

APR 29 1982

United States Department of the Interior  
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form

For HCRS use only

received JUL 6 1982

date entered

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

## 1. Name

historic New Hampshire State Union Armory

and/or common Hermsdorf Manufacturing Building

## 2. Location

street & number 60 Pleasant Street \_\_\_\_\_ not for publication

city, town Manchester \_\_\_\_\_ vicinity of congressional district # 1

state N.H. 03101 code 33 county Hillsborough code 011

## 3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational	<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:

## 4. Owner of Property

name Manchester Housing Authority

street & number 34 Fir Street

city, town Manchester \_\_\_\_\_ vicinity of state N. H. 03101

## 5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Hillsborough County Courthouse  
Hillsborough County Record of Deeds

street & number 19 Temple Street

city, town Nashua \_\_\_\_\_ state N. H. 03062

## 6. Representation in Existing Surveys

Request for Determination of Eligibility \_\_\_\_\_ See attached also (page A)  
has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date May 1980. \_\_\_\_\_ federal  state \_\_\_\_\_ county \_\_\_\_\_ local

depository for survey records Manchester Housing Authority

city, town Manchester \_\_\_\_\_ state N. H. 03101

NEW HAMPSHIRE STATE UNION ARMORY

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Item number

Page A

# 6 Title: Historic Planning Study

Date: 1978

Depository for Survey Records:

Manchester Historical Association  
129 Amherst Street  
Manchester, N. H. 03101

## 7. Description

<b>Condition</b>		<b>Check one</b>	<b>Check one</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved date <u>n/a</u>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

### Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

(Information in this section taken directly from source cited in Block # 9)

The Hermsdorf Building was constructed as the first New Hampshire State Armory and is a detached brick complex with two principal elements. The head house, a two story rectangular building fronting on Pleasant Street is fifteen bays wide and five bays deep. The facade faces north and the longitudinal axis of the building is oriented east-west. Constructed of sand-cast red brick laid in common bond with red-tinted mortar, the main block has a massive projecting two-story pavilion surmounted by a heavy stepped parapet of decorative concrete aggregate. Wide brick engaged pilasters enframe the central pavilion and visually support the parapet. The fortress-like main entrance is composed of a massive rock-faced granite segmental arch with the doors in antis. The building has a heavy water table of decorative concrete aggregate carried all around the perimeter immediately above the basement windows. A more narrow sill course of rock-faced granite repeats this horizontal line beneath the first floor windows. The roof is a deck-type covered with asphalt.

The second element of the complex is a large drill hall which fronts on West Central Street and is three stories in height. This building is characterized by a gable roof covered with green slate with copper and ferrous sheet metal flashings. The longitudinal axis of this structure is oriented north-south and the building is eighteen bays deep and eleven bays wide on the south facade. Because of the slope, the south facade is three stories, thus permitting an at-grade entrance to the basement level.

The facade is composed of a flat, gabled wall plane devoid of decorative features except for the corbelled profile at the eaves of the east and west entablatures and a very narrow water table of brick dividing the basement and drill hall floor levels. The wall plane is relieved however by a projecting central pavilion, two stories in height with a modestly stepped parapet. While this element is monumental in scale, it is clearly subordinate to the pavilion dominating the north facade. Three round-arched windows articulate the gable above the central pavilion and provide natural illumination for the drill hall floor. A massive flat arch of rock-faced granite with quoined pilasters enframes the portal to the basement at the base of the central pavilion.

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# 7 (continued)

The drill hall is also constructed of sand-cast brick laid in common bond with red-tinted mortar. The east and west elevations of the building have full-height slit windows which are paired. This design element diminishes the large scale of the drill hall and serves to relate the building well to surrounding neighborhood.

Important decorative elements include rock-faced granite window sills which articulate the fenestration for the whole of both buildings and wrought iron window gratings on lower level windows. The head house has massive quoins of brick at each of the four corners and the first floor windows within the engaged pilasters flanking the front entrance are recessed into the brick to suggest embrasures. The heavy decorative concrete aggregate cornice is supported by several courses of corbelling and is surmounted by a parapet wall with a copper cap. Beneath the eaves of the drill hall roof is a plain corbelled entablature.

Significant interior features from the period of original use are numerous. 95% of the original floor plan remains intact including the stair in the main block, door and window trim, varnished wainscotting and grained ceiling beams in the function rooms upstairs in the northwest corner. A cobblestone fireplace stands in the northeast corner room on the first floor. Floors in both the head house and drill hall are polished maple hardwood. A balcony serves as a transitional point and entry for viewing of the drill hall from the second floor of the main block. A compass rose is painted upon the floor of the balcony and appears to be an original feature. Wall murals of a nautical theme adorn the north gable wall of the drill hall at this level. Looking southward from this platform, one can observe the construction of the modified Fink trusses at eye level as well as the entire field of the drill hall floor. The drill hall roof is sheathed with heavy matchboard planking.

The interior of the basement level contains rows of posts which constitute the support for the drill hall floor. The principal uprights have wooden shear caps and the entire area has been whitewashed. Evidence of the 1906 fire which charred approximately 25% of the posts and ceiling is also visible. The northeast corner of the drill hall basement has been partitioned while the floor plan of the main block basement appears to be the original configuration. A vaulted passageway which penetrates the east wall of the boiler room, now sealed, is said to have connected the armory via a subterranean tunnel with the building which formerly stood on the lot across the former alley (now

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# 7 (continued)

the delivery lane for the truck loading dock attached to the east wall of the drill hall). The foundation is granite with a brick top course.

The most unusual design feature of the basement complex area is the fold-away posting system incorporated in the basement ceiling near the grade-level entry on the south end. Four steel posts, approximately 2" in diameter with an eye and shackle on the hinged upper end, were used during drills or assemblies to provide added strength to the drill hall floor when this surface was fully loaded. When needed, the steel posts could be swung down 90 degrees from their storage position and wedged at the bottom when perfectly vertical. In the storage position, the hinged posts are supported by an iron rod which was slid beneath the posts perpendicularly to each end and in turn carried by the rod and turnbuckle system spanning the ceiling over the aisle. The rod and turnbuckle system, with cast iron spreaders, appears to have been necessitated by the extreme span of the aisle ceiling.

The most significant alterations to the property occurred in conjunction with the conversion of the complex for use as a plastics manufactory. Slit windows on the east elevation of the head house and the west elevation of the drill hall were removed and bricked in while similar changes were made to the facade. Here, large horizontal fixed metal sash were introduced within the second floor wall plane interrupting the rhythm of the original design. Sheet metal ductwork and exhaust vents were also added on the south facade, east elevation of the head house and midway along the drill hall wall on the west side. The original massive oaken doors and iron gates which secured the entry to the head house on the north side have also been removed. All of these changes were made after 1941 when the building had been declared obsolete as an armory.

Structurally, there have been two elements added which, while serving the building's recycled purpose, do not contribute to the integrity of the original design. These include the concrete truck loading dock appended to the east side of the drill hall and the overhead garage door entrance introduced at street level on the south elevation. This is the lowest site elevation and was the location of the backstop for the former indoor firing range. Overall however, the property retains most of its original design integrity, and is clearly recognizable as an expression of period military architecture.

## 8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

**Specific dates** 1904 **Builder/Architect** Col. Alfred A. Collins

**Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)** (Source: See Block # 9)

**Architecture:** The New Hampshire State Union Armory was designed as a variation of the Romanesque architectural style. The signature of the building is clearly its massive, arched entry portals of stone masonry but the balance of the design of the main block is understated. The south facade is strongly reminiscent of the Richardeonian Romanesque style with its broad flat wall planes and round-arched gable windows. The Armory retains 85% of its original design integrity and has borne moderately reversible alterations. The building is clearly recognizable interiorly and exteriorly for the use it was originally designed to serve.

**Military:** The Armory is significant in the military history of The State of New Hampshire because it was the first such facility constructed by the State government in an effort to centralize disparate local units of the National Guard and state militia. Previously, regimental companies trained at different locations throughout Manchester. The design of the building incorporated assembly, drill, storage, headquarters, and fortification functions.

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

Closs, Christopher W. Request for Determination of Eligibility - The National Register of Historic Places " New Hampshire State Union Armory". Prepared for the Manchester Housing Authority, May, 1980.

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreege of nominated property 0.99

Quadrangle name Manchester South, NH

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

### UMT References

A 

1	9	2	9	8	9	6	0	4	7	6	2	2	5	0
Zone		Easting						Northing						

B 

Zone		Easting				Northing					

C 

Zone		Easting				Northing					

D 

Zone		Easting				Northing					

E 

Zone		Easting				Northing					

F 

Zone		Easting				Northing					

G 

Zone		Easting				Northing					

H 

Zone		Easting				Northing					

### Verbal boundary description and justification

The nominated property is on City map and parcel number 630/2 and is approximately 192' X 225' in size.

### List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	code	county	code
N/A			

state	code	county	code

## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Richard P. Weaver, Redevelopment Planner

organization Manchester Housing Authority

date June 16, 1981

street & number 34 Fir Street

telephone 603-625-8936

city or town Manchester

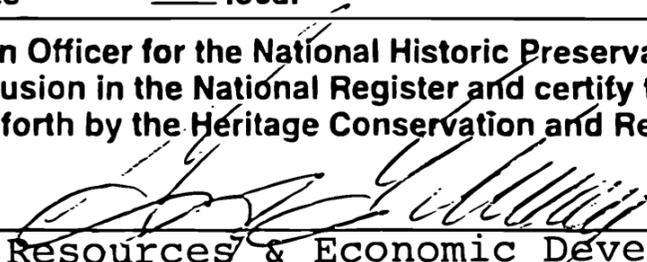
state New Hampshire 03101

## 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national  state  local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature 

Commissioner, Dept. of Resources & Economic Development

title NH State Historic Preservation Officer

date June 28, 1982

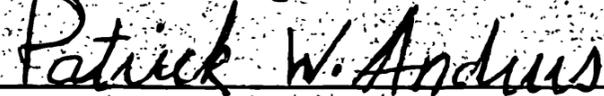
For HCRS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register



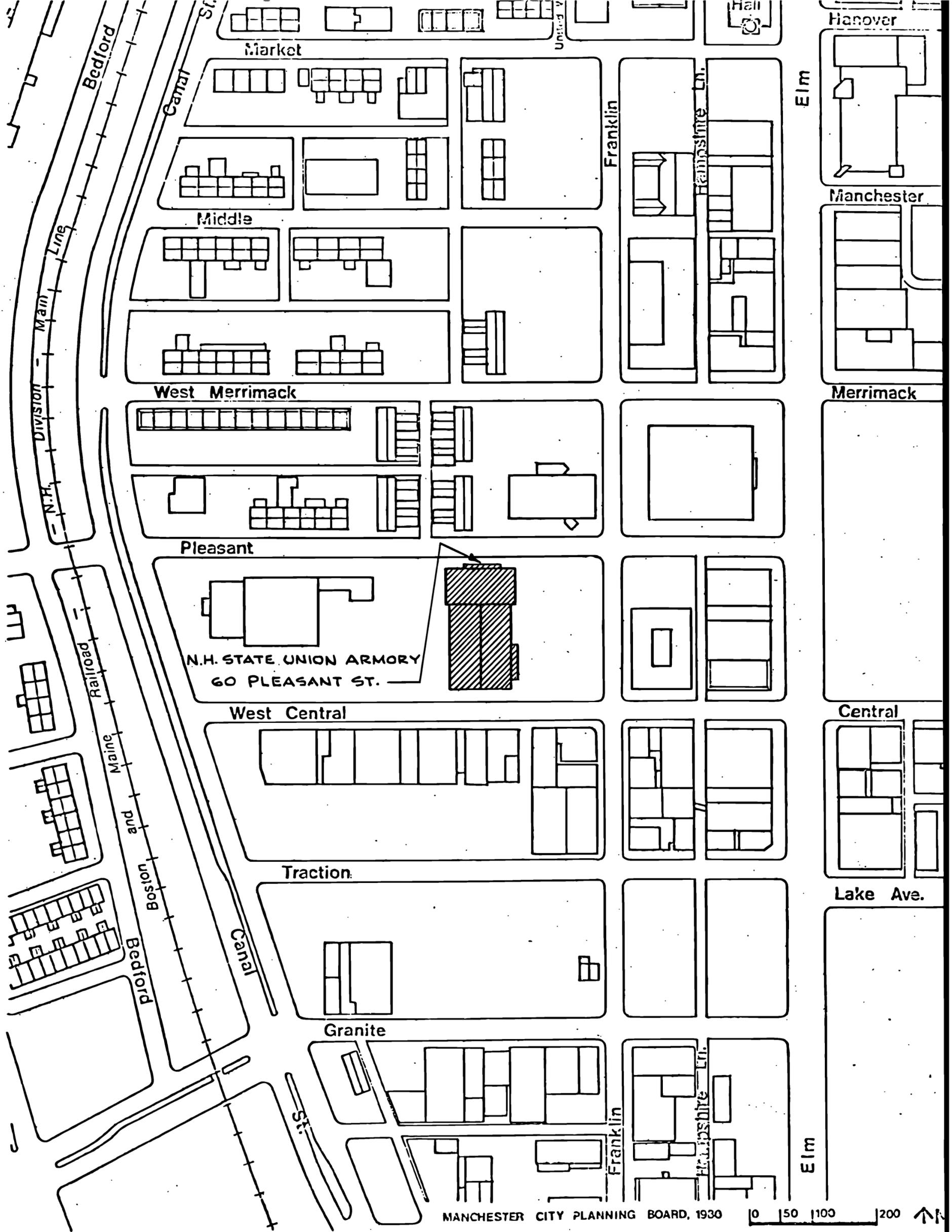
date 8-10-82

Keeper of the National Register

Attest: 

date 8/9/82

Chief of Registration



Location Map