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

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES REGISTRATION FORM

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	APR 2 1994	
INTERAC	SENCY RESOURCES DIVISION	N
LNA	TIONAL PARK SERVICE	

	MATIONAL PARK SERVICE
1. Name of Property	
historic name <u>Pawnee Armory</u>	
other names/site number <u>Pawnee National Guard Arr</u>	nory
2. Location	
city or town Pawnee	not for publication <u>N/A</u> vicinity <u>N/A</u> Pawnee code <u>117</u>

3. State/Federal Agency Certification	
As the designated authority under the National Register of and professional requirements set forth property _X meets does not meet recommend that this property be consideratewide X locally. (N/A See continual)	this X nomination request for documentation standards for registering Historic Places and meets the procedural in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the the National Register Criteria. I ered significant nationally nuation sheet for additional comments.) April 4, 1994
Signature of certifying official	Date
Oklahoma Historical Society, SHPO	
State or Federal agency and bureau	
Signature of commenting or other official State or Federal agency and bureau	
4. National Park Service Certification	
I, hereby certify that this property is see continuation sheet determined not eligible for the National Register removed from the National Register other (explain):	Entered in the National Register Signature of Keeper Date of Action

5. Classification
Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply) private public-local _X public-State public-Federal
Category of Property (Check only one box) _X building(s) district site structure object
Number of Resources within Property
Contributing Noncontributing 1 0 buildings 0 0 sites 0 0 structures 0 0 objects 1 0 Total
Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register $\underline{0}$
Name of related multiple property listing (Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

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)
X A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contri- bution to the broad patterns of our history.
B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
X 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)
Cultural Affiliation N/A
Architect/Builder Nolen, Bryan W., Supervising Architect, Works Progress Administration Smith, Stanley I., Construction Supervisor
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 on 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 X

Photographs

10. Geographical Data		
Acreage of Property <u>2.5 acres</u>		
UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)		
Zone Easting Northing Zone Easting Northing 1 14 697920 4022880 3		
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 <u>Mary Jane Warde</u>		
organization Oklahoma SHPO date December 30, 1992		
street & number2806 W. 18th telephone (405) 377-0412		
city or town <u>Stillwater</u> state <u>OK</u> zip code <u>74074</u>		
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.		

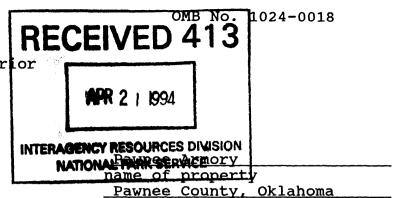
Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Property Owner	
(Complete this item at the request of the SHPC	or FPO.)
name State of Oklahoma/Oklahoma Military Dep	partment
street & number 3501 Military Circle NE	telephone (405) 425-8000
city or town Oklahoma City	state_OKzip_code73111

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SUMMARY:

The Pawnee Armory (Pawnee National Guard Armory) is a single-story rectangular building (149' x 237'). It was built of native stone by the Works Progress Administration between 1935 and 1937. It is located on the southeast edge of Pawnee between a primarily residential neighborhood and Black Bear Creek. It is at the base of a triangular block bounded on the south by Cleveland Street, on the west by First Street, and on the north and east by the curve of Highway 64. The Pawnee Armory consists of a barrel-roofed drill hall and three large flat-roofed extensions: one on the north, one on the west, and one on the south. The roofs are rolled asphalt. The walls are randomly laid, rusticated buff sandstone. The use of tall, narrow windows, piers, pilasters, and triangular parapets suggests an Art Deco influence. The castellated design and use of native sandstone make the armory an excellent example of WPA architecture in Oklahoma.

EXTERIOR DESCRIPTION:

The Pawnee Armory is an unusually large example of a WPA armory in Oklahoma. The roofs are rolled asphalt with heavy metal gutters providing drainage. The walls are randomly laid, rusticated buff sandstone topped by a concrete coping. Multiple-paned, steel-framed windows are set in elongated openings above precast concrete sills. The barrel-roofed drill hall, with its axis paralleling First Street, forms the core of the building. Three large flat-roofed extensions add to the compound design. Broad pilasters define the corners of the building and contribute to the massive, fortress-like impression it conveys.

The south elevation, facing Cleveland Street, is the south extension from the drill hall. The south elevation features a centrally placed public entrance set beneath a corbelled lintel in a flat-topped projecting portal. Flanking the single metal door are broad pilasters that extend to the top of the portal. On both sides of the portal are four windows, either two-over-five or three-over-five. The two center windows on the left are paired. Some panes have been painted. The second window on the right has an air conditioner unit. The third on the left is pierced by a vent pipe. Windows at the extreme end of the each grouping are set into flat-topped pilasters that extend just above the roofline. Behind this extension rises the south end of the drill hall. The separation between these two sections of the building is marked by a pediment-shaped parapet that disguises the curve of the drill hall's barrel roof.

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EXTERIOR DESCRIPTION (continued)

The west elevation, facing First Street, demonstrates the compound design of the Pawnee Armory, with the barrel roof of the drill hall rising above the flat-roofed extensions. The west elevation of the south extension has a single window on the right and a pair of windows near the center. All are three-over five. To the left of the windows is a wooden overhead door giving access to the southwest corner of the drill hall. Beyond this door, the west extension projects from the main wall of the drill hall toward First Street. The south elevation of this extension has a pair of wooden overhead doors flanked by a single two-over-five window on the left and three-over-five window on the right. The west elevation of this extension has a centered single wooden door. On either side of the door are four windows, either two-over-four or threeover-six. The second and third in each grouping are paired. All are covered with mesh screens designed to accommodate outward-opening windows. elevation of this extension has two windows. In the angle between this extension and the northwest corner of the drill hall is a smaller extension. Its west elevation is plain. On its north elevation are three three-over-six windows.

At the north end of the drill hall is the north extension. It opens onto a park-like space at the apex of the triangular block. In the center of this elevation is a flat-topped projecting portal. It is a duplicate of the public entrance on the south elevation, except that this entrance has double wooden doors. On either side of the portal are groups of four windows. The second from the door in each group is three-over-five. The rest are two-over-five. Most panes have been painted. Roof-high flat-topped pilasters define the northwest and northeast corners of the extension. The windows on the extreme edges of the elevation are set into the pilasters. Above this flat-roofed extension rises the north wall of the drill hall with its pediment-shaped parapet. On the right end of the east elevation of this extension are windows similar to those found elsewhere on the building. On the left are two wooden overhead garage doors.

The east elevation of the drill hall section faces the curve of Highway 64. At either end of the drill hall are massive flat-roofed, two-story projecting piers. Pilasters at each corner of the piers frame vertical indentations. Into each indentation is set a wooden single door. Above each door is a two-over-five window. Another entrance is located on the north wall of the south pier and on the south wall of the north pier. In the center of this elevation is a slightly projecting portal, the third and largest on the building. It is stepped and flat-topped with corbelled stonework above a wooden overhead door.

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EXTERIOR DESCRIPTION (continued):

To the right is the plaque commemorating the dedication of the building. On either side of the portal are two pairs of three-over-six windows. Over each is mesh screening designed to accommodate outward-opening windows. To the left of the east elevation of the drill hall is the east elevation of the southern extension. It features two wooden overhead doors under shallow, segmental arches. To the left of the doors, set into the pilaster at the southeast corner of the southern extension is a single two-over-five window. Over and between the doors is a wooden plaque with the yellow-on-red Thunderbird insignia of the 45th Infantry Division.

ALTERATIONS

Exterior alterations to the Pawnee Armory are minimal. Window panes in several places have been painted. Other windows are barred or boarded on the inside. The most obvious alteration is the installation of mesh screening on some windows. Otherwise, all doors and windows appear original except for the new metal door on the south elevation of the southern extension. The recent abandonment of the Pawnee Armory by the Oklahoma National Guard has left the building prey to vandalism. Some window panes have been broken out. This is unfortunate because the building retains a high degree of its historic and architectural integrity.

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SUMMARY:

The Pawnee Armory (Pawnee National Guard Armory) is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A due to its association with the Works Progress Administration and the Oklahoma National Guard. Under the WPA, public works construction projects were designed to employ as many people on relief rolls as possible while stimulating the local economy through payrolls and the purchase of building materials. The Pawnee Armory was the first and most substantial WPA project in Pawnee County. It was also the first permanent headquarters for Pawnee's three Oklahoma National Guard units. It continued in that capacity for fifty-five years, having been vacated in late 1992. The Pawnee Armory is also eligible for the National Register under Criterion C as an excellent example of the multiple-unit, WPA-built armory in Oklahoma. The use of native stone and local unskilled labor to create a public building of lasting value reflects the highest ideals of the WPA program.

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE:

The Works Progress Administration, created by the administration of President Franklin D. Roosevelt in 1935, was an attempt to combat the Great Depression. The primary result of that depression was wide-spread unemployment. The WPA program aimed through public works construction projects to provide jobs for laborers on relief rolls and to stimulate the local economy. The program lasted until June 1943, when full employment returned nationally as a result of the American entrance into World War II. By that time the federal government had spent \$10.75 billion on the program, of which \$185 million went to Oklahoma projects. The WPA stipulated that acceptable projects had to be useful and of lasting value, capable of providing employment for those on relief, and sponsored by the community. The Pawnee Armory met all three criteria. 1

Armories met the criterion of usefulness and lasting value in several ways. Oklahoma National Guard units never had permanent headquarters. Most units rented make-shift facilities at a cost to the state of approximately \$50,000 annually. Some of these facilities were no more than abandoned barns or garages. Additionally, inadequate security in these facilities often resulted in Guard units "losing" equipment and arms. Reportedly, some thefts were the work of outlaws who used the stolen arms in bank robberies and other crimes. Pawnee, home of Company B, 1st Battalion, 179th Infantry of the 45th Infantry Division, was one of the oldest National Guard towns in the state. Yet, the unit was housed inadequately on the top floor of the Pawnee County Courthouse. Construction of an armory in Pawnee provided the unit with functional, secure facilities that allowed it to achieve a higher degree of readiness for times of emergency. An armory also furnished space for community activities and public Furthermore, construction of an armory provided jobs for those on meetings. relief.

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HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE (continued):

A small market town and county seat, Pawnee historically was the site of the Pawnee Indian Agency. The surrounding area was suited to ranching and small farming, while nearby oil fields brought additional development early in the century. However, depressed agricultural and oil prices, drought, and lack of alternative employment, combined with a national economic depression, created real hardship in Pawnee County during the 1930s. According to the editor of the local newspaper, "men were idle and jobs could not be found--many who wanted to work and shuddered at the thought of accepting 'beans' from the commissary, knew not which way to turn for a chance to earn food for their wives and babies." As of 1936 no other federal relief program was in opera-Consequently, Pawnee citizens enthusiastically supported a public works project that would "keep the family table supplied with food." The Chamber of Commerce, city government, National Guard officers, and Congressman Wesley E. Disney participated in the campaign to build the Pawnee Armory on land donated by the town with materials furnished by a citizen. Thus, they met the WPA stipulation of community sponsorship.

Pawnee received word that it had been chosen for one of the state's 56 proposed armory projects in June 1935. The federal government already allocated \$50,000 for an armory to accommodate Pawnee's National Guard unit. The Chamber of Commerce, city planning board, and local Guard officers at once began considering building sites. They selected a 2.5 acre plot on Highway 64 on the southeast edge of town. Public donations raised the \$1,250 needed, and the land was eventually deeded to the state and the National Guard. Mrs. George A. Waters donated all the stone from sandstone deposits on her farm east of town, a fact some believed influenced federal approval of an armory for Pawnee. quarrying began in late October 1935 with 54 men employed under the direction of Nick Hawkins. National Guard trucks and Guardsmen transported the stone to the site. Excavation and laying of water lines began late in the year. Actual construction started on January 2, 1936. Under the supervision of Guard Captain Stanley I. Smith, a local builder, and Pawnee County Engineer Oscar Sewell, 36 men dressed and laid the cut stone. The work progressed through 1936, employing at various times 160 laborers from Pawnee and a dozen surrounding communities. These were "men whose families needed the wages to the end that food might be kept upon the tables, and to the further end that the boys and girls might have clothing, shoes and books suitable for continuance in the public schools."

The Pawnee Armory was completed in the spring of 1937 at a cost of \$71,319.22. One of the largest armories in the state of Oklahoma, it included a drill hall

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HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE (continued):

capable of seating an audience of two thousand. A stage at one end attested to the multiple purposes of the building. Unit quarters consisted of classrooms, administrative offices, storage space, supply rooms, garages, lockers, showers and a concrete arms vault. A rifle range with bullet-proof observation chambers for scorers and observers was built under the stage. The dedication on May 14 attracted thousands. General W. S. Key, state WPA administrator and commander of the Oklahoma National Guard, and Lieutenant Governor and Guardsman James E. Berry were the principal speakers. The local newspaper described the armory building as "the greatest physical accomplishment of the Works Progress Administration in this state" and applauded "its successful prosecution with raw materials and comparatively raw labor." The open house, reception, and dance featuring Chief Shunatona and his American Indian band marked the acceptance of the Pawnee Armory as a fixture of the Pawnee community. By the end of the same month, the building was already functioning as a meeting hall for the local chapter of the American Legion.

The construction of the Pawnee Armory continued the town's long-standing connection with the Oklahoma National Guard and the Pawnee Indians' long tradition of service with the American military. Most Oklahoma Guardsmen were recruited locally and strengthened unit-community ties through their service. The Pawnee unit was organized as Company E, First Oklahoma Infantry, in territorial days and participated in the Spanish-American War, the 1916-1917 Mexican Border Campaign, and World War I. It became Company B, 1st Battalion, 179th Infantry, when the larger unit was re-designated on October 14, 1921. In 1923 the Oklahoma National Guard was reorganized as part of the 45th Infantry ("Thunderbird") Division. Construction of the Pawnee Armory and the whole WPA armory building program brought the Oklahoma National Guard much-needed stability. A higher degree of training was already in evidence by 1938. Construction of the Pawnee Armory coincided with the assignment to Pawnee of two additional Guard units, the Enlisted Detachment, State Staff Corps, and Department Staff Section, Service Company, 179th Infantry. The 45th Infantry Division mobilized in 1940 in preparation for American participation in World War II. The "Thunderbirds" became a source of pride to Oklahoma as they served with distinction in the European Theater from the invasion of Sicily and Italy to the fall of Berlin in 1945. The service of the local unit and all veterans has been commemorated annually since 1946 at the Pawnee Indian Homecoming and Powwow.1

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE:

The Pawnee Armory is an excellent example of a multiple-unit, WPA-built armory in Oklahoma. Major Bryan W. Nolen, an architect and Guardsman, was the

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ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE (continued):

supervising architect for the Oklahoma WPA armory building project. His standardized design allowed flexibility for local conditions and the variable skills of labor recruited from local relief rolls. The Pawnee Armory lacks many of the decorative details seen on other Oklahoma WPA armories, but the corbelled entrances, pedimented parapet of the drill hall, massive size, and complex design also set it apart. The vertical emphasis in the piers, pilasters, and windows and in the triangular roofline make the Art Deco influence more apparent, while the broad pilasters and use of locally quarried stone give the armory a "fortress-like" appearance. By mid-1937, eighteen Oklahoma armories were built of brick, but the Pawnee Armory was one of thirtythree that used locally-available native stone. This met WPA goals of sharing costs with the community, keeping the overall expenses down, and employing as many men as possible in the labor-intensive work of quarrying, shaping, and laying of the stone. Unlike most armory construction projects, the Pawnee Armory was built completely under the supervision of a local builder and Guardsman, Captain Stanley I. Smith of Company B.

The exterior of the Pawnee Armory has retained a high degree of its architectural and historical integrity. One original door, on the south elevation of the southern extension, has been replaced with a new metal door. All other doors and windows appear original, although some panes have been painted or partially blocked. The building was never completely air-conditioned, so ventilation required the addition of mesh screens over some windows. This is the primary exterior alteration to the building. The Oklahoma National Guard vacated the Pawnee Armory late in 1992. Vandalism was evident within weeks. Pawnee's citizens regret the closing of the armory and have expressed interest in retaining it as a community center. Acceptance by the National Register would probably encourage local preservation efforts. The open south of the payner is a second to the payner is a se

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ENDNOTES

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

²Accomplishments: Works Progress Administration for Oklahoma, July 1, 1935-March 1, 1937 (Oklahoma City: Works Progress Administration, 1937), 38; National Guard of the United States, State of Oklahoma, <u>Historical Annual, 1938</u> (Baton Rouge, Louisiana: Army & Navy Publishing Company, 1938), 65; <u>The Pawnee (Oklahoma) Courier-Dispatch</u>, 6 May 1937, 9 July 1936, 12 September 1935.

³The Pawnee (Oklahoma) Courier-Dispatch, 13 May 1937.

⁴Ibid., 11 June 1936.

⁵Ibid., 16 April 1936.

⁶Ibid., 12 September, 19 September, 26 September, 12 December 1935.

⁷Ibid., 20 June, 12 September, 26 September 1935, 6 May, 13 May, 1937.

8Ibid., 31 October 1935, 9 January, 9 April 1936, 6 May 1937; Historical Annual, 65.

9The Pawnee (Oklahoma) Courier-Dispatch, 13 May 1937.

¹⁰Ibid., 6 May, 13 May, 20 May 1937.

¹¹Ibid., 20 May 1937.

12 Historical Annual, 44, 65; Accomplishments, 44; Kenny A. Franks, Citizen Soldiers: Oklahoma's National Guard (Norman, Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press, 1984), 40, 49-50, 62-77, 83, 91-94, 110-114; 46th Annual Pawnee Indian Home-coming & Powwow Program, Pawnee Indian Veterans and the Pawnee Tribe of Indians, Pawnee, Oklahoma, 1992.

¹³Accomplishment, 38; The Pawnee (Oklahoma) Courier-Dispatch, 13 May 1937; interview, D. Joe Ferguson, editor, <u>Pawnee Chief</u>, Pawnee, Oklahoma, November 2, 1992.

¹⁴Interview, D. Joe Ferguson, Pawnee, Oklahoma, November 2, 1992, January 5, 1993.

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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.

- Ferguson, D. Joe. Interview. Pawnee, Oklahoma, November 2, 1992, January 5, 1993.
- 46th Annual Pawnee Indian Homecoming & Powwow Program. Pawnee Indian Veterans and the Pawnee Tribe of Indians. Pawnee, Oklahoma, 1992.
- Franks, Kenny A. <u>Citizen Soldiers: Oklahoma's National Guard</u>. Norman, Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press, 1984.
- National Guard of the United States, State of Oklahoma. <u>Historical Annual</u>, <u>1938</u>. Baton Rouge, Louisiana: Army & Navy Publishing Company, 1938.
- The Pawnee (Oklahoma) Courier-Dispatch. June 1935 through May 1937.
- U. S. Works Progress Administration, Oklahoma. <u>Final Report of Activities and Accomplishments</u>. N.p., 1943.

The Wagoner (Oklahoma) Tribune, November 1935.

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Verbal Boundary Description

On a tract of land beginning 1248 feet west of the northeast corner of the NW 1/4, Sec. 5, T 21 N, R 5 E [Indian Meridian], and go south 416 feet, east 208 feet, north 416 feet, and west 208 feet.

Boundary Justification

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