

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions.

1. Name of Property

Historic name: Nickles Machine Shop

Other names/site number: _____

Name of related multiple property listing: _____

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

2. Location

Street & number: 600 South 1st Street

City or town: Ponca City State: OK County: Kay

Not For Publication: Vicinity:

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, 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. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

___ national ___ statewide X local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

X A ___ B X C ___ D

<p>_____</p> <p>Signature of certifying official/Title:</p> <p>_____</p> <p>State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government</p>	<p>_____</p> <p>Date</p>
<p>In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.</p>	
<p>_____</p> <p>Signature of commenting official:</p> <p>_____</p> <p>Title :</p>	<p>_____</p> <p>Date</p> <p>_____</p> <p>State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government</p>

Nickles Machine Shop
Name of Property

Kay, OK.
County and State

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register
- determined eligible for the National Register
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register
- other (explain:) _____

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

- Private:
- Public – Local
- Public – State
- Public – Federal

Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

- Building(s)
- District
- Site
- Structure
- Object

Nickles Machine Shop
Name of Property

Kay, OK.
County and State

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Early 20th Century Commercial Style

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: Brick and metal

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

Summary Paragraph

The Nickels Machine Shop at 600 South 1st Street in Ponca City, Kay County Oklahoma sprawls across nearly one full city block in an industrial area located six blocks south of the Downtown Ponca City Historic District (NRIS #10001010). The complex backs onto the railroad tracks and consists of a historic core with several large additions over time. The large building consists of eleven distinct bays facing South 1st Street with two large metal buildings connected to the west side near the railroad tracks. City directories indicate that the oldest portion of the building was constructed in 1946 and expanded throughout the next two decades. Each bay has a projecting stepped parapet at different elevations providing an interesting linear landscape on the block. The two-story tan brick buildings have brown brick trim to enhance their stepped rooflines. Overall the building's exterior displays a high degree of integrity.

Narrative Description

Site

Nickles Machine Shop is located at 600 South 1st Street approximately six blocks south of the Downtown Ponca City Historic District (NRIS #10001010), five blocks south of the Santa Fe Depot (NRIS #12000113), and three blocks north of an industrial park. The Nickles Machine

Nickles Machine Shop

Name of Property

Kay, OK.

County and State

Shop consumes most of the full block on the west side of South 1st Street. Immediately behind (west) of the property are the railroad tracks where a small spur accessed elevated loading docks. Just north of the building is a surface parking lot. The block long complex is surrounded by other small scale commercial and industrial buildings. Sixth Street is a two-lane asphalt street with brick paved angled parking on either side of the street. Five small trees line the sidewalk along the street in front of the complex. The angled parking serves those visiting the Nickles Machine Shop building. The complex building was constructed between 1946 and 1964 with construction episodes in 1946, 1952, 1955, and 1964.

Roofs

A variety of roof systems are present throughout the building. The southernmost two-story bay has a steel-clad, front gable roof with industrial steel windows on the north and south sides that can be seen behind the false fronts of the two-story portions of the property. The 1964 garage at the southern end of the building has a shallow front gable that caps the corrugated metal pre-fabricated brick clad building below. The remaining roofs are either white membrane flat roofs or shallow front gables. The entire roof system is white.

East Façade

The Nickles Machine Shop company purchased the land at 600 South 1st Street to construct their complex in 1946, which is the date of the oldest portion of the building. The front of the building or east façade faces South 1st Street and has eleven distinct bays. Three bays are two stories in height, one at one-and-a-half stories, and the remaining seven bays all one story. Stepped false front parapet walls project above the blonde brick façade. These stepped parapet walls have rectangular brown brick panels in the upper level spaces to break up the expanse of tan brick. The brown brick also extends around the vertical edges of each façade bay forming a stylized brick quoin reference. The ornamental brick treatment breaks up the large mass of the brick walls. Though the building is quite expansive on the block there are few windows or other fenestrations in this façade. Each of the one-story bays has a fixed, rectangular, glass block window opening at the pedestrian level. The center bay has a second square, fixed, glass block windows next to the rectangular glass block window. The northern most and southern most two-story bays each have large center openings with overhead garage doors while the center two-story bay has an off-center pedestrian entrance capped by a flat metal awning with two fixed window openings at the second floor. The flat metal awning today has the address number and visible evidence of sign remnants within the brown brick cornice outline detail. The central bay with overhead door is flanked by two wings, each with one rectangular glass block window, represents the first construction episode at the site. Terminating the southernmost portion of the block, is a bay constructed in 1964 with a center overhead door. The South 1st Street façade, aside from the brick detailing, is simple and relatively blank, punctuated by overhead doors, pedestrian doors, and fixed glass block windows. By 1952, the company owned most of the block and built an addition to the north end of the original building. By 1955, another addition was again added to the north. The complex expanded to the south in 1964 and aerial photograph indicates that by this time the two large rectangular metal pre-fabricated buildings were completed to the west, connecting the brick buildings to the railroad tracks and accessible

Nickles Machine Shop

Name of Property

Kay, OK.

County and State

loading dock areas. A surface parking lot is located at the north end of the complex. Scuppers with downspouts are located across the façades.

North Elevation

The north elevation is composed of concrete masonry units with a smooth painted finish and the second story of the neighboring two-story bay visible beyond. Large exhaust equipment is mounted on a metal platform resting on the roof of the northern most bay. Small openings covered with metal grates ventilate the space. This elevation looks onto the surface parking lot immediately adjacent and to the north of the building.

West (Rear) Elevation

The west elevation of the Nickles Machine Shop faces the railroad corridor. This elevation constitutes the back of the building and retains many of the utilities and services to power the property. The simple, rectangular, metal prefabricated buildings along the railroad tracks are used for storage and provided loading dock areas between the tracks and the parking area.

South Elevation

The south elevation is minimally visible as it abuts the adjacent building with only a small space between the two buildings. The south elevation represents the side wall of the 1964 addition to the building and is a corrugated metal surface.

Interior

The main pedestrian public entrance to the interior space is located at the center two-story bay where the pedestrian entrance with steel flat awning is located. Here, one area of finished office space remains separated from the industrial workshop area by concrete masonry unit wall system. Reception area and offices have drywall, carpet, and manufactured floor finishes. The remainder of the interior remains industrial and is largely unfinished open industrial space housing machinery, equipment, storage, and demarcated transportation corridors. Throughout the building are concrete floors with painted transportation corridor lines and exposed structural elements. Exposed steel trusses and columns vary in shape and size based on the construction period of the buildings. Within the earliest 1946 section, the steel trusses and structural beams are heavier and bulkier. Natural light throughout the interior space is provided by clerestory windows within the two-story bays.

Conclusion

Overall the complex retains a high degree of physical integrity. Though design features are minimal, the building represents the industrial requirements of the manufacturing plant it housed. Exposed structural features, concrete floors, clerestory windows, and heavy equipment define the interior space, while the exterior brick façade provides an interesting stepped profile to the block.

Nickles Machine Shop
Name of Property

Kay, OK.
County and State

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A. Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B. Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C. Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D. Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

- A. Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes
- B. Removed from its original location
- C. A birthplace or grave
- D. A cemetery
- E. A reconstructed building, object, or structure
- F. A commemorative property
- G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

Nickles Machine Shop
Name of Property

Kay, OK.
County and State

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Industry
Architecture

Period of Significance

1946-1964

Significant Dates

1946
1952
1955
1964

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Unknown

Nickles Machine Shop

Name of Property

Kay, OK.

County and State

Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

The Nickles Machine Shop at 600 South 1st Street is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places at the local level of significance under Criteria A for Industry for its association with the history of oil and gas production in Oklahoma and the United States. In the 1940s, the surge in need for oil and natural gas during World War II, led Nickles Machine Shop to find another industry in which their expertise in diesel engines and compressors became important. During World War II the oil and natural gas industry pumped their product across the country to meet the demands of the growing war industry. The companies changed from the oil-fired engines to natural gas fueled compressors. The Nickles Machine Shop provided services and parts for the natural gas engines that powered the compressors. This allowed companies in the oil and gas industry to move their resources from places like Texas, Oklahoma and Louisiana to the Midwest and East coast.

The Nickles Machine Shop is also eligible under Criterion C at the local level of significance for its Early 20th Century Commercial architectural style as applied to an industrial building. It is a unique example of commercial design on a massive scale, consuming an entire city block. The simple but distinct sections have false fronts with applied brick ornamentation giving them a style that reflects the early contemporary commercial architecture in the community.

The period of significance starts in 1946 when the first section of the building was built and ends in 1964 when the final additions to the building were complete. This is also the period that the company and building were most involved with oil and gas industry at this location.

Narrative Statement of Significance (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

Context History/ Early History of Ponca City

The City of Ponca City began as part of the settling of Indian lands in the late nineteenth century. The northern strip of land west of the 96th meridian began as what was known as the Cherokee Outlet. This stretch of land contained six million acres of prime grazing land. After removing the Cherokees to Indian Territory in the 1830s, the government assigned the tribe land for hunting purposes. During the 1870s and 1880s, the government also assigned the area to the Osage, Kaw (Kansa), Pawnee, Ponca, Otoe-Missouri, and Tonkawa tribes as reservation lands. The fertile land and the economic downturns of the late nineteenth century made this native held land enticing to Americans looking for better opportunities in the west. The prairie grasses and the railroad made an ideal environment for grazing, and the demand and possibility for profits led the Cherokee to lease the land to cattle ranchers. In 1873, the cattlemen formed the Cherokee Strip Cattlemen's Association and continued to lease the area from the tribe.¹

¹ Louis Seymour Barnes, "The Founding of Ponca City," *Chronicles of Oklahoma* 34 no. 2(1957): 154; Alvin O. Turner, "Cherokee Outlet Opening" *The Encyclopedia of Oklahoma History*

Nickles Machine Shop

Name of Property

Kay, OK.

County and State

The continued demand for the land by whites distressed the tribes and the federal government. In 1893, the government made a deal with the Cherokee. It would remove all intruders from Cherokee lands in Eastern Oklahoma and would allow the Cherokee to establish claims in the outlet if the tribe permitted the government to open it for white settlement. The other tribes, except the Kaw and Ponca, agreed to sell their land to the federal government. This newly opened or excess land created much excitement. In April 1893, the federal government opened up the Oklahoma territory for white settlement. In anticipation of opening the Cherokee Strip land, the government surveyed it and laid out the counties. Initially, they assigned each new county an alphabetical letter, later names were added. The future site of Ponca City resided in Kay County. On August 19, 1893, President Grover Cleveland issued a proclamation opening the Cherokee Outlet. This was one of the last areas opened to white settlement in Oklahoma territory.²

The lure of the land in the newly opened Oklahoma territory lured many people like Burton Seymour Barnes. Barnes sold furniture in Adrian, Michigan. Seeing more significant opportunity in the new territory, Barnes sold his business and headed to Arkansas City, Kansas for the opening of the Cherokee Outlet. Barnes planned to create a townsite in the new land. Before the opening, he traveled across the outlet, searching for the perfect spot. He found a spring off of the Ponca Indian reservation with the train running nearby and a train stop at the nearby town of Cross. Barnes returned to Arkansas City and began selling townsite lots for \$2.00 each. By the opening day, he had sold 2,300 lots. On September 16, 1893, Barnes joined 25,000 others lined up ready to race to claim their land. Riding in a surrey with two horses, the entrepreneur dashed to the spot he had earlier staked. Upon arrival, Barnes discovered several other people had also staked the same place. On September 21, after settling the various claim disputes, the founder held a drawing among the 2,300 people who purchased lots and new town of Ponca was born. That evening, the new citizens of Ponca elected Barnes their first mayor.³

Like most of the land run boom towns, Ponca City proliferated. Within the first two months, the city boasted a two-room schoolhouse and a Methodist church. Barnes knew that for the town to continue to thrive, it would need a railroad stop. The Santa Fe railroad which ran through the territory already had a boxcar stop one mile north in the town of Cross. The small town also had a telegraph office. Barnes petitioned unsuccessfully for a stop in Ponca City, but the railroad company refused citing the depot in Cross. Legend says that one-night Barnes and townspeople moved the Cross depot to Ponca City and forced the train to stop in the town the following morning. In reality, the business leaders of the city were successful in their petition and in September 1894, the Santa Fe authorized rails, a spur and a depot in the new town. The town was successful in getting a post office. The decision to name the new city, Ponca City, developed

www.Okhistory.org/pubhistory/enc/entry.php accessed 2/23/2019; Mary Jane Ward, "Report on the Intensive-Level Survey of The Historic Churches in Ponca City," August 2012, 8; C. D. Northcutt, William C. Ziegenhain and Bob Burke, *Palace on the Prairie*, Ponca City, OK: Marland Mansion, Inc., 2005): 26.

² Barnes, "The Founding of Ponca City," 154; Turner, "Cherokee Outlet Opening"; Ward, "Report on the Intensive-Level Survey," 8; Northcutt, *Palace on the Prairie*, 23, 26.

³ Barnes, "The Founding," 154, Turner, "Cherokee Outlet"; John Brooks Walton and Kathy Adams. *Historic Homes of Ponca City and Kay County*. (Tulsa: J.B.W Publications, 2004): 11.

Nickles Machine Shop

Name of Property

Kay, OK.

County and State

because of the post office. Because the rail station four miles south in the present-day community of White Eagle was named Ponca, the post office insisted the new town be named Ponca City. On December 19, 1893, Ponca City officially incorporated and three months later the city held its first municipal elections. Again, the people elected Barnes, the mayor.⁴

Ponca City's success in the early years relied on agriculture which made the city vital to Kay County. The town quickly became the commercial center for the county. Native Americans, farmers, and ranchers conducted their business regularly there, thus boosting its economy. The boom led to the construction of a flour mill and electric lights in 1894. Just a few years later, in 1896, the town boasted telephone lines. By 1910, the town featured a beautiful city hall and 4,000 people claimed it as their home.

Discovery of Oil and the Economic Boom of Ponca City

It was the discovery of oil and natural gas that brought an economic boom to Ponca City. Oil exploration began in Indian Territory in the 1890s. Quickly, explorers struck oil in Chelsea in 1889, Muskogee in 1894 and near Bartlesville in 1897. Because the land belonged to the native tribes, little could be done to further production until the Dawes Commission allowed individual Indians to lease their properties. In 1904, drillers struck oil in Red Fork and a year later at Glenn Pool. These ushered in the oil boom. By statehood in 1907, Oklahoma produced forty-three and half million barrels of oil.⁵

It was during this time that Ernest Whitworth Marland came to Oklahoma in search of opportunities in oil and gas. After graduating from Michigan Law School in 1893, he joined the Pennsylvania Bar and at the age of twenty-one and opened his own law office. In 1895, Marland purchased an oil interest and then began purchasing coal mining leases. He quickly found success in the oil and coal industries. In 1901, he became the general counsel and president of the Pittsburg Securities and Guaranty Company. This success would be short-lived. In 1907, Marland lost everything in the economic panic that hit the nation. Hearing of the opportunities in the newly opened Oklahoma Territory, he sold everything and headed west. Marland arrived in the new territory and headed to Glenn Pool and Red Fork. Deciding to try his luck elsewhere he headed to further west to the former Cherokee Strip land. Arriving in the Cherokee Outlet in 1908, Marland visited the Miller Brothers, who in the early 1890s, began operating the 101 Ranch (NRIS #73001560), a large and successful cattle ranch that stretched across 110,000 acres and included a Wild West show and movie pictures⁶ near present-day Ponca City. In his meeting with them, he was hoping to get permission to drill on their property. In February 1909, he staked the location of his first test well. It turned out to be dry, so Marland abandoned it and drilled seven more holes. This time he struck natural gas, but he had no interest in gas drilling.

⁴ Barnes, "The Founding," 159; Walton, "Historic Homes," 12.

⁵ Faulk, Odie B. and William D. Welge, "Oklahoma: A Rich Heritage," (California: American Historical Press, 2004), 186.

⁶ "Ponca City History" www.poncacity.com/history accessed 1/12/2019; Mary Jane Ward, "Report on the Intensive-Level Survey Of The Historic Churches in Ponca city," August 2012, 8.

Nickles Machine Shop

Name of Property

Kay, OK.

County and State

At this point, Marland needed the money and began looking for investors. He found W. H. McFadden, who agreed to invest \$66,000 in Marland's tenth well. McFadden, who had apprenticed in a steel mill, left West Virginia with money he had borrowed from his life insurance. McFadden suffered from lung problems due to the acid from the steel mill. Believing he was dying, the young man headed to Oklahoma looking for better health and opportunities. His investment in Marland's well changed his luck. In 1910, Marland hit oil.⁷

Quickly, Marland formed the 101 Ranch Oil Company. McFadden became one of the first stockholders along with J.C. McCaskey, Franklin Kenny, who came to Ponca City with Marland and Lew Wentz, who became the wealthiest one-man oil company owner in the 1920s. In 1911, the oilman drilled 1,500 feet to strike oil. Marland's success rested on his use of geology and science to locate the oil. This was a first in oil history. In 1912, Marland opened two fields in Kay County and built pipelines to supply gas from the wells he drilled to the towns of Newkirk, Tonkawa, and Ponca. In 1912, Marland began constructing a refinery in Ponca City and formed the Marland Oil Company which took over the 101 Ranch Oil operations. The new company operated over twenty wells. By 1913, E. W. Marland's Kay County Gas company became one of the world's most significant natural gas suppliers.⁸

The discovery of oil and the formation and construction of Marland's oil company and refinery led to an economic boom in Ponca City. By 1916, the population of the city tripled. The refinery itself included a tank farm, a six-story office building, and 1,000 houses. With the fortunes being made in oil, Marland and his executives, such as Lew Wentz and William McFadden began investing in real estate and construction throughout the city. As their fortunes amassed, the city's amenities grew to include public swimming pools, parks, and schools. Marland's success and interest in developing the town he and his employees called home, led him to construct over 400 homes in the city. Often, he brought in professional architects like John Duncan Forsyth to design houses and structures. Marland also purchased land to build a free golf course for the community. By 1920, Ponca City's population reached 7,000 people and averaged one house a day completed construction. In 1922, Marland Oil controlled one-tenth of the world's oil reserve.⁹

In 1928, Marland began a business relationship with Wall Street financier John Pierpont Morgan. Morgan convinced the oilman to merge his company with Continental Oil. At the time, Marland Oil Company owned 3,000 wells and operated a thousand gas stations in thirty states. While E. W. Marland, honeymooned, J.P. Morgan arranged a hostile take-over of Marland Oil Company, thus forcing Marland out of his own company. The former oilman tried unsuccessfully to start another oil company. The great depression of the 1930s hit Oklahoma hard. Marland turned to politics. In 1932, Oklahomans elected him to the U. S. House of Representatives, and in 1934,

⁷ John Joseph Matthews, E. W. *Marland: Life and Death of an Oilman*, (Norman: University of Oklahoma, 1974): 18-20; Northcutt, "Palace on the Prairie," 17, 30, 33-35; "William H. (Bill) McFadden," www.kaycountyinfo/ncoha/legends.htm accessed September 18, 2019; "Ponca City History,"

⁸ John Joseph Matthews, E. W. *Marland: Life and Death of an Oilman*, (Norman: University of Oklahoma, 1974): 18-20; Northcutt, "Palace on the Prairie," 17, 33-35; "Lew Wentz," www.kaycountyinfo/ncoha/legends.htm accessed September 19, 2019; "Ponca City History,"

⁹ Northcutt, "Palace on the Prairie," 35-42; "Our History," www.conocophillips.com/about-us/ourhistory/1910-1929.htm Accessed March 11, 2019. "Ponca City History,"

Nickles Machine Shop

Name of Property

Kay, OK.

County and State

they elected him as their tenth governor. Marland's experience of building a successful business and losing it all served him well as a governor and politician.¹⁰

Despite, E. W. Marland no longer heading his oil company, Conoco Oil, who merged with Marland Oil, still had an impact on the community. During World War II, Conoco Oil helped the war effort by developing products to help the United States and its allies win the war. After the conflict, the company expanded its operations. In 1949, the company moved its headquarters from Ponca City to Houston, Texas. It continued to operate a refinery in Ponca City. The late 1960s-early 1970s and the Middle East Oil Crisis increased the demand for oil and gas exploration. This increased production in Oklahoma and fueled the economy of Ponca City again. Today, the company still maintains the refinery and other operations which help fuel the economy of Ponca City and the state of Oklahoma.¹¹

Criteria A: Industry

Clair Nickles, who came to the city in 1894 with his family, graduated from Ponca City High School in 1908. Industrious and inventive, Nickles took an interest in developing automobiles. After the invention of cars in the late nineteenth century, auto-headlights were created to illuminate the streets ahead. These new headlights used acetylene fuel to power the lights. The light used a small carbide-acetylene generator to fuel the lamps. In 1910, Clair Nickles invented a device that would regulate the fuel in car headlights. The Carbo-Light created by Nickles made the lights last longer and safer. In 1911, he patented his invention. The demand for the new device led him to move to Indiana for its production. However, Nickles' Carbo-Light did not last long. Electric headlights made it obsolete.¹²

Still interested in automotives, Nickles moved back to Ponca City. By this time, the oil boom was in full swing. Men drilled throughout the territory, hoping to make their riches. Of course, E. W. Marland's fortune helped fuel the economic and population booms of Ponca City. When Nickles returned to his hometown, it boasted of 5,000 people and 500 telephones. Telephones were not the only new invention taking over the city. The oil boom brought automobiles. In 1915, Nickles opened Nickles and Kimball Machine Shop at 104 E. Central Avenue. The shop specialized in auto accessories, repair, and welding. In 1918, Nickles' partner changed to E. E. Gentry, and they changed the name of the shop to Nickles and Gentry. By 1926, the men moved the shop to 201 South 1st Street.¹³

By the 1930s, the shop's expertise and business evolved. In 1930, Nickles' partner E. E. Gentry had left, and Nickles had the shop incorporated as Nickles Machine Shop. The shop began doing large engine repairs and providing replacement parts. At this time, they began working on diesel engines as well. Cities began using large diesel engines for their power plants and Nickles

¹⁰ "Our History," "Earnest Whitworth 'E.W' Marland" www.marlandmansion/history.html accessed September 21, 2019.

¹¹ Micheal Cassity, "Intensive Level Survey for Ponca City, Oklahoma," (September 22, 2008): 31.

¹² "C.A. Nickles," Clark Nickles, Ponca City, Oklahoma

¹³ Ibid, Ponca City 1926 City Directory.

Nickles Machine Shop

Name of Property

Kay, OK.

County and State

Machine Shop supplied the parts, repaired the engines, and worked on power plants across Oklahoma.¹⁴

World War II had a significant impact on the oil and natural gas industry. As a result, it also impacted Nickles Machine Shop. The demand for oil led to the laying of pipelines from Texas and Oklahoma to states in the Midwest and East coast. This provided the needed oil and natural gas for war production. Compressors helped to move the fuel along the miles of pipeline. Natural gas transmission companies, refineries and city power plants all began to use large gas engines. Already familiar with the engines and parts, Nickles expanded. Clair Nickles took on a new partner, a German engineer by the name of Hein O. Swenk. Nickles and Swenk became the largest independent manufacturer of replacement parts of stationary gas and diesel engines. In 1946, the company purchased open land at 600 South First Street. Quickly they constructed a large manufacturing building that featured a large bay door and two side wings. Inside they filled the shop with large machinery. By the 1950s, Swenk had left the company, and the name changed again to Nickles Machine Shop, but business continued to grow. Already owning almost the entire block, the company built an addition to the north end of the original building and later that decade they added another addition to the north end. As the oil and gas industry expanded in the 1960s, so did Nickles Machine Shop. The continued growth forced the company to add another addition to the south side of the original building. Through the late twentieth century, the company employed between 50 and 100 employees, many who worked at the company their entire career. In 2001, the family sold the business and the building to Cooper Industry. This later became a division of the Cameron Corporation. In 2008, the company became Nickles Industry and continued to serve the oil and gas industry. Later in 2013, the company closed the facility at 200 South First Street, and in 2017, the company sold the building to Epic International who continues to own the building.¹⁵ The building was built and used for industrial manufacturing purposes and continues to be used for industrial purposes to this day.

Criteria C: Architecture

The Nickles Machine Shop built a commercial style building for industrial work in phases. This Early 20th Century Commercial architectural style is found not only on the original building section, but each of the additions facing South 1st Street. Though the Early 20th Century Commercial architectural style is very prevalent in Ponca City, its use on an industrial building is not. The use of brick helps to ground the building and give it sense of permanence and strength. The care and attention to consistency throughout all the building phases of the building is also testament to the building's longevity and permanence. The scale, design, and construction method afforded to the architectural style lend itself well to the development of the property, which by the end of its expansions, consumed an entire city block, and continues to stand thus today. This also helps the building, as a whole, not feel as imposing as it could due to the implementation of undulating parapets, variations in fenestration, engaged pilasters between each building section, and brick detailing, all of which are used to break up the otherwise monolithic expanse of buff colored brick. The simple but distinct bays or sections all share a common

¹⁴ Ponca City 1930 City Directory, Clark Nickles, Interview by Stacy Reaves, 15 February 2019, Ponca City, Oklahoma.

¹⁵ Clark Nickles Interview; Ponca City 1946 City Directory; "Our History."

Nickles Machine Shop

Name of Property

Kay, OK.

County and State

façade with a simple brick ornamentation that is in-keeping with the early twentieth century style of the city. This stepped parapet, which corresponds to the front gable and lean-to roofs of the building sections behind the façade, and contrasting brick detailing creates the illusion of multiple storefronts and buildings, thereby maintaining and paying homage to the commercial scale of the nearby Downtown Ponca City Historic District (NRIS #10001010) and city. The block glass windows and large metal garage doors in the façade and the clerestory windows in the upper portions of the side elevations, reflect the industrial nature of the building's use. The use of the Early 20th Century Commercial architectural style as a front for an industrial building is rare and makes the building unique in Ponca City.

While isolated singular industrial properties exist along the first street corridor and elsewhere in the city for the most part no none of these present the scale of the historic Nickles operation, except for perhaps the expansive oil and gas installations themselves and the Robin Hood grain complex. The very fact that the Nickles machine shop occupies almost an entire block reflects the scale and impact of the local oil and gas industry in Oklahoma and the necessary manufacturing infrastructure in support of the economic engine. Although Nickles Machine shop was not the primary employer in Ponca City, it regularly employed between 50-100 people most of its period of operation. The expansion of the building over time reflects the changes and growth of the oil and gas industry between the 1940s and 1960s. The sale of the business in the early 2000's reflects the decline and ever-changing nature of the industry and its impact on the local and state economy.

Nickles Machine Shop
Name of Property

Kay, OK.
County and State

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

PRIMARY

Kay County Land Deeds- Kay County Clerk, Newkirk, Oklahoma.
Kay County Tax Assessor Records, Newkirk, Oklahoma.
Ponca City Directories, 1924, 1930, 1935, 1940, 1946.
Ponca City Public Library, Ponca City, Oklahoma.
Nickles, Clark. Interview by Stacy W. Reaves, February 15, 2019, Ponca City, Oklahoma.

SECONDARY

Baird, David W. *Oklahoma: A History*. Norman: University of Oklahoma, 2011.
Barnes, L. S. "Founding of Ponca City," *Chronicles of Oklahoma* (Vol. 34, no. 2): 154-162.
Cassity, Micheal J. *Intensive Level Survey for Downtown Ponca City*, Broken Arrow, OK. 2008.
Faulk, Odie B. and William D. Welge, *Oklahoma: A Rich Heritage*, (California: American Historical Press): 2004
Matthews, John Joseph. *Life and Death of an Oilman: The Career of E. W. Marland*. Norman: University of Oklahoma, 1951.
McAlister, Virginia and Lee. *A Field Guide to American Houses*. New York: Alfred Knopf, 1992.
Northcutt, C.D and William C. Ziegenhain, and Bob Burke. *Palace on the Prairie: The Marland Family Story*. Ponca City, OK., Marland Mansion Inc., 2005.
Ponca City Public Library- Vertical Files- John S. Alcorn, Ponca City, Oklahoma
Rister, Carl Coke. *Oil! Titan of the Southwest* Norman: University of Oklahoma, 1949
Turner, Alvin O. "Cherokee Outlet Opening" *The Encyclopedia of Oklahoma History* .
[www.Okhistory.org/pubhistory/enc/entry.php](http://www.okhistory.org/pubhistory/enc/entry.php) accessed 2/23/2019
Walton, John Brooks and Kathy Adams. *Historic Homes of Ponca City and Kay County*. Tulsa: J.B.W Publications, 2004.
Weaver, Bobby. "Burbank Field," *The Encyclopedia of Oklahoma History and Culture*,
<https://www.okhistory.org/publications/enc/entry.php?entry=BU008> Accessed 02/10/2019.
_____. "Our History," www.conocphillips.com/about-us/ourhistory accessed 02/19/2019.

<https://www.epic-int.com/latest-news/epic-acquires-nickles-industrial/>
Accessed 01/05/2019

<https://www.nicklesindustries.com>
Accessed 1/9/2019

Nickles Machine Shop
Name of Property

Kay, OK.
County and State

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 # _____
- recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other
- Name of repository: _____

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of Property 2.87 acres

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: _____
(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

- | | |
|------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Latitude: 36.699481 | Longitude: -97.084662 |
| 2. Latitude: 36.699472 | Longitude: -97.084072 |
| 3. Latitude: 36.697644 | Longitude: -97.084168 |
| 4. Latitude: 36.697685 | Longitude: -97.084715 |

Nickles Machine Shop
Name of Property

Kay, OK.
County and State

Or

UTM References

Datum (indicated on USGS map): 1984

NAD 1927 or NAD 1983

- | | | |
|----------|-----------|-----------|
| 1. Zone: | Easting: | Northing: |
| 2. Zone: | Easting: | Northing: |
| 3. Zone: | Easting: | Northing: |
| 4. Zone: | Easting : | Northing: |

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

Nickles Industry building located at 600 S. 1st Street in Ponca City sits on lots 1-4 and lots 5-10 on block 22. It includes the alley adjacent and N/2 Maple Avenue adjacent lot 10 block 22 and s 2 Maple Ave Adjacent L-1 B-35 and lots 1-8 and vacant alley adjacent and north 1-foot lot 9 and adjacent alley all in block 35.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundary description includes all the property that the building sits upon and the vacant lots used for storage and parking. This is set according to the legal description of the property.

Nickles Machine Shop
Name of Property

Kay, OK.
County and State

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Dr. Stacy W. Reaves, Sr. Historian, & Melissa Gengler-Architectural historian
organization: Reaves Research and Consulting
street & number: 921 W. G St
city or town: Jenks, state: OK zip code: 74037
e-mail reavessw@gmail.com
telephone: 918-527-0514
date: May 31, 2019

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A USGS map or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

Photo Log

Name of Property: Nickles Machine Shop

City or Vicinity: Ponca City

County: Kay

State: OK

Photographer: Stacy Reaves

Date Photographed: 20 February 2019

Nickles Machine Shop
Name of Property

Kay, OK.
County and State

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

Photo No.	Description	Camera Direction
0001	East Façade	West-Southwest
0002	East Façade and North Elevation	Southwest
0003	Southernmost Building Sections and South Elevation	West
0004	Parking Lot and East Façade of Accessory Buildings	West
0005	West Elevation	North-Northeast
0006	West Elevation	South
0007	Interior of Office Space	West
0008	Interior of Original Industrial Bay	Northwest
0009	Interior of Industrial Space	South
0010	Interior of Northernmost Section	Northwest

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

Nickles Machine Shop
Name of Property
Kay County, Oklahoma
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 10 Page 1

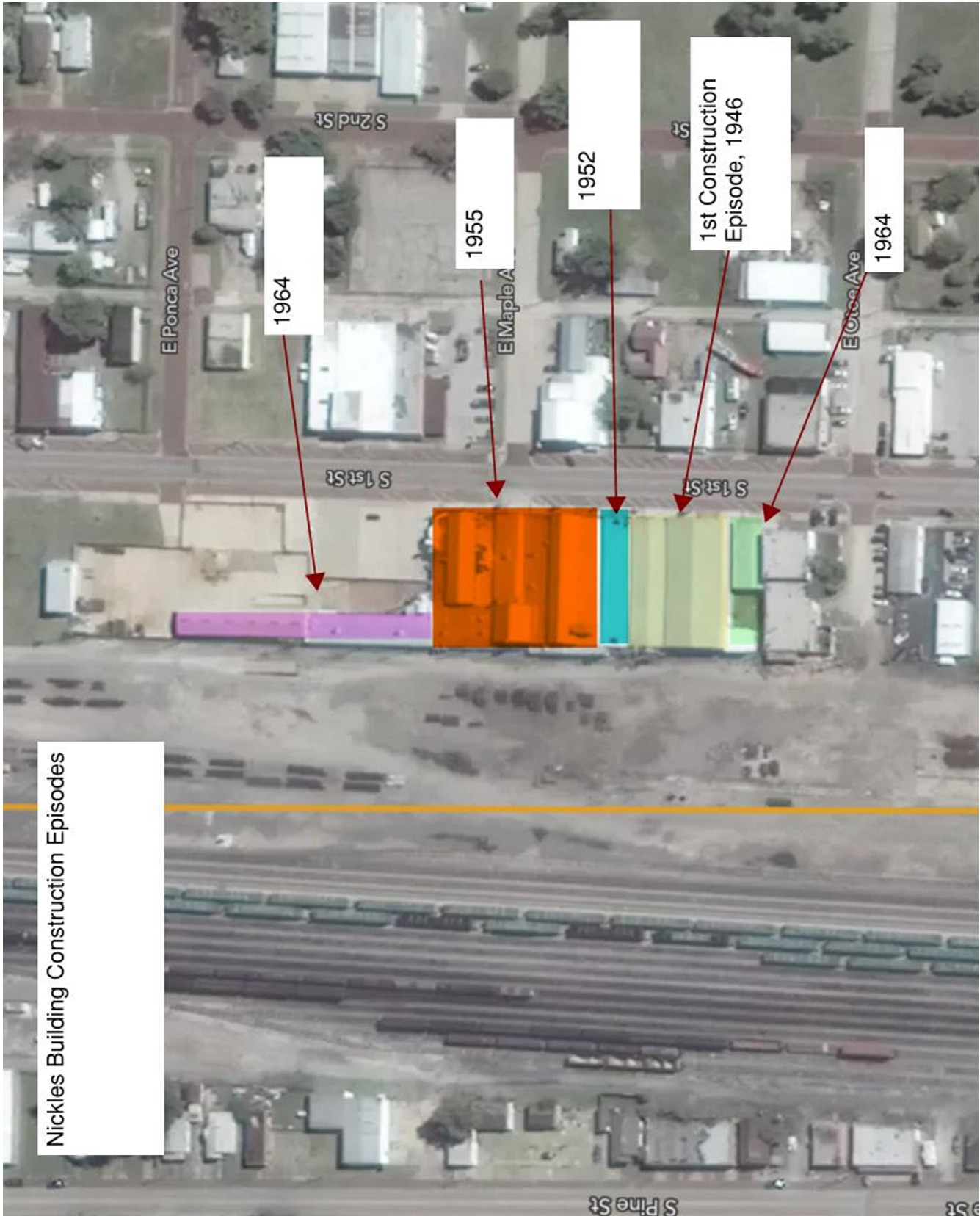


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

Nickles Machine Shop
Name of Property
Kay County, Oklahoma
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 10 Page 2



United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Nickles Machine Shop

Name of Property

Kay County, Oklahoma

County and State

N/A

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number 11

Page 2



OK_Kay County_Nickles Machine Shop_0001

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Nickles Machine Shop

Name of Property

Kay County, Oklahoma

County and State

N/A

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number 11

Page 3



OK_Kay County_Nickles Machine Shop_0002

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Nickles Machine Shop
Name of Property
Kay County, Oklahoma
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number 11 Page 4



OK_Kay County_Nickles Machine Shop_0003

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Nickles Machine Shop

Name of Property

Kay County, Oklahoma

County and State

N/A

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number 11

Page 5



OK_Kay County_Nickles Machine Shop_0004

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Nickles Machine Shop

Name of Property

Kay County, Oklahoma

County and State

N/A

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number 11

Page 6



OK_Kay County_Nickles Machine Shop_0005

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Nickles Machine Shop

Name of Property

Kay County, Oklahoma

County and State

N/A

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number 11 Page 7



OK_Kay County_Nickles Machine Shop_0006

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Nickles Machine Shop
Name of Property
Kay County, Oklahoma
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number 11 Page 8



OK_Kay County_Nickles Machine Shop_0007

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Nickles Machine Shop

Name of Property

Kay County, Oklahoma

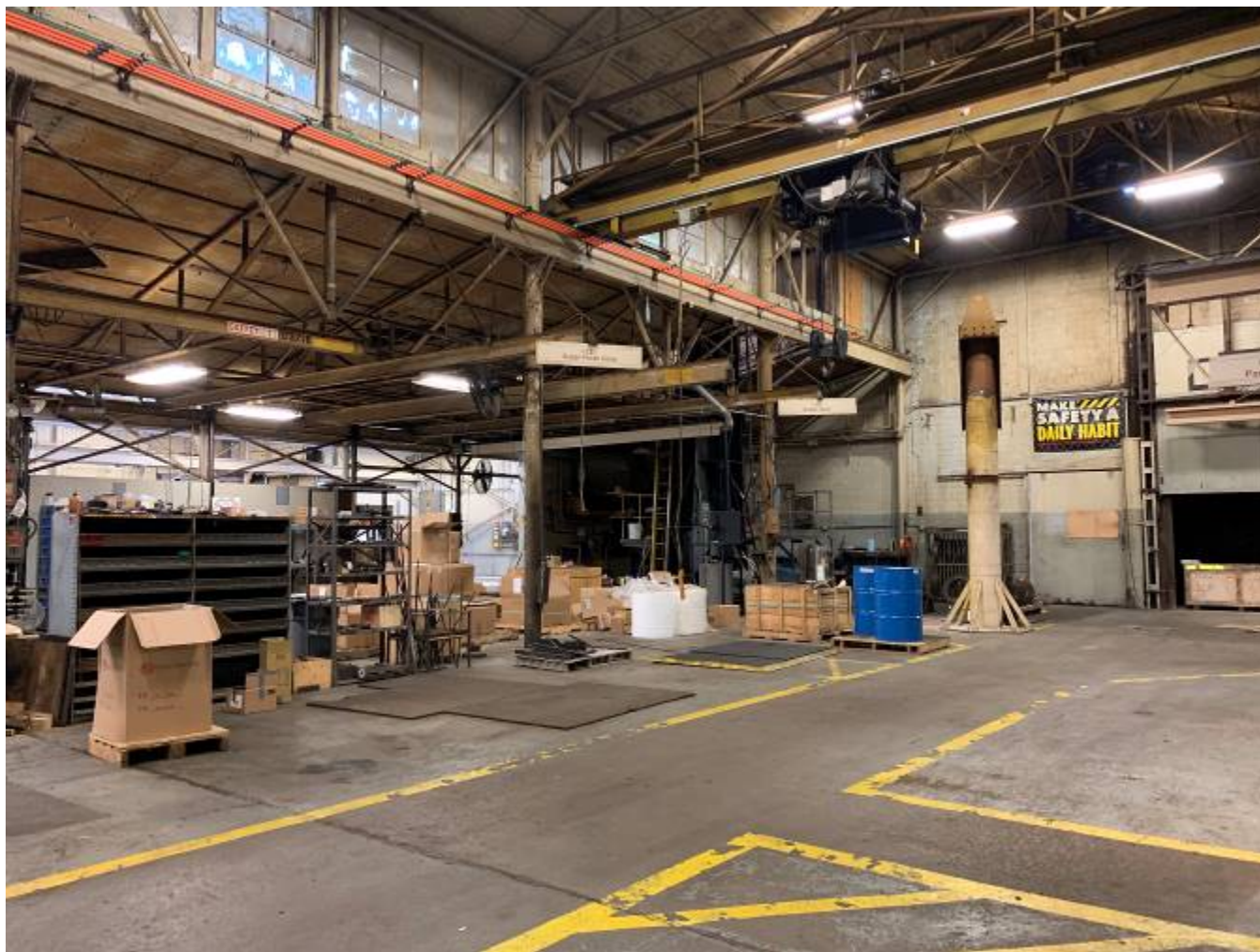
County and State

N/A

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number 11

Page 9



OK_Kay County_Nickles Machine Shop_0008

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Nickles Machine Shop
Name of Property
Kay County, Oklahoma
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number 11 Page 10



OK_Kay County_Nickles Machine Shop_0009

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Nickles Machine Shop
Name of Property
Kay County, Oklahoma
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number 11 Page 11



OK_Kay County_Nickles Machine Shop_0010