, 1928, and 1931, Texas county claimed to be the leading wheat producing county in the nation. But from 1932 to 1939, the Panhandle and Great Plains experienced the "Dust Bowl" and the accompanying repeated crop failures. Not until 1940 did the Oklahoma Panhandle rebound with a harvest of 46.8 million bushels. As early as 1920s, Oklahoma consistently ranked as the nations third largest wheat producing state. The Oklhoma Panhandle annually produced one-quarter of the state's entire wheat crop. Cattle and natural gas were and are a significant element in the Panhandle's economy, but since 1900 agriculture (wheat) has dominated the commerce of the region. The wooden elevators promoted agriculture and commerce in the region by serving as primary marketing centers for local grain produce.

The elevators were significant in making the union between the railroads and the wheat producers possible. The railroads built across the Oklahoma Panhandle for one reason, and that was to move the areas large wheat crops. Not only was the Beaver, Mead & Englewood (B.M.&E.) constructed for exploiting the areas grain produce, but much of the labor needed to build the railroad was performed by the local farmers themselves. The grain elevators made it possible to store the local farmers grain until enough had been accumulated for the trains to make profitable runs, or they stored the grain to wait for a favorable rise in prices. In any event, the grain elevators made wheat marketing profitable for the farmers and the railroads, and kept the trains moving through the Panhandle.

The grain elevators were also a vital innovation in the rapid mechanization of American agriculture, which made it possible for the Great Plain's farmers to carry out their massive conversion of prarie grass into wheat fields. The introduction of the tractor and harvestor made it possible for a farmer to work hundreds of acres more each year, while the railroads made the movement of the huge harvests to the distant commercial centers more efficient and profitable. The wooden elevator was much more than a storage bin. It made the unloading of grain a quick and easy process; capable of taking in as much as a 1,000 bushels an hour. The grain elevator was a significant innovation in agricultural engineering.

With the conversion of the prairies into wheat fields and a rising wheat production came a corresponding decline in the price of wheat. Consequently, farmers plowed more ground and harvested even larger crops. The grain elevators were storing up to 60 percent of the produce in 1931 in hopes that the price would rise. But, the Depression affected the Great Plains in 1932 and with it came the storms of the '30s. The conversion of grass lands to wheat fields combined with an extended drought and highwinds which caused dust storms that swept the Plains repeatedly. The Oklahoma Panhandle was in the heart of the area labeled as the Dust Bowl. The grain elevators played a significant role in the evolution of wheat farming on the Plains and the agricultural practices of the farmers contributed greatly in causing the dust storms of the 1930s.

9. Major Bibliographical References

See continuation sheet

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property See continuation sheet

Quadrangle name _____ **Quadrangle scale** _____

UMT References

	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
A				B			
C				D			
E				F			
G				H			

Verbal boundary description and justification

See continuation sheet

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 Lance Wiesend Supervised by Mary Ann Anders

organization Oklahoma Preservation Survey **date** 1982

street & number 502 Math Sciences **telephone** 624-5678

city or town Stillwater, Oklahoma State University **state** Oklahoma

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

title Certified **date** 3/18/83

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

NPS Form 10-900-a
(3-82)

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Multiple Resource Area
Thematic Group

dnr-11

Name Woodframe Grain Elevators of the Oklahoma Panhandle Thematic Resources
State Oklahoma

	Nomination/Type of Review			Date/Signature
✓ 1.	Turpin Grain Elevator	Entered in the National Register	for Keeper	Delores Byers 5/13/83
			Attest	
✓ 2.	Knowles Grain Elevator	Substantive Review	Keeper	Linda McClelland 5-13-83
			Attest	accept Patrick Andrus 5/12/83
✓ 3.	Hooker Woodframe Grain Elevator	Entered in the National Register	for Keeper	Delores Byers 5/13/83
			Attest	
✓ 4.	Tracey Woodframe Grain Elevator	Substantive Review	Keeper	Linda McClelland 5-13-83
			Attest	accept Patrick Andrus 5/12/83
✓ 5.	Adams Woodframe Grain Elevator	Entered in the National Register	for Keeper	Delores Byers 5/13/83
			Attest	
6.	Floris Grain Elevator	Substantive Review	Keeper	Linda McClelland 10-7-83
			Attest	
✓ 7.	Optima Grain Elevator	Entered in the National Register	for Keeper	Delores Byers 5/13/83
			Attest	
✓ 8.	Baker Woodframe Grain Elevator (Riffe & Gilmore Co)	Substantive Review	Keeper	Linda McClelland 5-13-83
			Attest	accept Patrick Andrus 5/12/83
✓ 9.	Baker Woodframe Elevator (Baker Kimber Co)		for Keeper	Delores Byers 5/13/83
			Attest	
✓ 10.	Hough Woodframe Elevator	Substantive Review	Keeper	Linda McClelland 5-13-83
			Attest	accept Patrick Andrus 5/12/83

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Multiple Resource Area
Thematic Group

Name Woodframe Grain Elevators of the Oklahoma Panhandle Thematic Resources
State Oklahoma

Nomination/Type of Review			Date/Signature
11. Eva Woodframe Grain Elevator	Entered in the National Register	for Keeper	Deborah Byers 5/13/83
		Attest	
12. Mouser Grain Elevator	Substantive Review	Keeper	Linda McClelland 10/7/83
		Attest	
13. Mouser Woodframe Grain Elevator	Entered in the National Register	for Keeper	Deborah Byers 5/13/83
		Attest	
14.		Keeper	
		Attest	
15.		Keeper	
		Attest	
16.		Keeper	
		Attest	
17.		Keeper	
		Attest	
18.		Keeper	
		Attest	
19.		Keeper	
		Attest	
20.		Keeper	
		Attest	