

**DESIGNATION
REPORT**

CITY OF  DALLAS 
department of planning & development

HISTORIC LANDMARK NOMINATION FORM
CITY OF DALLAS LANDMARK COMMITTEE

1. NAME:
a) Historic name of property Continental Gin Company, Dallas Plant
b) Common name of property Coerver Industries, Inc.
2. LOCATION:
a) City address: 3301 Elm/212&232 Trunk Av d) Land survey name: John Grigsby
b) Location in city: East Dallas e) Size of tract: 2.991 Acres
c) Neighborhood name: Near E Side/Deep Ellum) Block, 1st, tract: 833
3. CURRENT ZONING: Planned Development District 178
4. CLASSIFICATION (CHECK ALL APPROPRIATE):
- | | | | |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|
| Category | Ownership | Status | Present Use |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> district | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied | <input type="checkbox"/> agriculture |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> public | <input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied | <input type="checkbox"/> museum |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private | <input type="checkbox"/> work in progress | <input type="checkbox"/> commercial |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> both | <input type="checkbox"/> Accessible | <input type="checkbox"/> educational |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> Public Acquisition | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted | <input type="checkbox"/> entertainment |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> N/A in progress | <input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted | <input type="checkbox"/> government |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> being considered | <input type="checkbox"/> no | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> industrial |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | | | <input type="checkbox"/> military |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | | | <input type="checkbox"/> park |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | | | <input type="checkbox"/> residence |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | | | <input type="checkbox"/> religious |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | | | <input type="checkbox"/> scientific |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | | | <input type="checkbox"/> transp. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | | | <input type="checkbox"/> other |
5. CURRENT OWNER: Multiple ownership-see continuation sheet PHONE: _____
ADDRESS: _____ STATE: _____ ZIP: _____
6. FORM PREPARED BY:
a) NAME AND TITLE: Michael Stevens, Associate and Urban Planner
b) ORGANIZATION: EDI Architects, Inc.
c) CONTACT PERSON: Same PHONE: 214/750-1945
7. REPRESENTATION ON EXISTING SURVEYS (CHECK ALL APPROPRIATE IF KNOWN):
 ALEXANDER SURVEY (CITY WIDE) LOCAL STATE NATIONAL
 BEASLEY H.P.L. SURVEY (CBD) A B C D
 EMRICH SURVEY (CITY WIDE) STATE MARKER
 MASON SURVEY (OAK CLIFF) NATIONAL REGISTER
 VICTORIAN STRUCTURE SURVEY
 OTHER: _____

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

8. FORM RECEIVED: DATE: 1-10-86; SURVEY VERIFIED: YES; BY: PC
9. FORM FIELD CHECKED: DATE: 3-1-86; BY: PC
10. TYPE OF NOMINATION:
 ARCHEOLOGICAL STRUCTURE(S)
 SITE ONLY STRUCTURE AND SITE
 DISTRICT
 DISTRICT WITH SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS NEEDED

11. NAME OF ORIGINAL OWNER OF STRUCTURE(*): Robert S. Munger
12. DATE(S) OF ORIGINAL CONSTRUCTION AND MAJOR ALTERATIONS(*): 1888, 1888-1900, 1912, 1914
-
13. NAME OF ARCHITECTS/CONTRACTORS/OTHERS INVOLVED IN BUILDING DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION(*):
 a) ORIGINAL: Undetermined at this time.
 b) ALTERATIONS: _____
-
14. NATURAL/URBAN DESIGN FEATURES OF SITE: Excellent intact grouping of turn-of-the-century architecture, helps define warehouse area of Near East Side.
-

15. PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

Condition:

excellent
 good
 fair

Check one:

deteriorated
 ruins
 unexposed
 unaltered
 altered

Check one:

original site
 moved date

DESCRIBE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE; INCLUDE STYLE(S) OF ARCHITECTURE, CURRENT CONDITION, AND RELATIONSHIP TO SURROUNDING FABRIC (STRUCTURES). PLEASE ELABORATE ON PERTINENT MATERIALS USED AND STYLE(S) OF ARCHITECTURAL DETAILING FOR ROOFS, WALLS, WINDOWS, DOORS, AND ANY OTHER BUILDING OR SITE EMBELLISHMENTS OR DECORATIONS.

The Continental Gin Company buildings are of interest as a substantial and basically intact complex of turn-of-the-century industrial structures. Ranging from the 1888 vernacular masonry three-story buildings with ornamental corbelled cornices to the hybrid glass-fronted, 1914 industrial structures with Flemish bond brick and almost Palladian symmetry, the Continental Gin Company is an unusual survivor in Dallas and North Texas. While parts of the complex were removed at an early date, the remaining structures have had relatively few modifications and the integrity of the buildings remains essentially undisturbed.

The Continental Gin complex is a collection of industrial structures built in three phases between 1888-1914. The company manufactured cotton gins and equipment in the various buildings constructed during this period. The oldest existing structures in the complex (1888, 1888-1900) are located at 232 Trunk Avenue and 3309 Elm Street, and are two- and three-story flat-roofed buildings, built of load-bearing masonry, seventh course common bond, and heavy timber. Their design is spartan with corbelled cornices, 4/4 window openings with operable wooden sashes, occasional segmented arched openings for loading, and tan-red brick with "star bosses." The largest structure contains a single line of timber columns bearing two spans of approximately 30' and 3"x14' joists. Floors are covered with 1'x2' hardwood diagonally laid. It appears the building was enlarged in increments of approximately 100', eastward from the earliest two-story building. The buildings appear to be in sound condition.

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION (continued)

In 1912, a new foundry was constructed on the west side of the property at 212 Trunk Avenue. It is built of load-bearing masonry, seventh course common bond, and steel beams and trusses. Although modified on the interior, the exterior retains most of the segmented arches over the window and door opening and (apparently original) steel sash windows. The original broken gable roof, thought to be metal, carried numerous shed-roof gables and ridgeline heat ventilators (removed). The overall design is restrained and functional. The plan and elevations reflect a classical attitude of balance and simplicity. The Palladian motif, 'A-B-A,' is evident in the front and rear facades. The plan consists of the 'main hall' with two flanking "side aisles." Its structural condition is poor with some exterior brick and mortar deterioration and minor modification.

In 1914, the complex was expanded with four new structures located at 3301, 3311, and 3333 Elm Street and at the rear of 3333 Elm at Pacific. On Elm Street, these structures are rather formal and defined the company's new image at its "front door." These two- and three-story flat-roofed buildings are constructed of steel-reinforced concrete with "mushroom" columns and two-way slabs, exterior infill of "deep eggplant" fired brick and operable steel sash windows. A tall one-story structure behind 3333 Elm Street housed power-generating equipment and was similarly detailed and constructed of concrete and brick, with an attached masonry smokestack bearing the Company logo. Both 3333 Elm and the tall one-story structure behind are not a part of the designated district.

Dominant features of the building are the classically proportioned steel sash windows and fan lights with brick arches and cast stone keystones. The corners are also articulated with cast stone quoins bracketed by pilasters which add visual strength to the building. Two cast-in-place arched bridges connect the main block at 3311 with the lower, flanking buildings at 3301 and 3333 Elm Street. The Condition of these buildings is good, and they are largely intact, except for demolition of the power plant chimney and removal of the generating and steam heating equipment which served the complex.

At the time of these additions industrial construction in the U.S. was changing from load-bearing masonry-timber system to that of cast-in-place reinforced concrete with brick infill. Evidence of this shift in technique is the most significant architectural feature of the complex, demarcating architectural "eras." Perhaps because these new structures served as corporate headquarters as well, the company felt a need to apply again the Palladian balance to their front facade. The central, main building is three stories, with two-story flanking buildings. The main building also exhibits decorative concrete pilasters, imitating stone, and the floors are not expressed equally. Instead, there is a classic sense of horizontal and vertical layering. The "base" is defined by rusticated corner pavilion pilasters and a "string course moulding" at second floor level. The third floor is unmarked ("the body") and the "head" is a deep concrete cornice with decorative reveal patterns over the windows which mimic jack arches. Vertically, the corners step forward and are more decorative and massive. The company must not have accepted the image of the structural concrete as suitable to its purposes, preferring more classical composition and masonry-like detailing, although many of the cues are purely symbolic. The brickwork, interestingly, is Flemish bond.

A steel water tower stands on the north side of the complex. Though damaged, this tower continues to be a local landmark easily visible from the surrounding neighborhoods and freeways. A large two-level steel truss bridge connects the two major manufacturing buildings (3309 and 3311). The original complex consisted of a small brick foundry building (demolished) and brick manufacturing building(s). Wooden manufacturing buildings which were constructed along Elm Street were peaked-roof, wood-sided structures (demolished 1913). They were representative of the neighboring urban fabric of predominantly wooden houses and commercial buildings. The gin company, at this point, used several off-site wooden facilities on adjacent land to the northeast of the current tract, but they have been demolished. It appears that as the complex grew on Elm Street, the neighboring tracts turned from predominantly residential to manufacturing/commercial, and many of these structures exist today.

The buildings of this complex reflect two generations of manufacturing facilities and construction technology. Building styles illustrate changes in architectural design. The Continental Gin Company is noteworthy also for its planning and unusual exterior spaces. The complex contains several of the few remaining excellent singular examples of late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century industrial architecture in Dallas. The juxtaposition of industrial utility and classic eclecticism evident on the 1914 additions is significant in the designer's purely symbolic homage to the mason's art, an ambiguity rarely seen in industrial design of the era.

(*)Must be annotated

16. HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE:

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE, INCLUDE: HISTORY, CULTURAL INFLUENCES, SPECIAL EVENTS AND IMPORTANT PERSONAGES, INFLUENCES ON NEIGHBORHOOD, NEIGHBORHOOD'S INFLUENCE ON THE CITY, ETC. (*)

Cotton was a mainstay of the Dallas and East Texas economy for much of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and the Continental Gin Company is one of the most visible reminders of that once-pivotal industry to be found in the State. Continental Gin grew to be one of the largest and most innovative concerns of its type in the country under the leadership of Robert S. Munger and his brother Stephen. They were also known for their philanthropic and real estate ventures in the area. The Continental Gin Company complex is also significant as an unusual and intact survivor of turn-of-the-century Texas heavy industry; there were relatively few such manufacturing sites in North Texas, and most of these have since been abandoned, substantially altered or, more likely, removed altogether. The Continental Gin Company, however, remains substantially as completed in 1914.

Robert S. Munger was born in Rutersville, Texas on July 24, 1854. Working with cotton as a boy in Mexia, Texas he developed an improved type of cotton gin. After receiving patents on his innovations, Mr. Munger established at Dallas, Texas in 1884 a small plant for the manufacture of the Munger Ginning System. Capital support to expand production was provided by the prominent Dallas banker, W. H. Gaston, and the Munger Improved Cotton Machine Manufacturing Company was organized. Until 1899, the Munger machinery sales were the largest of any single manufacturer in the West.

With increasing demand east of the Mississippi, R. S. Munger decided to establish another plant in Birmingham, Alabama, and his brother, S. I. Munger, took over the plant in Dallas during his absence.

The Continental Gin Company was created in October of 1899 by a merger of the Munger companies in Dallas and Birmingham; the Daniel Pratt Gin Company of Prattville, Alabama; the Winship Machine Company of Atlanta, Georgia; and the Eagle Cotton Gin Company of Bridgewater, Massachusetts. The Continental Gin Company soon became the largest manufacturer of cotton gins in the United States with a large export business to South America, South Africa and Russia.

The various structures which comprised the Dallas part of the Continental Gin Company are situated in the block bounded by Trunk Avenue, Elm Street and Pacific Street. The site is just east of the Central Business District. The Plant was easily identified by a large water tower which was partially destroyed by a tornado in the early 1970's. Located to the north of the plant is the Munger Place development which at one time attracted many of Dallas' elite residents. This development is now listed on the National Register of Historic Places and is a Dallas Historic District.

The Dallas office of the Company was responsible for accepting all the western sales orders and distributing them to the factories. The Dallas plant also housed one of two demonstration facilities of the Company. A new demonstration outfit was constructed in 1902.

Not much is known about the original foundry because of the destruction of city records dating before 1900. However, a second foundry was completed in 1912 and is still standing. This one-story building was valued at \$16,000 and took approximately six months to complete. The contractor was D. L. Stevenson with Nettleson Contractors, Inc.

While there was a good brick warehouse at the Dallas plant, the manufacturing buildings were of frame construction and badly in need of repair. In the fall of 1913 an appropriation of \$250,000 was made for four new buildings. The largest of these was valued at \$175,000. A building committee consisting of R. S. Munger, chairman, S. I. Munger, D. T. Smith and Daniel Pratt was appointed to supervise the construction.

The Continental Gin Company was a booming industry in the early 1920's and received honorable recognition during the 1940's for its aid in the war effort. Corporate offices were located at 3333 Elm Street. The foundry is located at 212 Trunk Avenue and was sold in 1962 to Al-Mar Investment. The remaining portions of the gin company were bought by Coerver Properties in 1964 and 1966. The Coerver Company later purchased the foundry from Al-Mar Investments in 1974. The old Continental plant still houses the offices and foundry of Coerver Industries.

R. S. Munger was not only innovative in the cotton gin industry but also contributed to the development of the City of Dallas. While in Birmingham, Munger observed restricted residential districts and decided in 1900 to devise such a district for Dallas. Munger Place, located north of the Continental Gin Company, was opened in 1905 as Dallas' third subdivision and first deed-restricted subdivision. R. S. Munger was also quite influential in the development of the Lakewood Country Club, an institution in Dallas since 1913. Also, because of the exclusiveness of the entire Munger Place Development (including the Swiss Avenue Historic District), R. S. Munger managed to attract many of the prominent citizens of Dallas in the political, social, and economic circles.

His brother, S. I. Munger, was also a prominent and beloved citizen of Dallas. He was a director of several banks in Dallas and served as President of the Continental Gin Company from 1903 until his death in 1921. After his brother's death, R. S. Munger served as president of the Company until his death in 1923.

17. ATTACHMENTS (CHECK ALL APPROPRIATE):

<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT OR SITE MAP	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SLIDES, PHOTOS, ETC. (EACH FACADE)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SITE PLAN	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ADDITIONAL DESCRIPTIVE MATERIAL
<input type="checkbox"/> ANNOTATIONS(*)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BIBLIOGRAPHY

18. INVENTORY OF STRUCTURES FOR DISTRICTS ONLY, SEE ATTACHED SHEETS.
(NOTE: SEE ATTACHED INSTRUCTIONS BEFORE PROCEEDING)

NUMBER OF STRUCTURES: 6 (inc. water tower) NUMBER OF ATTACHED SHEETS: 7

(*) Must be annotated

NAME OF DISTRICT: Continental Gin Complex

FORM PREP. BY: Michael Stevens

- A. 232 Trunk Avenue: Contributing Building
Built: 1888
Original Owner: Robert S. Munger
Present Owner: Patricia Stahl
Condition: Good; however, exterior brick walls have been painted and replacement windows are not true style.
This two-story brick building is one of the oldest existing structures in the complex. Constructed of load-bearing masonry, seventh course common bond, and heavy timber, the building is industrial-utilitarian in style. The design is spartan with a flat roof, corbelled cornices, 4/4 window openings, decorative window arches, and "star bosses" on exterior brick walls.
- B. 3309 Elm Street (situated along T&P Railroad): Contributing Building
Built: 1888-1900 (3 phases)
Original Owner: Robert S. Munger
Present Owner: Continental Gin Industries, Ltd.
Condition: Good, brick unpainted and original windows intact.
As the other oldest existing structure on site, this three-story brick structure was built in three phases in increments of approximately 100'. Built in the industrial-utilitarian style, it has a flat roof and is constructed of load-bearing masonry and heavy timber. It contains a single line of timber columns bearing two spans of approximately 30'. The 4/4 window openings have operable wooden sashes and decorative segmented arches. "Star bosses" also decorate the exterior brick walls.
- C. 212 Trunk Avenue (The Foundry): Contributing Building
Built: 1912
Original Owner: Robert S. Munger
Present Owner: Continental Gin Industries, Ltd.
Condition: Demolished - the building was structurally unsound and exhibits sagging steeltrusses and crumbling brick and mortar joints. It was de-listed from the National Register and was demolished in February 1986. The foundry building was built of load-bearing masonry, seventh course common bond, and steel beams and trusses. Its design is a simple industrial style with a Palladian motif. The overall design was restrained and functional with the plan and elevations reflecting an attitude of balance and simplicity. The Palladian motif, "A-B-A", was evident in the front and rear facades. The building plan consisted of a main hall and two flanking side aisles. Segmented arches were located over window and door openings and the roof was a broken gable in form.
- D. 3301 Elm Street: Contributing Building Site
Built: 1914
Original Owner: Robert S. Munger
Present Owner: Continental Gin Industries, Ltd.
Condition: Good - currently undergoing renovation.
- E. 3311 Elm Street: Contributing Building
Built: 1914
Original Owner: Robert S. Munger
Present Owner: Continental Gin Industries, Ltd.
Condition: Good

This group of structures is rather formal and defined the company's new image at its "front door". These two- and three-story flat-roofed buildings are constructed of steel reinforced concrete with "mushroom" columns and two-way slabs, exterior infill of "deep eggplant" fired brick and operable steel sash windows.

Dominant features of the buildings are the classically proportioned steel sash windows and fan lights with brick arches and cast stone keystones. The corners are also articulated with cast stone quoins bracketed by pilasters which add visual strength to the buildings. Two cast-in-place arched bridges connect the main block at 3311 with the lower, flanking buildings at 3301 and 3333 Elm Street. The condition of these buildings is good, and they are largely intact, except for demolition of the power plant chimney and removal of the generating and steam heating equipment which served the complex.

At the time of these additions, industrial construction in the U.S. was changing from load-bearing masonry-timber systems to that of cast-in-place reinforced concrete with brick infill. Evidence of this shift in technique is the most significant architectural feature of the complex, demarcating architectural "eras". Also, these structures reflect the Palladian balance in their front facades. The central, main building is three stories, with two-story flanking buildings. The main building also exhibits decorative concrete pilasters, imitating stone, and the floors are not expressed equally. Instead, there is a classic sense of horizontal and vertical layering. The "base" is defined by rusticated corner pavilion pilasters and a "string course moulding" at the second-floor level. The third floor is unmarked ("the body") and the "head" is a deep concrete cornice with decorative reveal patterns over the windows which mimic jack arches. Vertically, the corners step forward and are more decorative and massive.

- F. Steel Water Tower (behind 3311 Elm): Contributing Structure
 - Built: 1914
 - Original Owner: Robert S. Munger
 - Present Owner: Continental Gin Industries, Inc.
 - Condition: Fair, altered when the cone or "hat" blew off in high winds.

Continuation Sheet

OWNERS OF PROPERTY

Continental Gin Industries, Ltd.
3013A Canton Street
Dallas, Texas 75226

Buildings located at 3301, 3309, 3311 Elm, and 212 Trunk, and buildings behind 3309 Elm.
2.915 Acres

Patricia Stahl
3525 Congress Avenue #3
Dallas, Texas 75219
Building at 232 Trunk.

.0763 Acres

MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

1. Story of Continental Gin Company, 1900-1952, by Algernon L. Smith, Birmingham, Alabama
Copyright - 1952
2. Dallas County Deed Records
3. City of Dallas Munger Place Nomination Report

PRESERVATION MERIT

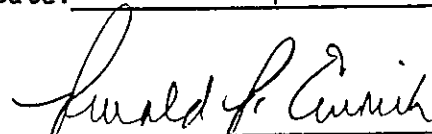
- | | | | |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|
| A. Character, interest, or value as part of the development, heritage or cultural characteristics of the City of Dallas, State of Texas, or the United States. | <u>X</u> | H. Embodiments of elements of architectural design, detail, materials, or craftsmanship which represent a significant architectural innovation. | ___ |
| B. Location as the site of a significant historical event. | ___ | I. Relationship to other distinctive buildings, sites, or areas which are eligible for preservation according to a plan based on historic, cultural, or architectural motif. | ___ |
| C. Identification with a person or persons who significantly contributed to the culture and development of the city. | <u>X</u> | J. Unique location of singular physical characteristics representing an established and familiar visual feature of a neighborhood, community, or the city. | <u>X</u> |
| D. Exemplification of the cultural, economic, social, or historical heritage of the city. | <u>X</u> | K. Archeological value in that it has produced or can be expected to produce data affecting theories of historic or prehistoric value. | ___ |
| E. Portrayal of the environment of a group of people in an era of history characterized by a distinctive architectural style. | ___ | L. Value as an aspect of community sentiment or public pride. | ___ |
| F. Embodiment of distinguishing characteristics of an architectural type or specimen. | ___ | | |
| G. Identification as the work of an architect or master builder whose individual work has influenced the development of the city. | ___ | | |

RECOMMENDATION

The Designation Task Force respectfully requests the City of Dallas Landmark Committee to deem this proposed landmark meritorious of historic recognition as outlined in City Ordinance 51-4.501.

Further, this task force endorses the preservation criteria, policy recommendations and landmark boundary as presented by the Department of Planning and Development staff.

Date: March 1, 1986



Ron Emrich
Senior Planner/Historic Preservation



Bob Canavan, Chairman
Designation Task Force

