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NPS Form 10-900
(Rev. 10-90)

OMB No. 1024-0018

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NATIONAL
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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM

1. Name of Property

historic name Mangum Armory

other names/site number Mangum National Guard Armory

2. Location

street & number 115 East Lincoln Street not for publication N/A
city or town Mangum vicinity N/A
state Oklahoma code OK county Greer code 055
zip code 73554

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, 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 nationally statewide x locally. (N/A See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Blake Wade February 22, 1994
Signature of certifying official Date

Oklahoma Historical Society, SHPO
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting or other official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register Edson H. Beall 4/7/94
 See continuation sheet. Entered in the
 determined eligible for the National Register
 National Register
 See continuation sheet.
 determined not eligible for the
 National Register
 removed from the National Register
 other (explain): _____

for _____
Signature of 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

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	buildings
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	sites
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	structures
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	objects
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

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

=====

6. Function or Use

=====

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: DEFENSE Sub: arms storage

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: DEFENSE Sub: arms storage

=====

7. Description

=====

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

OTHER/Works Progress Administration

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation CONCRETE

roof ASPHALT

walls STONE/sandstone

other _____

Narrative Description (Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

=====

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 a grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)

ECONOMIC

MILITARY

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance 1935-1937

Significant Dates 1937

=====
8. Statement of Significance (Continued)
=====

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation N/A

Architect/Builder Nolen, Bryan W., Supervising Architect
Works Progress Administration, Builder

Narrative Statement of Significance (Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

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9. Major Bibliographical References
=====

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

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 # _____

Primary Location of Additional Data

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository: N/A

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10. Geographical Data
=====

Acreage of Property Less than one (1) acre

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

	Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing
1	<u>14</u>	<u>454040</u>	<u>3858840</u>	3	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
2	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	4	<u> </u>	<u> </u>

N/A See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

=====
11. Form Prepared By
=====

name/title Dianna Everett, Research Associate
organization State Historic Preservation Office date February 15, 1993
street & number 621 N. Robinson Ave., Suite 375 telephone 405-521-6249
city or town Oklahoma City state OK zip code 73102

=====
Additional Documentation
=====

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
A sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage
or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional items (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

=====
Property Owner
=====

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name State of Oklahoma/Oklahoma Military Department
street & number 3501 Military Circle, Northeast telephone 405-425-8000
city or town Oklahoma City state OK zip code 73111
=====

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Mangum Armory
name of property
Greer, Oklahoma
county and State

SUMMARY:

The Mangum Armory (Mangum National Guard Armory) is a self-contained, horizontal, single-story building measuring 140 feet by 125 feet. A local project of the Works Progress Administration in Oklahoma, it was constructed in 1935-1937 of locally quarried native sandstone. The armory is located at 115 East Lincoln Street, in a primarily commercial area. The armory's main entrance faces south. The floor plan of the Mangum Armory is typical of WPA-built armories, in that the building comprises two distinct sections: A north section, with barrel roof, contains the drill area, while a flat-roofed south section comprises offices, supply and arms rooms, and a garage area. The square-cut ashlar blocks of sandstone of variegated light colors are set uncoursed, with beaded mortar joints. The masonry work is an excellent example of WPA architecture and construction philosophy in Oklahoma. Though the massing is strongly horizontal, several architectural details give the building a vertical emphasis and suggest a vernacular Art Deco influence: recessed stonework "incisions" in the front facade; projecting pilasters that rise into pedimented towers having recessed stonework "incisions"; and tall, vertical metal-frame windows. The windows are all original. Exterior alterations have been minimal: of three original wood overhead vehicle doors, one has been replaced with a metal door; of five exterior pedestrian doors, two have been replaced with steel doors. These very minimal changes do not affect the building's integrity. The Mangum Armory retains more than adequate integrity of location, setting, design, workmanship, materials, feeling, and association sufficient to enable it to convey its past identity. It definitely embodies the distinctive characteristics of the WPA period and of WPA construction methodology.

EXTERIOR DESCRIPTION:

The Mangum Armory is a horizontal, self-contained, one-story sandstone building measuring approximately 140 feet east-to-west and 125 feet north-to-south. It lies in a commercial district and is bounded by Lincoln Street on the south, by Carolina Street on the west, by an alley on the north, and by Commerce Street on the east. The building's overall appearance is that of a fortress: As with most armories, the building is strongly horizontal in massing, the roofline indicating that the building is divided into two sections having different functions. The horizontal roofline of the flat-roofed south section is interrupted by short pedimented towers at the southeast and southwest corners and by a central three-part frontispiece consisting of a tall, stepped parapet that towers over the main entry and is supported by two pedimented piers that flank the entry. The roof of the north section, or drill hall, is barrel-shaped, the roofline following the arch of the vault ends in the east and west elevations. On both east and west sides of the building the vault is flanked by massive pedimented pilasters that rise into "towers" above the roofline of the flat-topped south section. On the north the roofline is

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uniformly horizontal, following the side of the barrel vault, with pedimented towers on the northeast and northwest corners. (Historically and presently) the roof of the flat section is covered with tar and gravel; the drill hall is covered with roll roofing.

As with many WPA armories in Oklahoma, the Mangum Armory is designed to have two principal facades that each give pedestrian and/or vehicular access to a street. The Mangum Armory has two such facades, the main (south) entry accessing Lincoln Street, and a secondary entry accessing Commerce Street on the west. These facades are characterized by outwardly projecting pilasters and piers that enframe window/door bays. The south facade's main focus is an elaborate door surround consisting of markedly stepped and castellated parapet, massive, deep piers, and short, broad wing walls that enframe the segmental-arched entry. The west facade is divided by shallow pilasters into two parts, one being the administrative/garage section, characterized by overhead vehicle doors, and the drill hall section, characterized by towering pilasters and garage door/window arrangement. The secondary facades, on north and east, are less elaborate, characterized primarily by metal-framed windows.

Viewed from the south, the building appears to have "wings" that project outward from the east and west walls, because the drill hall section is about twenty feet wider than the administrative/garage section, giving the plan a T-shape. On the east wall, in the niche where the drill hall joins the administrative section (southeast corner of the drill hall), the south end of an underground rifle range has an exterior above-ground-level concrete roof that looks like a "patio." This ten-foot-square section is raised three feet above ground level and is enclosed by a two-foot-high "wall"; the "patio" is accessible only via a doorway that exits the south dressing room, adjacent to the drill hall stage.

Rock-faced, square-cut ashlar blocks of sandstone set uncoursed, with beaded mortar joints, comprise the building's load-bearing masonry walls. The stone is variegated, with color ranging from cream to buff. The masonry work provides an excellent example of WPA architecture and construction philosophy in Oklahoma. The blocks were quarried near Haystack, in Greer County, and were brought to the construction site by WPA and National Guard crews. WPA crews shaped the blocks on-site. While the design of the building was executed by an architect and while the construction and was overseen by experienced stonemasons and trained supervisors, the stones were cut and placed by untrained laborers. The work is sophisticated and professional.

The fenestration pattern is irregular also, and many of the lights have been painted over to block out sunlight. All of the steel-framed windows are original. Glazing patterns include combinations of two or three lights set in four, five, or six rows (4/4/2, 3/6/3, 6/6/3, 3/6/3/3, 6/3/6/3, usually with

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one or two sets of vertical center-pivot windows and a bottom row that opens in hopper fashion). The front or SOUTH facade comprises three bays. In the center is the entry bay, marked by the tall, stepped parapet supported by pediment-topped piers. The doorway, with steel double doors (new) is recessed into this bay. On the left and right of the entry are window bays, each enframed by a massive corner tower, on one side, and on the other, by the pier marking the entry. Each window bay has a central pair of 3/6/3/3 windows flanked by single 4/4/2 window near the corner tower and near the entry bay. The EAST facade contains very few openings: in the south (administrative) section there are two 3/6/3/3 windows. At the point where the administrative section joins the drill hall, a pedestrian door opens onto the ten-foot-square enclosed patio. In the north section there are two 3/6/3/3 windows flanking a near-ground-level, two-foot-square ventilation window (for the underground rifle range). In the NORTH or rear facade, two centrally placed original wood-panel pedestrian doors, topped with 3/6/3 transoms, are flanked by two pairs of 6/3/6/3 windows. Openings in the WEST facade indicate the building's functional nature: the south section has two original wooden panel-type overhead vehicle doors; to its north are a pair of 3/6/3/3 windows. The north, or drill room, section, has a central overhead vehicle door (new, steel), flanked on the south by two 6/3/6/3 windows and an original wood-panel pedestrian door topped with a 3/6/3 transom, and on the north by three 6/3/6/3 windows.

Architectural detailing gives the Mangum Armory a vertical emphasis and suggests an Art Deco influence. On the south elevation, above the windows, is a horizontal row of vertical "incisions" recessed into the stonework. These incisions are filled with stone (and although they look like little square-topped "lancet-like" windows, never actually functioned as windows). These give the appearance of being "gunports," and lend a military, fortress-like aspect to the facades. Elongated versions of these incisions are also placed in sets of three on each face of each tower and pilaster/pier. Each of these false "ports" has a narrow stone sill that in shape resembles cornice moulding. Decorative stonework includes a single layer stone coping, slightly projecting out over the walls all around the building; the stone segmental arch, with keystone, at the main entry; and keystone-shaped decorations in the piers flanking the main entry. In addition, original metal downspouts still exist on the north, east, and west sides of the flat-roofed south section. The tall, steel-framed windows are also typical of Art Deco or "modernistic" style, popular from the 1920s through the early 1940s.

At the west end of the south elevation is a cornerstone with the inscription: "State Armory/Built by Works Progress Administration/1936/W. S. Key/State Administrator." Above the main entrance is a new diamond-shaped metal sign bearing the Thunderbird insignia of the 45th Division. Another new metal sign, bearing the unit designation, is affixed to the wall east of the entrance. Outside the south entrance sit a steel flagpole and a steel

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communication tower, both new. A gasoline pump sits outside the west-side garage doors. A new wooden sign identifying the property as a National Guard Armory sits at curbside near the southeast corner of the building.

INTERIOR DESCRIPTION/ALTERATIONS:

The Mangum Armory exhibits a rectangular plan that was standard for WPA armories. The building is divided into two functional sections. The 86' by 125' north section, or drill hall, was and is characterized by a very high vaulted ceiling with exposed steel roofing panels and exposed steel truss system. The original stage, in the east end, was enclosed by a concrete-block wall at an unknown date. Decorative stonework, consisting of pediment-topped pilasters identical to those on the exterior, surrounds the stage (former) opening. On each side of the stage are steps leading to original wood-panel doors accessing dressing rooms. On the south side of the stage, steps lead down to an original door accessing the now-condemned underground rifle range. The other walls of the drill hall exhibit pilasters at regular intervals. With the exception of the stone stage surround, the walls are (historically and presently) plastered and painted. An original 1937 wood-block floor was removed from the drill hall in the 1960s, leaving its concrete sub-floor and a concrete "lip" around the edge of the room.¹ The doors to the rifle range, maintenance room, and central hallway are all original wood-panel type.

The interior floor plan of the administrative/garage section generally retains its original appearance. Here, too, all interior walls are of plastered and painted stone. As with most armories, offices and other rooms lie on either side of a central north-south hallway. On the east side of the hallway are a locker room (now devoid of lockers and divided in 1989 with wood-framed walls into three offices and a lobby), a shower/latrine, and a supply room with original arms vault. On the west side of the hallway are two original small offices with private toilet and closet, and a two-bay garage that includes a small original tool room and a small, new (1970s) room that serves as a kitchen, and two original motor-pool rooms that open into the garage and into the drill hall.² Original wood panel-type doors remain in all openings. The original plastered walls have been maintained, but the hallway and most other rooms have new drop ceilings that conceal the original concrete ceilings.

As the exterior is completely intact, with no alterations other than the replacement of two pedestrian doors and one vehicle door, the Mangum Armory still retains the essential integrity of location, setting, design, materials, and workmanship to enable it to convey its past identity and its historical and architectural significance. It is an excellent example of WPA-type military architecture in Oklahoma.

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ENDNOTES

1. Sgt. Douglas Dobbins, 1/171 Field Artillery, interview by Dianna Everett, Mangum, Oklahoma, March 10, 1993.
2. Ibid.

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SUMMARY:

The Mangum Armory (Mangum National Guard Armory) is significant within the economic context of Works Progress Administration projects in Mangum, Oklahoma, 1935-1937, within the military context of national defense requirements of the Oklahoma National Guard's local unit in the era between the two world wars, and within the architectural context of WPA building style and methodology locally and in Oklahoma. The armory was constructed between 1935 and 1937 by local men who were qualified for work relief under WPA guidelines. The project brought \$41,000 into the economy of Mangum, Oklahoma, by employing an approximate average of forty previously unemployed, unskilled workers for more than sixteen months. The armory also filled a longstanding military need for an adequate, secure drill hall and arms storage building for Company H, 179th Infantry Regiment, 45th Infantry Division of the Oklahoma National Guard, which had previously had no permanent armory. The Mangum Armory is significant architecturally as an example of an excellent, intact example of WPA architecture. The materials, limestone quarried within Greer County, and workmanship, evident in stonework and masonry, reflect both the goals of the WPA Building Program in Oklahoma and the practical considerations of using unskilled labor to construct large public buildings. As it is essentially intact, the Mangum Armory is able to convey appropriate feeling and association within these three contexts.

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE:

Oklahoma suffered severely during the initial years of the Great Depression, 1929-1933, but in a predominantly rural state, where in 1930, 65.7 percent of the population lived in rural areas, and twenty-seven of the state's seventy-seven counties had no towns of more than 2,500 persons, drought, general agricultural failure from 1932 through 1938, and a downturn in the petroleum industry exacerbated the general economic depression. Rural communities, towns, and cities, which functioned as agricultural or petroleum service centers, consequently foundered.

Oklahoma's state and local governments were unable to provide much help for citizens, whether urban or rural. Limited relief offered by counties did not alleviate the suffering, nor did meager annual appropriations by the state legislature. No public funding was available to maintain the existing infrastructure, and private charity failed to create or to support relief initiatives. The Federal Emergency Relief Administration, established in May of 1934 by the Roosevelt administration, provided some direct relief, in terms of food, clothing, and small stipends, but until the inception of the Works Progress Administration in 1935 only a few Oklahomans received adequate assistance. The urban unemployed and displaced farm families combined to create a situation in which 33 percent of all Oklahoma families were on the direct relief rolls by the time that Roosevelt created the WPA by executive

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order in May, 1935. By July 1935, there were 127,416 jobless men certified in Oklahoma.¹

The inauguration of the Works Progress Administration in 1935 stands as one of the benchmarks of Franklin D. Roosevelt's "New Deal" for the United States. Administered nationally by Harry Hopkins, the program was designed to assist in lifting the nation from the depths of severe economic depression. Make-work projects provided work-relief for literally millions of individual citizens whose lives had been devastated by the near-collapse of the American economy. The infusion of cash into work-relief projects all over the state made a significant economic impact on hundreds of communities. During the seven-and-one-half-year life of the WPA, more than \$10.75 billion were expended, of which Oklahoma received more than \$185 million for projects ranging from school lunch programs, flood control, and archeological excavations, to major construction projects such as armories, highways, bridges, schools, stadiums, and museums.²

Localities competed for WPA funds from the outset. Chambers of Commerce and planning committees drew up specifications to meet three major criteria established by the administration: 1) projects must meet a well-defined community need; 2) each project must be sponsored by a public body, such as a city or county government or school district, which was required to provide from 10 to 25 percent of the project cost in cash and/or materials; and 3) 90 percent of those hired must be unemployed employable workers who were carried on the relief rolls. Compensation was to be based on 130 hours of work for \$21 (later \$23) per month for unskilled labor.³ In June of 1935 Oklahoma WPA Director (Gen.) William S. Key estimated that there were already "70,000 employable unemployed" ready to work on his agency's projects throughout the state; by November of that year, 67,973 people were at work for the WPA, and by January of 1936, WPA rolls reached an all-time high of 94,281.⁴

Armory construction was the first major thrust of the WPA Building Program in Oklahoma. By mid-1937, 126 armories had been constructed throughout the United States, and 51 of these projects were located in Oklahoma. When the WPA ended its program in 1943, 54 armories had been built and 53 others "reconstructed" in the state. The new construction had infused \$3.5 million into local economies.⁵

Greer County, in southwestern Oklahoma, was opened to settlement after 1896. In this primarily agricultural region, the economy was based on ranching and on wheat and cotton farming. The town of Mangum, originally established in 1883, grew rapidly after the completion of rail connections to regional markets. Mangum functioned as the county seat and as the major service center. Greer County and the town of Mangum, like most rural communities in Oklahoma,

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were hit hard by depressed market prices in the 1920s and by drought and the Great Depression during the early 1930s.⁶ In September of 1934, 1,657 families, comprising 34 percent of the Greer County population, were on direct relief. In Greer County, the agricultural depression continued to worsen, but WPA relief work helped reduce the number of families on assistance to 865, or 19 percent of the population, by September of 1935. WPA programs were providing jobs for 639 persons on 13 projects in November of 1935.⁷

Greer County commissioners submitted proposals for several WPA projects, one of which would be the construction of an armory. After the county deeded the old Greer County jail site on East Lincoln Street to the state in October, work began on November 1.⁸ Earlier, during the autumn, a WPA crew had been at work near the community of Haystack, where stones for the armory and a new community center were being quarried.⁹ Thus, the sponsor's share of the cost of the armory was provided in real property and materials.

WPA crews began clearing the armory site on November 1, 1935. The project's supervisors estimated that it would employ forty men for three or four months, a gross underestimate of time. The blocks of sandstone were shaped on the site by the WPA crew. A short project expanded into a long one, but by November of 1936 the armory was nearly finished. A second WPA grant was obtained to complete interior work, which continued until March. On March 23, Mangum dedicated its new armory with an elaborate program. General Key, state WPA director, and other state and local dignitaries participated in the ceremonies, and program included a parade, a cornerstone ceremony, speeches, entertainment, and a dance in the new armory.¹⁰

WPA projects in 1935-1937 propped up the sagging rural economy of Greer County, hard-hit because of the extended agricultural depression and severe drought. Major projects in Mangum included two large schools, a swimming pool, a community center, and the customary WPA road repair and paving. The WPA's cost on the armory project was \$41,649.71 (with the county contributing land and materials). With the exception of the farm-to-market road project and the community center building, the federal government invested more in the armory than in any other construction project in the county.¹¹ In human terms, tens of thousands of person-hours of labor went into the armory's construction. Most significantly, from thirty to forty men were employed on the project. As with most WPA projects, the armory project was labor-intensive, designed to provide as much work as possible for those on relief rolls. Most of the hours were consumed in hand labor--stone cutting in the city's quarry (22,000 cubic feet of stone were cut and hauled to the site), in dressing the blocks and hoisting them into place by hand, and in installing a maple-block floor in the drill room (148,000 wood blocks were cut, primed, set in asphalt, sanded, oiled, and polished, in sections). In the garage section, the floor was created of bricks set in sand. In both instances, a concrete floor would have

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sufficed, but ample time and labor were available to create a complicated design.¹²

Upon completion, the Mangum Armory became the home of Company H, a machine gun unit first mustered in June of 1935 as part of the 179th Infantry Regiment of the 45th Infantry Division, Oklahoma National Guard.¹³ Reorganized in 1923 under the National Defense Act of 1920, the Guard was an integral part of United States military preparedness. Since 1920 approximately five-sixths of America's military strength lay with "citizen soldiers"--National Guard divisions and Reserve divisions in nine corps areas across the nation. Each corps area had one Regular Army division, two National Guard Divisions, and three Reserve divisions. Oklahoma, along with New Mexico, Arizona, and Colorado, formed one division of National Guard within the Eighth Corps. Despite inadequate training facilities, the Oklahoma National Guard provided service during numerous natural disasters and civil disturbances in the 1920s and 1930s.¹⁴ Because the Guard paid its members a monthly fee, which they spent locally to feed their families, Oklahoma communities actively competed to secure local Guard units during these years. In July of 1935 Mangum received an infantry unit. By 1937 the unit included three officers and sixty-two non-commissioned officers and enlisted men.¹⁵

The National Guard received only one-tenth of the War Department's budget in the interwar years, and equipment was surplus from World War I. Many units needed permanent training, drilling, and storage facilities, as Guard members were required to meet 48 drills per year. Units without permanent armories usually rented space in warehouses that often lacked proper security. Four hundred new armories created by the cooperative effort of the federal and local governments helped correct this serious deficiency.¹⁶

The new Mangum Armory provided permanent housing for the unit, which formerly had been using rooms in the local high school gymnasium.¹⁷ The new facility was more than adequate for the detachment's needs. The building was divided into areas serving specific functions. The entire north section housed the drill hall, comprising the stage and the drill floor. Underground, beneath the stage, was a rifle range. The front, or south, section, housed the arms vault, the supply room, the locker room, the garage, and offices. Thus the building provided for virtually every training need, except for field exercises.

Due in large measure to the WPA armory-building program, the 45th Infantry Division was able to achieve a level of military efficiency and readiness that prepared it to be among the first four National Guard divisions federalized in late 1940 by President Roosevelt. After the United States entered World War II, the 45th saw action in North Africa, Sicily, and Italy.¹⁸

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ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE:

The Mangum Armory typifies WPA armory architecture in Oklahoma. In the mid-1930s several standard armory plans were developed by Major Bryan W. Nolen, an Oklahoma City architect and National Guard officer selected in 1935 to serve on the staff of WPA administrator Gen. William S. Key. Nolen planned for every armory to have a drill hall section, usually having a high ceiling and either a barrel or a flat roof, and also a flat-roofed, single-story extension on one or both sides, the number depending on the number of units (one, two, or four) to be housed in the building.¹⁹ Design was flexible, allowing for the orientation of the building to various avenues of egress, size of property, and size of Guard unit. The Mangum Armory was designed as a one-unit facility. The WPA preferred to used locally purchased building materials, and therefore armories were constructed of native stone, usually quarried locally, or brick, manufactured locally or within the state. The Mangum Armory was built of white limestone quarried in Greer County by a WPA crew and trucked to the site by National Guardsmen using Guard vehicles.²⁰

WPA architectural philosophy prohibited the use of ornate features, intricate structure, and elaborate trim; therefore, WPA armories tend to be straightforwardly utilitarian. They have a strong horizontal massing, a fortresslike quality, which is often relieved only by vertical Art Deco detailing or by virtue of being a provincial interpretation of a romantic high style, such as Tudor.²¹ The Mangum Armory is a very minimal example of vernacular Art Deco applied to military architecture. Like other WPA military buildings, it reflects the skills of designers and supervisors and the inadequate funding for design and materials, as well as the use of unskilled labor as bricklayers, stonecutters, masons, and so forth. While these buildings may not be architectural masterpieces, they served the WPA's purpose--to make work, and to provide secure space for national defense units. WPA armories exemplify the New Deal's practical determination to "do something--and do something now." As David Baird notes in his survey of WPA structures of Oklahoma, WPA buildings are "the architecture of the poor," "mute reminders of the emotional distress and physical pain many Oklahomans suffered during the 1930s and of the enlightened relief effort by the federal government that alleviated much of the suffering."²² The Mangum Armory is one of ten extant WPA structures in the community, and it is the only example of military architecture. In type, style, scale, materials, and workmanship, Mangum Armory is a fine example of WPA Building Program philosophy and methodology in Oklahoma. It exemplifies a class of buildings that are unique when compared to the rest of the built environment, both in Mangum and across the state.

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ENDNOTES

1. C. Roger Lambert, "Dust, Farmers, and the Federal Government," Hard Times in Oklahoma: The Depression Years, ed. K. E. Hendrickson, Jr. (Oklahoma City: Oklahoma Historical Society, 1983), 71-72, 78-79, 81; Guthrie (Oklahoma) Daily Leader, July 9, 1935; W. David Baird, "Final Report: WPA Structures Thematic Survey (Phase III)" (Stillwater: Oklahoma State University, 1987), 5.
2. Baird, "Final Report", 10; "Final Report of the Oklahoma Work Projects Administration, February 27, 1943," Archives of the Work Projects Administration and Predecessors, 1933-1943, Series One: The Final State Reports, 1943 (Washington, D.C.: National Archives, 1987), 1; "Building Construction Report, February, 1943," *ibid.*, 5-6.
3. "Questions and Answers on the WPA [brochure]," (Washington, D.C.: Work Projects Administration, December 1, 1939), Vertical File, Oklahoma Historical Society; Baird, "Final Report," 11; Kingfisher (Oklahoma) Times, July 9, 1936.
4. Guthrie (Oklahoma) Daily Leader, June 23, 1935; *ibid.*, November 13, 1935; Daily Oklahoman, September 12, 1937.
5. "Accomplishments: Works Progress Administration for Oklahoma, July 1, 1935-March 1, 1937" (Oklahoma City: Works Progress Administration, 1937), 38; "Building Construction Report," 5-6.
6. John W. Morris, "The Smaller Cities," Cities of Oklahoma (Oklahoma City: Oklahoma Historical Society, 1979), 11, 16; A History of Old Greer County and Its Pioneers (Manqum: Old Greer County Museum and Hall of Fame, Inc., n.d.), 17-20; Garry Nall, "King Cotton in Oklahoma, 1825-1939," Rural Oklahoma, ed. Donald E. Green (Oklahoma City: Oklahoma Historical Society, 1977), 38-43, 51-52; Donald E. Green, "Beginnings of Wheat Culture in Oklahoma," *ibid.*, 58-64, 68-70.
7. Daily Oklahoman, September 29, 1935; Manqum Daily Star, November 19, 1935.
8. Manqum Daily Star, October 22 and 31, 1935; WPA Project No. 156, "Index to Reference Cards for Work Projects Administration Project Files, 1935-1942," (Washington, D.C.: WPA, c. 1942), Micro T-935, Reel 54.
9. Manqum Daily Star, October 8, 1935.
10. *Ibid.*, March 21 and 24, 1937; "Accomplishments," 39.
11. *Ibid.*, August 14, 1935; *ibid.*, August 15, 1935; *ibid.*, July 24, 1936; *ibid.*, March 21, 1937; WPA Project No. 156, "Index to Reference Cards."

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12. Mangum Daily Star, October 22, 1935; March 21, 1937.
13. Historical Annual: National Guard of the State of Oklahoma, 1938 (Baton Rouge, La.: Army and Navy Publishing Company, 1938), 101; Mangum Daily Star, March 21, 1937.
14. Guy Nelson, Thunderbirds: A History of the 45th Infantry Division (Oklahoma City: 45th Infantry Division Association, 1970), 6-9; Kenny Franks, Citizen Soldiers: Oklahoma's National Guard (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1984), 38, 40, 48.
15. Mangum Daily Star, March 21, 1937.
16. Nelson, Thunderbirds, 6-9; Franks, Citizen Soldiers, 38, 40, 48.
17. Mangum Daily Star, July 21, 1936; Historical Annual, 101.
18. Nelson, Thunderbirds, 12.
19. "Accomplishments," 38, 40; Historical Annual, 18.
20. "Accomplishments," 40.
21. Final Report on the WPA Program, 1935-43 (Washington, D.C.: G. P. O., c. 1943) 52; Baird, "Final Report," 15, 21, 23.
22. Ibid., 17; *ibid.*, 2.

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VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION:

All of Block 33 (thirty-three), original addition, city of Mangum, Greer County, being a tract measuring 175 feet north to south by 200 feet east to west.

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION:

These are the legal boundaries as recorded in Book 75, page 617, Deed Records, Greer County, Oklahoma.