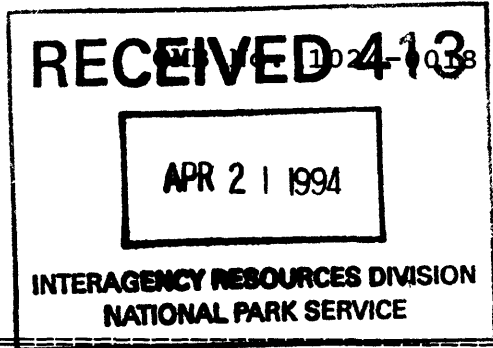


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM



1. Name of Property

historic name Cushing Armory

other names/site number Cushing National Guard Armory

2. Location

street & number 218 S. Little Avenue not for publication N/A
city or town Cushing vicinity N/A
state Oklahoma code OK county Payne code 119
zip code 74023

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.)

W. Wade
Signature of certifying official

April 4, 1994
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
 See continuation sheet.

Entered in the
National Register

determined eligible for the
National Register

 See continuation sheet.

determined not eligible for the
National Register

removed from the National Register

other (explain): _____

Edson H. Beall
Signature of Keeper

5/20/94
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>1</u>	<u>0</u> structures
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u> objects
<u>2</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 N/A

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)

ECONOMICS
MILITARY
ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance 1935-1937

Significant Dates 1937

=====
10. Geographical Data
=====

Acreeage of Property less than 1 acre

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

	Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing
1	14	701360	3983640	3	_____	_____
2	_____	_____	_____	4	_____	_____

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 Dr. Mary Jane Warde
organization Oklahoma SHPO date January 6, 1993
street & number 2806 W. 18th telephone (405) 377-0412
city or town Stillwater state OK zip code 74074

=====
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)

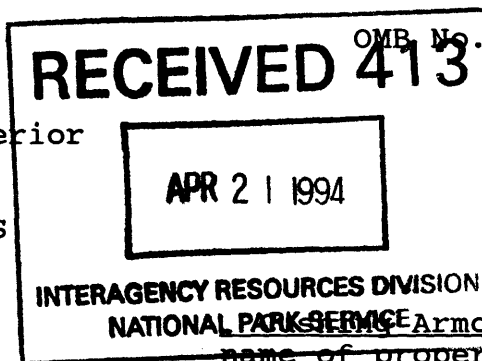
=====
Property Owner
=====

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

name State of Oklahoma/Oklahoma Military Department

street & number 3501 Military Circle, NE telephone (405) 425-8000

city or town Oklahoma City state OK zip code 73111
=====



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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 7 Page 9

~~Armory~~
name of property
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SUMMARY:

The Cushing Armory (Cushing National Guard Armory) is a single-story, rectangular sandstone building (140' x 125') built by the Works Progress Administration between 1935 and 1937. It stands on the northeast corner of South Little Avenue and East Second Street. It is located southeast of Cushing's central business district in a residential area. Directly south of the armory is a city park. The building consists of two main sections. The west section is a flat-roofed administrative wing. Set at right angles to it is the barrel-roofed drill hall. The roofs are rolled asphalt. The walls are of uncoursed white ashlar sandstone capped by a cut-stone parapet. The use of native stone and the castellated facade mark it as an excellent example of WPA architecture in Oklahoma. The vertical embrasures, elongated windows, piers, pilasters, and a projecting portal suggest an Art Deco influence on the otherwise functional fortress-like building.

EXTERIOR DESCRIPTION:

The Cushing Armory is built of white randomly-laid ashlar sandstone capped by a cut-stone coping. The roofs are of rolled asphalt. Heavy metal gutters provide drainage from the roofs. The length of the barrel-roofed drill hall parallels South Little Avenue. The narrower flat-roofed administrative section of the building is set at right angles to the drill hall and centered on its west elevation, creating a T-shaped building. The public entrance off South Little Avenue is on the west elevation of the administrative section. This elevation features a centered projecting portal. Pedimented pilasters flank the single entrance and extend above the flat top of the portal. Vertical embrasures in the stone near the top of each pier create a triple line motif repeated elsewhere on the building. Below the triple line motif on each of these two pilasters and flanking the entrance are single vertical recesses. The modern metal door is set between wood inserts and beneath a shallow arch. Mounted over the door is a wooden plaque inscribed "These colors don't run." Above this is a second, diamond-shaped wooden plaque with the yellow-on-red Thunderbird insignia of the 45th Infantry Division. This insignia is also set into the sidewalk in front of the door. On either side of the door is a pier approximately two feet high with a flat concrete cap. To each side of the portal are groups of four steel-framed hopper windows with pre-cast concrete sills. The second and third windows in each group are paired and are three-over-five. The first and fourth in each group are two-over-five. Some panes have been painted white. At each corner of the west elevation is a pedimented pilaster that extends above the roofline. Near the top of each the triple-line motif is repeated. The plaque commemorating the dedication of the Cushing Armory is set into the right pilaster. Just below the cut-stone coping and between the pilasters, short equally-spaced incisions suggest crenelation. In the angle between the northwest corner of the drill hall and the administrative

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Cushing Armory
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EXTERIOR DESCRIPTION (continued)

wing is a low, flat extension. This is an exposed section of the roof of the rifle range in the basement below the drill hall. Mounted on the roof of the extension is an air-conditioner unit. A pedimented pilaster with the triple-line motif defines each corner of the drill hall. On the west elevation the pilasters are broadened to extend the length of the projection of the drill hall beyond the narrower administrative wing. The triple-line motif on the west elevations of these pilasters are also lengthened and given more importance.

The north elevation of the armory includes the north end of the administrative wing. In this wing are set two steel-framed hopper windows with pre-cast concrete sills. To the left of the administrative wing is the taller drill hall. Between the pedimented pilasters on this elevation of the drill hall, the cut-stone coping follows the curve of the barrel roof. At the extreme right of this elevation of the drill hall is a three-over-six steel-framed hopper window with a pre-cast concrete sill. Centered just above ground level is a small fan vent.

The east elevation is the length of the drill hall between pedimented pilasters with their triple-line motif. Centered in this elevation are two single wooden doors. Each has a vertical two-over-four transom. To the right of the doors are two pairs of hopper windows and a single window on the extreme right. These are three-over-six. To the left of the doors are two pairs of two-over-four hopper windows. All windows and transoms are steel-framed with pre-cast concrete sills and extend to the same height.

The south elevation, with the south end of the drill hall on the right, overlooks East Second Street. As on the north end, the cut-stone coping between the pedimented pilasters follows the curve of the barrel roof. Centered in this elevation of the drill hall is a metal overhead door with a shallow concrete ramp. To the right of the overhead door are three three-over-six hopper windows. To the left is a single metal door with a vertical three-over-four transom. To the left of the single door are two three-over-four hopper windows. The windows and transom are steel-framed with pre-cast concrete sills and extend to the same height. The pedimented pilaster on the southwest corner of the drill hall, as on the northwest corner, is broadened on the west facade to extend the full projection of the drill hall beyond the administrative wing. To the left of the drill hall is the south elevation of

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EXTERIOR DESCRIPTION (continued)

the administrative wing. To the right are two three-over-five hopper windows with steel frames and pre-cast concrete sills. The left window has been partially blocked with a window air conditioner unit on stilts. To the left are two metal overhead doors.

On the north and east elevations of the Cushing Armory are narrow alleys separating the building from adjoining residences. They are edged by a sandstone retaining wall of variable height. The space between the building and the retaining wall is paved with concrete. It is believed that the wall is also a WPA construction and contemporaneous with the armory and is therefore considered to be a contributing structure.

INTERIOR DESCRIPTION:

The administrative wing is bisected by a central hallway that extends from the public entrance down an incline to the drill hall. On either side are offices, locker rooms, classrooms, a garage, and arms vault. The drill hall is 112' x 83.' At the north end is a stage and dressing rooms measuring 14' x 83.' Beneath the stage and extending beyond the west wall of the drill hall is the basement rifle range. The steel framework of the barrel roof is exposed. Walls in the drill hall are rough-finished, randomly-laid stone reaching a height of 4.' Above this line and on the stage wings, the walls are smooth-finished. Centered above the stage are three inlaid stone plaques. The large, diamond-shaped center plaque shows a caduceus. On either side are rectangular plaques, reading, on the left "Co A" and on the right "120." These signify the National Guard unit, Company A, 120th Medical Regiment, assigned to the armory in 1937. The floor is concrete.

ALTERATIONS:

Most alterations to the Cushing Armory occurred on the interior. Some office walls have been painted or paneled. Acoustical tile, fluorescent fixtures, and security lighting have been installed in the central hallway. The stone walls and woodwork have been painted to lighten the hallway and limit dust. Linoleum tile covers the concrete floor. In the drill hall the stage is enclosed with concrete blocks. An overhead heating system has been installed. In the southwest corner, particle board partitions create a ticket booth and control access to the drill hall proper. A section along the west wall has been railed off and carpeted to make a refreshment area. The original wood flooring has been removed to reveal the concrete beneath.

Exterior alterations have been less obvious. Bars and plywood inserts have been installed in some windows, while others have been covered with white

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Alterations (continued)

paint. New metal single and overhead doors, installed between 1987 and 1992, have replaced original wooden doors on all elevations except the east. Air conditioner units are visible on the north and south elevations. The short stone piers flanking the entrance on the west elevation have deteriorated. None of the exterior alterations, however, significantly impeach the architectural or historic integrity of the Cushing Armory.

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SUMMARY:

The Cushing Armory (Cushing National Guard Armory) is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A because of its association with the Works Progress Administration and the Oklahoma National Guard. The aim of the WPA was to combat the effects of the Great Depression by employing jobless people on the relief rolls in public works projects. These projects stimulated the local economy by providing waged to previously destitute people. The use of native stone or other locally-produced materials also increased local finances, as well as reduced project costs and created buildings distinctive in appearance. The Cushing Armory exemplified this program. Dedicated and conveyed to the Oklahoma National Guard in 1937, the armory remains the headquarters of the local Guard unit. The Cushing Armory also is eligible for the National Register under Criterion C. The fine craftsmanship displayed in the use of native stone, castellated style adapted for unskilled labor, and Art Deco influence make it an excellent example of WPA architecture in Oklahoma.

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE:

The Cushing Armory, constructed between 1935 and 1937, was a product of the Works Progress Administration. The WPA was created by the New Deal administration of President Franklin D. Roosevelt to combat the Great Depression. Its primary aim was to reduce record levels of unemployment through public works projects. Labor was to be drawn from relief rolls. Materials acquired locally would stimulate the economy and reduce costs. The WPA program was created in 1935 and ended in June 1943 with the return of full employment during World War II. The program spent \$10.75 billion, of which \$185 million was allocated to Oklahoma projects. To be eligible under WPA requirements, the project had to draw labor from local relief rolls, have a local sponsor, and the project had to result in a permanent useful addition to the community. The Cushing Armory met all these requirements.¹

Armories in Oklahoma easily met the requirement of usefulness and permanency. Oklahoma National Guard units never had permanent headquarters. Most rented make-shift facilities at a cost to the state of about \$50,000 annually. These quarters were usually inadequate and lacked security, so that equipment and arms were liable to theft. Reportedly, criminals used stolen Guard weapons while committing felonies.² In addition to providing tighter security, an armory allowed the unit to better prepare for its war-time duties. Prior to construction of the armory, Cushing's unit, the 158th Collecting Company, trained to retrieve casualties from the front-lines in a "small, stuffy room" crowded with equipment.³ The new building also doubled as a community center and public meeting hall.

In 1935 Cushing needed the economic benefits of an armory building project.

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HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE (continued):

The second largest town in Payne County, Cushing served as a market center for Cimarron Valley cotton farmers since the town's founding in 1891. Discovery of the fabulous Cushing Oil Field in 1912 greatly enriched the whole area and stimulated growth. However, over-production of oil by the early 1930s caused the market to collapse. Cut-backs in oil production increased unemployment at the same time declining demand for cotton hurt area farmers. These factors combined with wide-spread drought and the national economic depression brought hard times to the Cushing area. Yet little federal relief money from other New Deal programs reached the town by 1935.⁴ Construction of the \$70,000 armory eventually meant nineteen months' employment for men otherwise without work. G. K. Laughlin contributed the stone, while "a great many other citizens of Cushing speeded work on this project by their many contributions."⁵ Thus, Cushing met the WPA stipulation of local sponsorship.

Construction of the Cushing Armory began in the fall of 1935, within a few months of the creation of the WPA. It was one of three armories to be built in Payne County. Work halted briefly in November while state and federal administrators wrangled over allocation of funds. Once resumed, work continued throughout 1936. During construction, approximately forty men were regularly employed. At times, as many as seventy-five were on the payroll. In January 1937 the Cushing Guard unit was re-designated Company A, 120th Medical Regiment.⁶ The change was noted in the construction of the armory as stone plaques engraved "Co A" and "120" were set either side of a caduceus in the stonework over the drill hall stage. The building was completed and dedicated on May 17, 1937, in a ceremony that drew a crowd of 1,500. State WPA administrator General W. S. Key paid tribute to the cooperation of towns such as Cushing with the WPA in the armory building program. Adjutant General Charles F. Barrett noted that, "with these armories the guardsmen have new homes that they can be proud of. They will give us better trained men--for now we have better places for our work."⁷

The completed Cushing Armory was an addition to the community and one in which the town took pride. The building was constructed of the same white sandstone as Payne County's first armory in nearby Yale, Oklahoma. The Cushing Armory was approximately 140' x 125.' It consisted of an administrative section containing offices, classrooms, store rooms, lockers, garages, and an arms vault. Cushing Guardsmen particularly appreciated the secure, fire-proof storage space they previously lacked. The drill hall, 112' x 83,' served as a commodious community center with its stage at the north end. The stage concealed a basement gun range where Guardsmen practiced small arms and rifle fire.

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HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE (continued):

At the time of its dedication, the Cushing Armory became the headquarters of the sixty men and two officers of Company A, 120th Regiment. The Oklahoma National Guard originated during the territorial days and served honorably in the 1916-1917 Mexican Border Campaign and World War I, as well as natural emergencies and civil disturbances. In 1923, the Oklahoma National Guard was reorganized as part of the 45th Infantry ("Thunderbird") Division. Cushing's 158th Collecting Company was founded on January 13, 1930. Re-designation as Company A, 120th Regiment, did not change its assignment: collecting casualties from front-line aid stations, giving them emergency medical treatment, and evacuating them to hospitals. Company A continued to train at the Cushing Armory until the 45th Infantry Division mobilized in 1940 as the United States prepared to enter World War II. The "Thunderbird" Division served with distinction in the European Theater from the invasion of Sicily and Italy through the surrender of Germany in 1945. The Cushing unit, which later became an engineering company and then an infantry company, has now occupied the Cushing Armory for over fifty-five years.

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE:

The Cushing Armory is a model of a WPA armory in Oklahoma. It is a one-unit armory, typical of those designed by Major Bryan W. Nolen, an architect and Oklahoma National Guardsman. Nolen's standardized designs for one-unit, two-unit, and four-unit armories were flexible enough for construction by unskilled labor and for variable local conditions. Use of native stone, as was the case for thirty-three of Oklahoma's fifty-one WPA armories built by mid-1937, kept construction costs down while labor-intensive quarrying, dressing, and laying of the stone employed as many men from the relief rolls as possible. Thus, construction of the Cushing Armory met the practical goals of the WPA. Although the building does not have a great deal of ornamental detail, its shaped pilasters, vertical projections, and use of locally quarried stone give the armory a fortress-like appearance and suggest an Art Deco influence. It is also characteristic of the WPA's emphasis on art and craftsmanship. Together these qualities mark the Cushing Armory structurally and stylistically as a prime example of the WPA armories in Oklahoma.¹⁰

The period of significance for the Cushing Armory is 1935 to 1937. Construction of the armory began in 1935 and ended with its dedication in 1937. The building immediately became an integral part of the Cushing community.

During fifty-five years of continuous occupation by the Oklahoma National Guard, the Cushing Armory has undergone relatively little exterior alteration. The minimal exterior alterations which have occurred do not adversely impact the historic or architectural integrity of the building.

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ENDNOTES

¹U. S. Works Progress Administration, Oklahoma, Final Report of Activities and Accomplishments (n.p., 1943), 1-5; The Wagoner (Oklahoma) Tribune, 19 November 1935.

²Accomplishments: Works Progress Administration for Oklahoma, July 1, 1935-March 1, 1937 (Oklahoma City: Works Progress Administration, 1937), 38.

³The Cushing (Oklahoma) Daily Citizen, 29 August 1937.

⁴Jane Bryant, And Then Came Oil: Souvenir Booklet Commemorating [the] Fortieth Anniversary of the Discovery of Oil in the Cushing Area (n.p.: The Cushing Petroleum Festival, September 8-10, 1962), Cushing Public Library, Cushing, Oklahoma.

⁵The Cushing (Oklahoma) Daily Citizen, 29 August 1937.

⁶Ibid., 14 November 1935, 7 January, 1 April, 20 May, 29 August 1937.

⁷Ibid., 20 May 1937.

⁸Ibid.

⁹Ibid.; Kenny A. Franks, Citizen Soldiers: Oklahoma's National Guard (Norman, Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press, 1984), 20, 23-37, 42, 48, 49, 51, 62-114; unidentified clipping, May 1937, Daughters of the American Revolution Collection, Cushing Public Library, Cushing, Oklahoma; interview, Danny Matherly, editor, The Cushing (Oklahoma) Daily Citizen, Cushing, Oklahoma, November 9, 1992.

¹⁰Accomplishments: Works Progress Administration, 38.

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Bryant, Jane. And Then Came Oil: Souvenir Booklet Commemorating [the]
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Library, Cushing, Oklahoma.

The Cushing (Oklahoma) Daily Citizen. November 1935 through August 1937.

Daughters of the American Revolution Collection. Cushing Public Library,
Cushing, Oklahoma.

Franks, Kenny A. Citizen Soldiers: Oklahoma's National Guard. Norman,
Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press, 1984.

Matherly, Danny. Interview. Cushing, Oklahoma, November 9, 1992.

U. S. Works Progress Administration, Oklahoma, Final Report of Activities and
Accomplishments. n.p., 1943.

The Wagoner (Oklahoma) Tribune, 19 November 1935.

Verbal Boundary Description

Block 2, Elmwood Addition.

Boundary Justification

This is the property's boundary lines as legally recorded in the County Clerk's Office, Payne County Courthouse, Stillwater, Oklahoma. The boundaries described above have been historically associated with the nominated property.