

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM

RECEIVED 413

APR 2 1994

INTERAGENCY RESOURCES DIVISION
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

1. Name of Property

historic name Tishomingo Armory

other names/site number Tishomingo National Guard Armory

2. Location

street & number 500 E. 24th not for publication N/A
city or town Tishomingo vicinity N/A
state Oklahoma code OK county Johnston code 069
zip code 73460

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.)

Baker 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

Entered in the
National Register

other (explain): _____

Edson H. Ball
Signature of Keeper
for

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

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6. Function or Use

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Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: DEFENSE Sub: arm storage

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: DEFENSE Sub: arms storage

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7. Description

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Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

OTHER: Works Progress Administration

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation CONCRETE

roof ASPHALT

walls sandstone

CONCRETE

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 1935-1936

Significant Dates 1936

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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
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(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 acre

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

	Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing
1	<u>14</u>	<u>714100</u>	<u>3789100</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.)

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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

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Additional Documentation
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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)

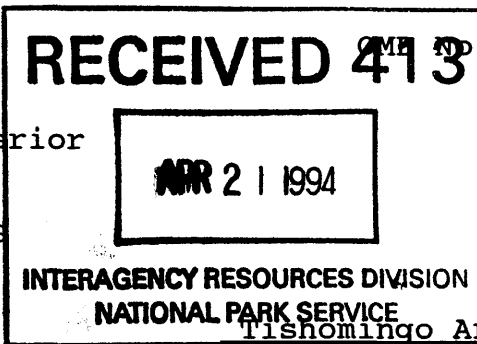
=====
Property Owner
=====

(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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CONTINUATION SHEET

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Tishomingo Armory
name of property
Johnston County
county and State

SUMMARY:

The Tishomingo Armory (Tishomingo National Guard Armory) is a single-story, roughly rectangular sandstone building (126' x 140') built by the Works Progress Administration between 1935 and 1936. It stands on the south side of East 24th Street between South Byrd and Murray avenues. It is part of the Murray State College campus, and campus buildings stand on all except the east side. To the east, across Murray Avenue, is a hospital and a residential area. On the east side of the armory is a large fenced parking area for military vehicles. Outside the fence, southeast of the armory, is a military jet aircraft mounted for display. The armory consists of two main sections. To the south is a barrel-roofed drill hall with its axis paralleling East 24th Street. Centered on it is the smaller flat-roofed administrative section, facing north onto East 24th Street. The roofs are rolled asphalt. The walls are rusticated, coursed variegated sandstone topped by concrete coping. The use of native stone and the castellated facade mark the Tishomingo Armory as an excellent example of WPA architecture in Oklahoma. The vertical lines used to break the horizontal mass of the building and other vertical features suggest an Art Deco influence.

EXTERIOR DESCRIPTION:

The Tishomingo Armory, consisting of two main sections, is roughly rectangular or shaped in a very broad T. The axis of the barrel-roofed drill hall, on the south, parallels East 24th Street. The flat-roofed administrative section, slightly narrower and on the north, is centered on the drill hall and faces onto East 24th Street. Both roofs are rolled asphalt. Heavy metal gutters drain the roofs. Walls are rusticated, coursed variegated sandstone of variable sizes. A simple concrete coping tops the walls around the circumference of the roofline. Pedimented pilasters define each corner of the building. Elongated steel-framed hopper windows with center-pivot sections have concrete sills. These windows create vertical lines and visually break up the horizontal mass of the building. The pilasters, windows, and projecting portal contribute to the verticality of the building, lending it an Art Deco influence.

The public entrance to the Tishomingo Armory is located on the north elevation, facing East 24th Street. It is contained in a centered, complex projecting portal that extends above the flat roofline. The portal has a stepped parapet. Shorter pediment-topped pilasters flank the entrance. Near the top of each pilaster are three vertical indentations (embrasures) that create a triple-line motif characteristic of the native stone WPA armory in Oklahoma. A single vertical incision is centered below the triple-line motif on both pilasters. Short flat-topped piers are placed on either side of the entrance. The portal, piers, and pilasters have concrete caps. Providing entrance to the building is

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EXTERIOR DESCRIPTION (continued):

a single metal door between wooden inserts. It is recessed beneath a keystone arch over a flat lintel. Over the door is a plaque commemorating the construction of the armory by the WPA in 1936. Mounted above the plaque is a wooden sign, the yellow-on-red Thunderbird insignia of the 45th Infantry Division. On either side of the portal are groups of four windows. The first and fourth in each group are two-over-six. The second and third, which are paired, are three-over-six. The panes of all eight windows are painted. Along the roofline are spaced vertical indentations in the stonework. These contribute to the castellated facade. At the northeast and northwest corners of this elevation of the administrative section are concrete-topped pedimented pilasters with the triple-line motif. The entire width of the extension of the drill hall beyond the narrower administrative section on the east and west is covered by pediment-topped pilasters. On each of these broad pilasters, the triple-line motif is elongated and given extra importance.

The east elevation includes the recessed elevation of the flat-roofed administrative section and the east elevation of the barrel-roofed drill hall. On the right of the east elevation of the administrative section are two wooden overhead doors giving access to garages. To the left of the overhead doors are two three-over-six hopper windows with center-pivot sections. On the east elevation of the drill hall the roofline follows the curvature of the barrel roof between concrete-topped pedimented pilasters. Each pilaster has the triple-line motif near the top. Centered on this elevation of the drill hall is a wooden overhead door. To the right of the overhead door is a single metal door with a vertical three-over-four transom. To the right of the single door are two three-over-six windows. To the left of the overhead door are three three-over-six windows. All windows and the transom extend to the same height.

The south elevation of the Tishomingo Armory extends along the entire length of the drill hall. It overlooks an open area of the campus and an adjoining college building. At the right end of this elevation is a concrete-topped pedimented pilasters with the triple line motif. The left end of the elevation has a pedimented step on the parapet. Centered on this elevation are two single metal doors with vertical transoms. On the right of the doors are four windows grouped in pairs. On the left of the doors are five windows. The first four grouped in pairs and the fifth window is at the extreme left end of this elevation. These windows and transoms have a similar glazing pattern as the other elevations.

The west elevation of the Tishomingo Armory also reveals the two part nature of the building. The right section features the curvilinear parapet of the drill hall. The large expanse of the stone wall is broken only by a single three-over-six window. Recessed behind the drill hall is the west elevation of the -

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EXTERIOR DESCRIPTION (continued):

administrative wing. In the angle between the two sections is a low, flat, concrete-topped extension which is the exposed roof of the basement rifle range. On the west elevation of the administrative section are two three-over-six windows, both of which have been painted. At the extreme left is a concrete-topped, pedimented pilaster with the triple-line motif.

ALTERATIONS:

Alterations to the Tishomingo Armory are relatively inconspicuous. These include painting the panes of some windows and replacing original pedestrian wooden doors with new metal doors on the east and south elevations. The original double wooden door in the main entrance on the north elevation has been replaced with a single metal door between wooden inserts.

The Tishomingo Armory is essentially intact and retains more than adequate integrity of location, setting, exterior design, materials, and workmanship to convey its significance as the embodiment of WPA-type architecture in Oklahoma.

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SUMMARY:

The Tishomingo Armory (Tishomingo National Guard Armory) is eligible for the National Register under Criterion A because it is associated 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 creating public works projects that would employ people on the relief rolls and stimulate the local economy. The use of native stone or other locally-produced materials reduced costs. The Tishomingo Armory exemplified the program in Johnston County. On completion it became the headquarters of the local National Guard unit, which has occupied the building for more than fifty-seven years. The Tishomingo Armory is also eligible for the Register under Criterion C. The castellated style, showing an Art Deco influence, and use of native stone adapted for unskilled labor make it an excellent example of WPA architecture in Oklahoma.

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE:

The Tishomingo Armory, constructed between 1935 and 1936, was a product of the Works Progress Administration, created under the New Deal programs of President Franklin D. Roosevelt. The goal of the WPA was to combat the effects of the Great Depression by subsidizing public works projects. These would draw laborers from the relief rolls to reduce record levels of unemployment. Materials produced locally would be used in order to stimulate the economy and reduce costs. The WPA program, created in June 1935, ended in June 1943 with the return of full employment during World War II. The program spent a total of \$10.75 billion, with \$185 million allocated to Oklahoma projects. Typical WPA projects in Oklahoma at the county and town level included roadwork, bridges, dams, malaria control, sanitation and water system improvements, schools, post offices, and public buildings. Local projects chosen for the WPA had to be permanent useful additions to the community, draw labor from local relief rolls, and have the sponsorship of the community. The Tishomingo Armory fulfilled all these requirements.¹

Armory projects 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. Security was often a problem, leaving arms and equipment liable to theft. Tishomingo's unit, Headquarters Company, First Battalion, 180th Infantry, occupied a space described by the local newspaper as "very poor."² It was so bad, in fact, that "as far as an armory goes, they have none."³ An armory for Tishomingo would have multiple purposes. The proposed site was on the campus of Murray State College on the south edge of town. The armory could serve both the Guard and the college's cadets as a drill site at the same time it provided facilities for "Aggie" and Tishomingo high school sports events. The Tishomingo community also needed the employment a WPA

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HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE (continued):

armory construction project would afford. Once the capital of the Chickasaw Nation, Tishomingo was now a small college and market town. The primarily agricultural economy was supplemented by tourism and exploitation of granite, building stone, and glass sand deposits. The droughts of the early 1930s and a national depression devastated a local economy already suffering from years of low agricultural prices. By June 1935 unemployment in Johnston County affected 1,349 heads of families or single people, translating to 43 percent of the population. A project such as the building of an armory in Tishomingo meant jobs for many men on the relief rolls. Murray State College was willing to sell its football practice field to the State of Oklahoma for the sum of one dollar if it meant a new and impressive building for the campus. By October 1935 the enthusiasm and active support of businessmen's organizations, Guardsmen, and school officials won Tishomingo a WPA armory project.⁴

Construction of the Tishomingo Armory began the same month. The labor-intensive quarrying, dressing, and laying of the native stone as well as the cutting, sanding, and setting in place of hundreds of thousands of four-inch wooden blocks in the drill hall floor took as many men as possible off the relief rolls. These men were limited to 130 hours' work per month but were guaranteed a wage of \$23 per month. This allowed them to regain their independence and some purchasing power, further aiding the local economy. By late August 1936, WPA officials reckoned that the building was 84 percent complete. The third started in the state, it stood a good chance of being the first finished. By October a four-way race had developed with Norman, Haskell, and Kingfisher being the other contenders. The race took on added importance with President Roosevelt, creator of the New Deal and its WPA program, up for re-election.⁵ Pointing to the armory building program, new bridges, farm ponds, street improvements, and sewer system, the editor of the local Democratic paper asked, "What would have happened to hundreds of impoverished Johnston County residents if the WPA had not furnished employment?"⁶ By late October the walls were up and the steel framing of the drill hall's barrel roof were going up. In spite of the labor force's best efforts, the armory was completed third behind Haskell and Kingfisher. The dedication, a celebration of and by the WPA, took place November 2, 1936, two days before the 1936 election.⁷ Within the next few weeks the Tishomingo Armory began to fulfill its multiple-purpose role, as an armory for the local Guard and the "Aggie" cadets as well as the site of boxing matches, basketball games, concerts, and fiddling contests.⁸

The Tishomingo Armory was completed at a cost of nearly \$40,000 with \$17,000 of the amount going into payroll for unskilled labor. While this was one of the smaller armories constructed under the WPA program, the drill hall at 85' by 125' was larger than comparable buildings in neighboring towns. At the west

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HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE (continued):

end of the drill hall was a stage, evidence of the multiple purposes intended for the armory. Beneath the stage was a basement rifle range. The administrative section of the building contained offices, locker rooms, storage rooms, and classrooms. It was the tenth building on campus and one of the most impressive structures in Tishomingo.⁹

The unit that received the Tishomingo Armory as its new home had been organized on August 31, 1918, as Company C, Third Infantry. After several redesignations, it became Headquarters Company, First Battalion, 180th Infantry on December 31, 1921. In 1923 the Oklahoma National Guard, including the 180th Infantry, was incorporated into the 45th Infantry Division, later known as the "Thunderbirds." By 1938 the improvements in training afforded by the WPA armory-building program were evident in the higher degree of preparedness of Guard units such as Tishomingo's Headquarters Company. The Oklahoma National Guard was 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, a total of 511 actual combat days. Following World War II the Guard reoccupied the Tishomingo Armory and has continued to use the building since. Presently it serves as the headquarters for the 1245th Transportation Company.¹⁰

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE:

The Tishomingo Armory is a model of the WPA native stone armory in Oklahoma. It is a one-unit armory, typical of that designed by WPA supervising architect and Oklahoma National Guardsman Major Bryan F. Nolen. 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, of which Johnston County had an abundance, kept down construction costs while the labor-intensive quarrying, dressing, and laying of stone employed as many men from the relief rolls as possible. Thus, the Tishomingo Armory met the practical goals of the WPA. The castellated facade could be as plain or elaborate as the skill of the workers allowed. The Tishomingo Armory demonstrates one early variation of the design, including the familiar triple-line motif. The massive size, complex projecting portal, and recessed entrance suggest the military use of the building while the verticality of windows, piers, and pilasters are evidence of Art Deco influence on the design. These characteristics mark the Tishomingo Armory structurally and stylistically as a prime example of the WPA armory in Oklahoma. Construction began in 1935 and ended with the dedication in 1936. The building immediately became an integral part of the Tishomingo community and Murray State College.

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ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE (continued):

During more than fifty-six years of continuous occupation by the Oklahoma National Guard, the Tishomingo Armory has undergone very little exterior alteration. Such alterations as have been made create little visual impact and do not impeach the historical or architectural integrity of the building.

NOTES

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

²The Johnston County Capital Democrat (Tishomingo, Oklahoma), 7 March 1935.

³Ibid., 20 June 1935.

⁴Ibid., 3 October 1935; "Tishomingo," Vertical File, Oklahoma Historical Society, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma; The Indian Journal, Eufaula, Oklahoma, 20 June 1935; Deed 68552, 5 September 1935, Deed Book 46, pp. 57-58, County Clerk's Office, Johnston County Courthouse, Tishomingo, Oklahoma.

⁵The Sulphur (Oklahoma) Times-Democrat, 11 July 1935; The Johnston County Capital Democrat (Tishomingo, Oklahoma), 27 August, 29 October 1936; Accomplishments: Works Progress Administration for Oklahoma, July 1, 1935-March 1, 1937 (Oklahoma City: Works Progress Administration, 1937), 41.

⁶The Johnston County Capital Democrat (Tishomingo, Oklahoma), 29 October 1936.

⁷Ibid., 29 October, 5 November 1936; Accomplishments, 41;

⁸The Johnston County Capital Democrat (Tishomingo, Oklahoma), 21 January, 18 February, 15 April, 29 September 1937.

⁹Ibid., 3 October 1935, 29 October 1936.

¹⁰National Guard of the United States, State of Oklahoma, Historical Annual, 1938 (Baton Rouge, Louisiana: Army & Navy Publishing Company, 1938), 118; Kenny A. Franks, Citizen Soldiers: Oklahoma's National Guard (Norman, Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press, 1984), 40, 49, 62-114.

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MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

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

Deed 68552, 5 September 1935, Deed Book 46, County Clerk's Office, Johnston
County Courthouse, Tishomingo, Oklahoma.

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

The Indian Journal (Eufaula, Oklahoma). June 1935.

The Johnston County Capital Democrat (Tishomingo, Oklahoma). June 1935 through
September 1937.

National Guard of the United States, State of Oklahoma. Historical Annual,
1938. Baton Rouge, Louisiana: Army & Navy Publishing Company, 1938.

The Sulphur (Oklahoma) Times-Democrat. July 1935.

"Tishomingo." Vertical File. Oklahoma Historical Society, Oklahoma City,
Oklahoma.

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

The Wagoner (Oklahoma) Tribune. November 1935.

Verbal Boundary Description

Tract of land in the West half of the SE 1/4 of Sec 9, T4S, R6E: The starting
point being 100 feet west and 75 south of the NE corner of the W 1/2 of SE 1/4,
thence W 200 feet, thence S 150 feet, thence E 200 feet, thence N 150 feet to
the point of beginning

Boundary Justification

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