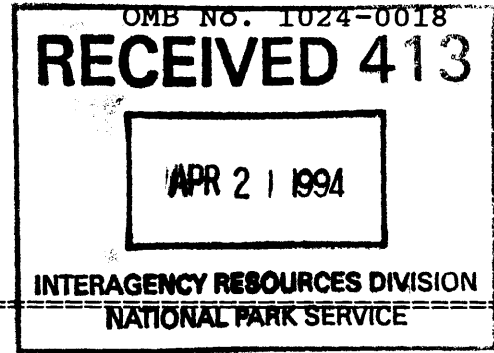


NPS Form 10-900
(Rev. 10-90)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM



=====

1. Name of Property

=====

historic name Wagoner Armory

other names/site number Wagoner National Guard Armory

=====

2. Location

=====

street & number 509 E. Cherokee Street not for publication N/A
city or town Wagoner vicinity N/A
state Oklahoma code OK county Wagoner code 109
zip code 74467

=====
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
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.
- determined eligible for the National Register
 See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register
- other (explain): _____

Entered in the
National Register

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> 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 Sandstone
Limestone
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

=====
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

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

=====
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

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

Acreage of Property less than one acre

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

| | Zone | Easting | Northing | Zone | Easting | Northing |
|---|-----------|---------------|----------------|------|---------|----------|
| 1 | <u>15</u> | <u>286180</u> | <u>3981900</u> | 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 May 30, 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

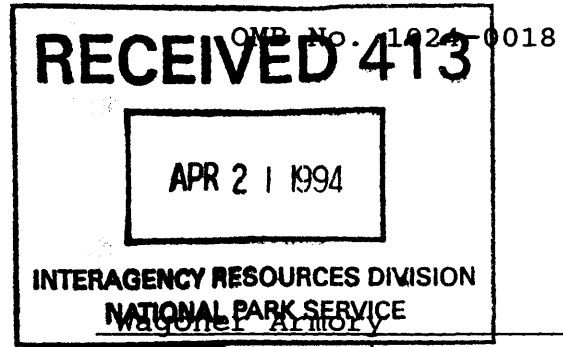
street & number 3501 Military Circle, NE telephone (405) 425-8000

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

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 7 Page 9



Wagoner Armory
name of property
Wagoner County, Oklahoma
county and State

=====

SUMMARY:

The Wagoner Armory (Wagoner National Guard Armory) is a single-story, rectangular-shaped building (129' x 140') constructed of native sandstone between 1935 and 1937 by the Works Progress Administration. The armory is located east of the Wagoner central business district on the northwest corner of E. Cherokee and Jefferson streets. On the west is a Catholic church, parking lot, and parsonage. On the east across Jefferson is a WPA native stone community center. The surrounding area is mixed commercial and residential. The Wagoner Armory has two distinct sections. Facing East Cherokee is the public entrance to a flat-roofed administrative/garage section. Behind is the barrel-roofed drill hall, facing Jefferson. Overhead doors provide access from Jefferson into the drill hall and garage. Both sections are roofed in rolled asphalt. Walls are of randomly laid, slightly rusticated sandstone with fine beaded mortar. Use of tall, narrow hopper windows with center pivot sections, pilasters, and piers give the building a strong vertical aspect and suggest an Art Deco influence. The Wagoner Armory is an excellent example of WPA architecture in Oklahoma.

EXTERIOR DESCRIPTION:

The Wagoner Armory consists of two main sections. A barrel-roofed drill hall parallels East Cherokee. Centered on it at right angles is the flat-topped administrative/garage section. Walls are randomly laid sandstone blocks, slightly rusticated and set in fine beaded mortar, with a cut limestone parapet. Both roof sections are rolled asphalt and drained by heavy metal gutters. The public entrance is on the south elevation of the administrative/garage section, facing East Cherokee. This elevation features an imposing, centrally-placed portal of complex design. The flat top of the portal is flanked by small crenelations. There is a tall pediment-shaped pilaster and a three-foot-high flat-topped pier on either side of the centered, arched single entrance. The pilasters have narrow, fixed, multiple-paned windows. Incisions (embrasures) in the stone high on either side of the entrance create a triple line motif repeated elsewhere on the building. Equally spaced incisions below the roofline suggest crenelation. An American eagle and the words "National Guard Armory," carved into the stone, are picked out in white on a red background over the entrance. A new metal door between wooden inserts has replaced the original wooden door. On either side of the portal are groupings of four steel-framed hopper windows with center-pivot sections and pre-formed concrete sills. Nearest the portal is a single two-over-five window. Beyond it is a pair of three-over-five windows, then a two-over-five window. All but the upper row of lights have been painted. At the extreme ends of the south elevation are pediment-shaped pilasters extending beyond the roofline. There is a plaque commemorating the dedication of the building on the southeast pilaster.

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CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 7 Page 10

Wagoner Armory
name of property
Wagoner County, Oklahoma
county and State

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EXTERIOR DESCRIPTION (continued)

The west elevation clearly shows the division of the building into two sections. To the right is the flat-roofed portion of the administrative/garage section. It has a three-over-five steel-framed hopper window with a center-pivot section and a pre-formed concrete sill. A long, low, windowless extension from the southwest corner of the drill hall is the above-ground roof of the basement rifle range. The parapet on the west elevation of the drill hall follows the curvature of the barrel roof between pediment-shaped piers.

The north elevation runs the length of the drill hall. There are two centrally-placed single wooden doors. Each is topped by a vertical three-over-four transom. There are six windows on this elevation similar to those found elsewhere on the building with three on either side of the doors. Windows and transoms, which extend to the same height, are steel-framed with pre-formed concrete sills. Just west of the doors is a low concrete block wall, perhaps the foundation of an extension or platform since removed.

The east elevation of the armory gives access to Jefferson Street. To the right is the drill hall. Pediment-topped pilasters with the triple-line motif extend above the roofline, which follows the curvature of the barrel roof. A wooden overhead door is centered on this elevation of the drill hall. To the left of the overhead door is a single wooden door. It is topped by a vertical, three-over-four transom. To the right of the overhead door are three three-over-five windows. To the left of the single door are two three-over-five windows. The windows and the transom, which extend to the same height, are steel-framed and have pre-cast concrete sills. The flat-roofed garage section has two three-over-five windows with pre-formed concrete sills on the right. There are two wooden overhead doors to the left. Several panes on this elevation have been painted white.

A small, freestanding brick sign shaped similar to the front facade of the building has been added to the southeast of the front entrance at an undetermined date.

INTERIOR DESCRIPTION:

The interior of the building is divided into two distinct sections. The southern-most section houses administrative offices, classrooms, the vault, and garages. These are arranged on either side of a central hallway leading from the entrance to the drill hall. Walls are of randomly-laid slightly rusticated sandstone over brick. Acoustical ceilings have been installed in the hallway. The floor is concrete. Faint mule shoe impressions in the floor recall the use of these animals during construction. The drill hall extends east-west across the rear of the building. The steel framework of the roof is exposed. At the

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Wagoner Armory
name of property
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INTERIOR DESCRIPTION (continued)

west end is the stage. On either side are sandstone piers incised with the triple-line motif. The stage has been walled in with concrete blocks. In the southeast corner is a recent plywood storage enclosure. The original wood-block flooring has been removed to expose the concrete beneath. Beneath the stage is the rifle range, now used for storage.

ALTERATIONS:

The Wagoner Armory has had very few exterior alterations. These consist of painted panes in some windows and the replacement of the original main entrance door with a modern metal door, probably for security reasons. A small brick sign has been installed to the southeast of the entrance. Oral tradition, unsubstantiated by any documentation, suggests the outside of the building was sandblasted sometime before 1958. If, indeed, that was the case, the stonework shows no evidence. The surface of the stone is firm, and the fine beaded mortar is smooth and flat with crisp edges. Interior stone walls, not sandblasted and finished in exactly the same manner, show no difference except for the coating of clear varnish that has been applied to limit dust. Interior alterations include redesign of the restrooms to accommodate guardsmen of both sexes, removal of the original wood flooring in the drill hall, and creation of secure storage spaces in the drill hall for the two guard units currently sharing the facility. These spaces were created by blocking in the stage and construction of a plywood enclosure in the southeast corner. All modifications have been made to allow more efficient use of the facility by the Oklahoma National Guard. None impeach the architectural or historic integrity of the building.

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Wagoner Armory
name of property
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county and State

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SUMMARY:

The Wagoner Armory (Wagoner National Guard Armory) is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A for its association with the Works Progress Administration of the 1930s and the Oklahoma National Guard. Under the WPA program, local construction projects were devised as a way of creating jobs for unemployed laborers and stimulating the local economy. The Wagoner Armory also has been the home of Company A, 180th Infantry, 45th Infantry Division, of the Oklahoma National Guard, for over fifty-five years. It is also eligible under Criterion C because it is an excellent example of WPA architecture in Oklahoma. The native sandstone construction and fine craftsmanship displayed in this building reflect the economic and artistic ideals of the WPA program.

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE:

The Works Progress Administration was created in 1935 during the New Deal administration of President Franklin D. Roosevelt. The United States was suffering its worst economic depression ever. The WPA was designed to create public works projects that would alleviate record unemployment by drawing labor from relief rolls. It also would stimulate the local economy. The program lasted until June 1943 when full employment returned nationally as the result of the United States' entrance into World War II. By that time the federal government had allocated \$10.75 billion to the program, of which \$185 million was spent in Oklahoma. To receive federal funds, WPA projects had to meet three criteria. They must be useful on a permanent basis, capable of providing employment for those on relief, and sponsored by the community. The Wagoner Armory met all three criteria.

First, an armory for Wagoner would be useful and a permanent addition to the community. Oklahoma National Guard units never had permanent headquarters. Inadequate rented facilities cost the state government as much as \$50,000 annually. Lack of secure facilities resulted in frequent loss of equipment and arms. Wagoner's Company A, 180th Infantry, for example, had occupied several sites. In 1935 it was quartered in a wing of the Deming Investment Company on North Main Street. Construction of an armory for Wagoner's Company A would save the state money; supply the unit with a permanent, secure, fire-proof facility; and provide Wagoner with a community center for recreation, cultural events, and sports.² Second, Wagoner needed the armory construction to provide relief from severe national and local economic depression. Once a thriving railroad market town situated in the historic Three Forks region of eastern Oklahoma, Wagoner flourished as a center of cotton and corn production after its founding late in the nineteenth century. But collapsing commodity prices, soil exhaustion, too much rain or too little in the 1930s, and a plague of grasshoppers combined to create severe economic hardships in the county by

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Wagoner Armory
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HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE (continued)

1935. In 1933 the Red Cross reported that 3,075 families, half the county population, was receiving aid. By 1935 federal relief programs were operating in the county, but the number of families on relief had increased to 3,402. WPA projects such as an armory for Wagoner offered jobs and a decrease in the number of families in economic distress.³ Wagoner's civic leaders recognized the benefits an armory construction project offered to the local economy and national defense. They also saw that cooperation with the WPA would give the community a permanent structure otherwise beyond their means. Their prompt acquisition of a building site demonstrated their eager support of the project. Thus, they met the third criterion.

Word of the proposed armory project reached Wagoner in February 1935. Official approval was announced in September. By that time the Wagoner Chamber of Commerce had already selected part of a parcel of land owned by the Catholic Church. With the approval of the diocese, the Chamber purchased the land at the intersection of East Cherokee and Jefferson and deeded it to the City of Wagoner as an eventual gift to the State of Oklahoma. Construction of the proposed \$26,000 armory began in October 1935. Quarrying of the stone and preparation of the site by 50 men had already begun when in November wrangling between state and federal WPA administrators temporarily cancelled the project. That Wagoner's citizens were outraged and dismayed was evidence of their commitment to the project. They were consequently relieved when it was reinstated within a week under the supervision of Major Roy Cox of Muskogee. By March 1936 the project employed 181 men, mostly unskilled laborers. As of October 1936, WPA projects in the county included community sanitation, cemetery improvements, malaria control, farm to market roads, and sewing rooms. The armory, costing eventually \$34,382,30, was the third largest project in the county.⁴

The Wagoner Armory was completed in early 1937. The building included a drill hall 83' x 110', a rifle range, a supply room, a concrete arms vault, locker rooms, shower rooms, offices, classrooms, and a garage. The stage in the drill hall indicated its future use as a community center and public meeting place. Its dedication on Friday, February 26, was cause for a community celebration. One of the largest crowds ever assembled in Wagoner witnessed the parade and dedication, an affirmation of the town's support of the project, the National Guard, and the WPA. Over the following decades the Wagoner Armory functioned not only as the headquarters of Company A, 180th Infantry, of the Oklahoma National Guard, but also met expectations that it would serve the community. For many years the drill hall with its wood-block floor doubled as the court for Wagoner's high school basketball team.⁵

The Wagoner Armory has served the local Oklahoma National Guard unit from its

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HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE (continued)

dedication in 1937 to the present. Guardsmen were usually drawn from the community in which the unit was stationed and served civilian as well as military needs, thus forging strong local ties. The Wagoner unit, for example, was formed in 1919. It helped suppress the Tulsa race riot in 1921, imposed martial law in 1933 and 1935, and was called out to rid the nearby Cookson Hills of outlaws in 1934. In 1923 it became a part of the 45th Infantry ("Thunderbird") Division when the Oklahoma National Guard was reorganized. Wagoner guardsmen were closely involved in the building of their armory. Captain Richard F. Jones and Lieutenant William C. Bryant helped acquire the land and plan the project. Major (later Colonel) Roy Cox, construction superintendent of the Wagoner Armory project, commanded the 180th Infantry when the Wagoner unit was activated at the beginning of World War II. It and the Thunderbird Division served with distinction from the invasion of Sicily and Italy through the surrender of Germany in 1945. The Wagoner Armory continues to serve the Oklahoma National Guard, currently housing not one but two units.⁶

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE:

The Wagoner Armory is an excellent example of WPA architecture in Oklahoma. Major Bryan W. Nolen, an architect and Guardsman, was the supervising architect for the Oklahoma WPA armory building project. His standardized plans for one, two, and four units provided simplicity for use of unskilled labor and flexibility to meet local conditions. The Wagoner Armory is typical of the one-unit design. The use of native stone quarried in the county exemplifies the WPA's goal of using locally available materials whenever possible. It was one of thirty-three armories built primarily of native stone by mid-1937. Eighteen others were brick. The quarrying, dressing, and laying of stone was labor-intensive; consequently, the design and construction met the WPA goal of employing as many men as possible. At the same time, the building reflects WPA concern with art and craftsmanship. The castellated appearance and Art Deco influence noted in the verticality of the windows, projecting pilasters, and the triple-line motif mark the Wagoner Armory unquestionably as a WPA project.⁷

The period of significance for the Wagoner Armory is from the beginning of its construction in 1935 to 1937, the year of its dedication. The building remains an integral part of the Wagoner community. That it appears almost exactly as it did when dedicated adds to its historic and architectural significance.

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Wagoner Armory
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county and State

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ENDNOTES

¹Accomplishments: Works Progress Administration for Oklahoma, July 1, 1935-March 1, 1937 (Oklahoma City, Oklahoma: Works Progress Administration, 1937), 38; Wagoner (Oklahoma) Tribune, 19 November 1935.

²Hominy (Oklahoma) News, 14 May 1937; Wagoner (Oklahoma) Tribune, 3 February 1935.

³Wagoner County History (n.p., 1980), 36-37; Wagoner (Oklahoma) Tribune, 22 January 1935.

⁴Wagoner (Oklahoma) Tribune, 5 February, 10 September, 19 November 1935, 10 March, 21 July, 13 October 1936.

⁵Ibid., 21 July 1936, 16 February, 2 March 1937; interview of Supply Sergeant Clarence B. Davis, Wagoner, Oklahoma, October 23, 1992; interview of Davis and Sergeant Benny C. Cox, May 26, 1993. Davis enlisted at this armory in 1958 and has been associated with it since.

⁶National Guard of the United States, State of Oklahoma, Historical Annual, 1938 (Baton Rouge, Louisiana: Army & Navy Publishing Company, 1938), 120, 312; Kenny A. Franks, Citizen Soldiers: Oklahoma's National Guard (Norman, Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press, 1984), 40, 42-43, 50, 62-77, 86-87, 91-92, 106-107; Wagoner (Oklahoma) Tribune, 10 September, 19 November, 1935.

⁷W. David Baird, "Final Report: WPA Structures Thematic Survey (Phase III)," (Stillwater, Oklahoma: Oklahoma State University, 1987), 13.

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CONTINUATION SHEET

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Wagoner Armory
name of property
Wagoner County, Oklahoma
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MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES:

- Accomplishments: Works Progress Administration for Oklahoma, July 1, 1935-
March 1, 1937. Oklahoma City: Works Progress Administration, 1937.
- Baird, W. David. "Final Report: WPA Structures Thematic Survey (Phase III)."
Stillwater, Oklahoma: Oklahoma State University, 1987.
- Cox, Benny C., Sergeant. Interview. Wagoner, Oklahoma. May 26, 1993.
- Davis, Clarence B., Sergeant. Interview. Wagoner, Oklahoma. October 23,
1992; May 26, 1993.
- Franks, Kenny A. Citizen Soldiers: Oklahoma's National Guard. Norman,
Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press, 1983.
- Hominy (Oklahoma) News. May 1937.
- Wagoner (Oklahoma) Tribune. February 1935 through March 1937.

Verbal Boundary Description

East 70 feet of Lot 7 and all of Lot 8, Block 291, Wagoner Original Town.

Boundary Justification

These are the property's boundary lines as legally recorded in the County Clerk's Office, Wagoner County Courthouse, Wagoner, Oklahoma. The boundaries described above have been historically associated with the nominated property.