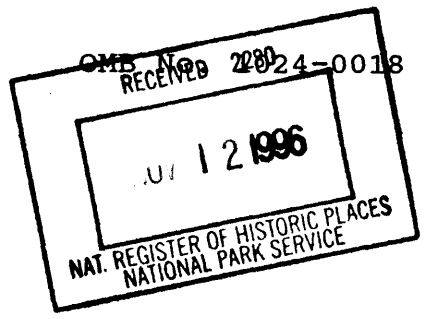


NPS Form 10-900
(Rev. 10-90)



United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM

=====

1. Name of Property

=====

historic name Duncan Armory

other names/site number Duncan National Guard Armory

=====

2. Location

=====

street & number 100 ft. from intersection of 14th Street and unmarked alley
between Fuqua Park and Ash Avenue not for publication N/A
city or town Duncan vicinity N/A
state Oklahoma code OK county Stephens code 137
zip code 73533

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this XX 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 XX 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 Wood 6 November 1996
Signature of certifying official 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: Edson H. Beall 12.13.96

- 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

for Signature of Keeper 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: RECREATION & CULTURE Sub: museum

=====

7. Description

=====

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

OTHER/Works Progress Administration

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation CONCRETE

roof ASPHALT

walls STONE: Sandstone

other _____

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)

ECONOMIC
MILITARY
ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance 1935 - 1937

=====
8. Statement of Significance (Continued)
=====

Significant Dates 1937

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.)

=====
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 (1) acre

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

	Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing
1	<u>14</u>	<u>595000</u>	<u>3818560</u>	3	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
2	<u>N/A</u>	<u>See continuation sheet.</u>		4	<u> </u>	<u> </u>

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 Jill Marsh, Preservation Research Assistant
organization State Historic Preservation Office date September 16, 1996
street & number 2704 Villa Prom telephone (405) 521-6249
city or town Oklahoma City state OK zip code 73107

=====
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 City of Duncan *

street & number City Hall telephone _____

city or town Duncan state OK zip code 73533

* Leased to the Stephens County Historical Society,
P.O. Box 1294, Duncan, Oklahoma, 73534-1294

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Duncan Armory
name of property
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county and State

SUMMARY:

The Duncan Armory is a self-contained, horizontal, one-story building measuring 120 feet by 140 feet and constructed of native sandstone. A local project of the Works Progress Administration in Stephens County, Oklahoma, the armory was constructed in 1935 - 1937. The armory property is located approximately 100 feet from the intersection of 14th Street and the unmarked alley located between Fuqua Park and Ash Avenue. The surrounding area is a park, with a residential area to the south. The armory's main entrance faces north. The floor plan is typical of WPA-built armories, in that the building comprises two distinct sections. A south section, with barrel roof, contains the drill area, while a flat-roofed north section comprises offices, supply and arms rooms, and a garage area. Though the massing is strongly horizontal, several architectural details give the building a vertical emphasis: the parapeted entrance bay with piers; corner pilasters; and narrow, vertical steel-framed multiple-light hopper windows in all elevations. The steel-framed windows are all original, as are the exterior overhead vehicle doors and pedestrian doors. Alterations to the exterior have been minimal. New concrete steps with metal hand rails leading up to the main entry were added in 1992, along with a concrete wheel chair ramp which is located along a portion of the east half of the north facade. The windows have been painted over with gray paint. Interior alterations are minimal: a wood-framed wall has divided the drill hall into two exhibit areas, and a wood-framed wall has created a storage/work room in one corner of the drill hall. The Duncan Armory retains a fairly high degree of integrity of location, setting, design, materials, and workmanship to enable it to exemplify WPA-type military architecture in Oklahoma.

EXTERIOR DESCRIPTION:

The Duncan Armory is a self-contained, horizontal, one-story building constructed of native sandstone quarried from a farm west of Duncan. The building measures 120 feet north-to-south and 140 feet east-to-west. A local project of the Works Progress Administration in Oklahoma, it was constructed in 1935 - 1937. The armory property is located in Fuqua Park. It is surrounded by Fuqua Park on the north, east, and west sides, and by an alley and residential area on the south. Fuqua Park is bordered by Highway 81 on the west and Beech Avenue on the north.

The roofline of the Duncan Armory indicates that the building comprises two

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distinct sections: A south section, with barrel roof, comprises the drill area, while a flat-roofed one-story north section comprises offices, supply and arms rooms, and garage. (Historically and presently), the drill hall roof is covered with roll roofing, while the north section is covered with tar and gravel. The east and west arc of the barrel roof, over the south section, contrasts with the horizontal line of the north section. At the four corners of the drill hall, shallow pilasters buttress the corners and rise to become arched "towers."

The NORTH facade of the armory consists of four bays: Slightly off-center is the entry bay consisting of a parapet and massive deep piers and wing walls that enframe the recessed entry, which is the main focus of the facade. The original solid wood-panel double doors are still present. Atop the parapet is a flag pole. Flanking the entry bay are two bays enframed by pilasters; each bay contains a pair of 15-light windows flanked on each side by a 10-light window. A small, narrow, vertical four-light casement window lies close to the pilaster on each side of the entry bay. The east end of the north facade contains an additional bay, which is separated by a wide shallow pilaster, and has a 10-light window. There are wide shallow pilasters on the west and east corners of the north facade, but they do not project above the roof line as the pilasters at the corners of the drill hall do. The west half of the facade is covered with heavy foliage.

The EAST elevation is divided into two sections, one being the administrative/garage section on the north, characterized by overhead doors, and the other being the drill hall section on the south, characterized by its barrel roof and window/door arrangement. The north half of the facade is slightly recessed from the south half. This, combined with the pilaster on the corner of the drill hall, provides a visual division of the facade. The northern section of the east facade contains four original wood-panel overhead doors, while the southern (drill hall) section contains a wooden overhead door in the center, flanked by three large, 18-light windows on the south, and a large transom atop an original wood pedestrian door and two large, 18-light windows on the north.

Openings in the SOUTH elevation historically illuminated the drill hall, but are now covered with paint. At the extreme west end is a 15-light window, and east of this, two pairs of 18-light windows are placed on each side of a off-centered pair of steel pedestrian doors that are topped with 12-light transoms.

The WEST elevation, like the east elevation, is divided into two sections, the drill hall section in the south and the administrative section in the north. A portion of the north section of the west elevation is recessed. The wall of the

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south half of the north section is flush with the wall of the southern drill hall section, while the northern half of the section is the recessed area. This recessed area contains two 15-light windows. The projected area of the north section contains a ribbon of three 12-light windows. The southern (drill hall) section of the west elevation contains only one window close to the pilaster on the northwest corner of the drill hall. All of the windows in the building have been painted gray to block out sunlight.

Though the buildings massing is strongly horizontal, several architectural details influenced by the Art Deco style give the building a vertical emphasis: the parapet and massive piers and wing walls marking the main entry, arch-topped pilasters, and narrow, vertical, steel-framed multiple-light windows in all elevations. Original metal downspouts are in place on the east, west, and south elevations.

A modern sign over the main entry identifies the building as the Stephens County Museum. To the west of the main entry is a diamond-shaped red and gold metal sign bearing the "Thunderbird" symbol. On the north facade near the northeast corner of the building a cornerstone marks the construction as a 1936 WPA project and bears the inscription "State Armory/Built by Works Progress Administration/1936/ W.S. Key/State Administrator". In addition, the half wall on the west side of the main entry contains a concrete slab inscribed "BTRY B/1 ST BN 158 ARTY/CO I.B. JONES/AST C.P. JAMESON/1 / SGT I.D. SPRUHL".

INTERIOR DESCRIPTION:

The Duncan Armory exhibits a rectangular plan that was standard for WPA armories. The building is divided into two functional sections, a drill hall area on the south, and an administrative/garage section on the north. The original floor plan has been maintained. In the administrative/garage section, rooms lie on either side of a north-south central hallway. A supply room and a large four-bay garage occupy the east half. Both areas still retain their original walls, floor, and ceiling. On the west side of the hallway is a large meeting room, men's restroom, and a Memorial room which contains a small kitchenette at the west end and the original ammunition vault, which is currently used for storage of historic clothing. There is a door connecting the meeting room and the Memorial room. The restrooms have been altered by having the showers removed. The original concrete ceiling in the central hallway was replaced with a pressed tin ceiling in 1992.¹ There is an entry area inside the main entrance which is separated from the central hallway by glass double doors. On the east wall of the

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entry area is the door into the women's restroom. The door is original with two wood panels on the lower half and glass in the top. There are many original wood doors throughout the armory. Between the north section and the drill hall is a load-bearing wall having glass double doors accessing the central hallway, and a panel overhead door, which was used to join the garage and drill hall. The overhead door is currently covered with a wall on the drill hall side which now contains exhibits.

The 80' by 110' drill hall retains much of its original interior. Flanked by wide stone pilasters resembling those on the exterior, an open stage is located along the west wall. On each side of the stage are steps and original wood doors leading to dressing rooms. To the south of the stage are steps leading down to an original wood door that accesses the underground rifle range. The door still has the words "Firing Range" on it. The Duncan Armory is one of the few remaining armories that has not had the firing range condemned. Historically, there were two rooms in the firing range. A large, main room and a smaller room off to one side. The main area of the firing range has been divided into two rooms by an east-west partition wall with a door that was constructed in approximately 1993.² The area is currently used for museum storage, as is the smaller firing range room.

The drill hall's original 1937 wood-block floor has been replaced with a new wood floor of narrow planks. The floor was replaced while the National Guard was still housed there as the floor has oil spots from where vehicles were parked. The original, high, barrel vaulted ceiling has been covered with a drop ceiling. The drill hall, which is currently used as an exhibit hall, is divided down the center, from east to west, by a wood frame wall. Double French glass doors provide access between the two areas of the hall. Wood framed walls have also been erected in the southeast corner of the drill hall to create a storage/work room. The original wood overhead vehicle door on the east wall of the drill hall is still present. Although the drill hall has been divided into two exhibit areas, it still retains much of the same feel of openness and of its original use, with the presence of the open stage and having a wood floor.

ALTERATIONS:

Alterations to the exterior have been minimal. New concrete steps with metal hand rails leading up to the main entry were added in 1992, along with a concrete wheel chair ramp which is located along a portion of the east half of the north facade.³ All of the windows are original, but have been painted over with gray

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paint. Except for these additions, the Duncan Armory is essentially unaltered from its original appearance. It retains a fairly high degree of integrity of location, setting, design, materials, and workmanship and conveys the feeling of its past environment.

ENDNOTES

1. Ibid.
2. Ibid.
3. Pee Wee Cary, Director, Stephens County Historical Museum, Duncan, Oklahoma, September 12, 1996.

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SUMMARY:

The Duncan Armory is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A for its association with the economic context of Works Progress Administration projects in Duncan, Oklahoma, 1935 - 1937, and within the military context of national defense requirements of the Oklahoma National Guard's local unit in the era between the two world wars. It is also eligible for the NRHP under Criterion C for its architectural significance as an example of WPA building style and methodology locally and in Oklahoma. The armory was constructed between 1935 and 1937 by local men who were qualified for work relief under WPA guidelines. The project brought \$60,000 into the economy of Duncan, Oklahoma by employing an average of forty-five out of work, skilled and unskilled workers for more than sixteen months. The armory also filled a military need for an adequate, secure drill hall and arms storage building for the Service Battery F, 158th Field Artillery, of the 45th Infantry Division of the Oklahoma National Guard, which previously had no permanent armory. The Duncan Armory is significant architecturally as an excellent, intact example of WPA standardized style architecture. The materials, native stone, and workmanship, evident in masonry, reflect both the goals of the WPA Building Program in Oklahoma and the practical considerations of using unskilled labor to construct large public buildings. The armory is one of ten WPA resources remaining in Duncan. As it retains a high degree of integrity, the Duncan Armory is able to convey the necessary feeling and association within these three areas of significance.

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE:

Oklahoma suffered severely during the initial years of the Great Depression, from 1929-1933. Oklahoma was a predominantly rural state, where in 1930, 65.7 percent of the population lived in rural areas, and twenty-seven of the state's seventy-seven counties had no "urban" areas or towns of more than 2,500 persons. Drought and general agricultural failure from 1932 through 1938, combined with a downturn in the petroleum industry, exacerbated the general economic depression. Rural communities, towns, and cities, which functioned as agricultural or petroleum service centers, consequently foundered.

Oklahoma's state and local governments, as was the case in other states as well, were unable to provide much help for citizens, whether urban or rural. Limited relief offered by counties did not alleviate the suffering, nor did meager annual appropriations by the state legislature. No public funding was available to maintain the existing infrastructure, and private charity failed to create or

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to support relief initiatives. The Federal Emergency Relief Administration, established in May of 1933 by the Roosevelt administration, provided some direct relief, in terms of food, clothing, and small stipends, but until the inception of the Works Progress Administration in 1935 only a few Oklahomans received adequate assistance. The urban employed and displaced farm families combined to create a situation in which 33 percent of all Oklahoma families were on the direct relief rolls by the time that Roosevelt created the WPA by executive order in May, 1935. By July 1935, there were 127,416 jobless men certified to work on WPA projects in Oklahoma.¹

The inauguration of the Works Progress Administration in 1935 stands as one of the benchmarks of Franklin D. Roosevelt's "New Deal" for the United States. Administered nationally by Harry Hopkins, the program was designed to assist in lifting the nation from the depths of severe economic depression. Make-work projects provided work-relief for literally millions of individual citizens whose lives had been devastated by the near-collapse of the American economy. The infusion of cash into work-relief projects all over the state made a significant economic impact on hundreds of communities. During the seven-and-one-half-year life of the WPA, more than \$10.75 billion were expended, of which Oklahoma received more than \$185 million for projects ranging from school lunch programs, flood control, and archeological excavations, to major construction projects such as armories, highways, bridges, schools, stadiums, and museums.²

Chambers of Commerce and planning committees drew up specifications to meet three major criteria established by the administration: 1) projects must meet a well-defined community need; 2) each project must be sponsored by a public body, such as a city or county government or school district, which was required to provide from 10 to 25 percent of the project cost in cash and/or materials; and 3) 90 percent of those hired must be unemployed employable workers who were carried on the relief rolls. Compensation was to be based on 130 hours of work for \$21 (later \$23) per month, for unskilled labor. In June of 1935 Oklahoma WPA Director General William S. Key estimated that there were already "70,000 employable unemployed" ready to work on his agency's projects throughout the state; by November of that year, 67,973 people were at work for the WPA, and by January of 1936, WPA rolls reached an all-time high of 94,281.³

Armory construction was the first major thrust of the WPA Building Program in Oklahoma. By mid-1937, 126 armories had been constructed throughout the United States, and fifty-one of these projects were located in Oklahoma. When the WPA ended its program in 1943, 54 armories had been built and 53 others

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"reconstructed" in the state. The new construction had infused \$3.5 million into local economies.⁴

Stephens County, in southern Oklahoma, was a rural region, with the town of Duncan functioning as the county seat. This part of Oklahoma was originally part of the Chickasaw Nation, Indian Territory. Duncan had been founded in 1892 on the Rock Island Railroad. Until the discovery of major oil fields nearby in the 1912-1920 era, most families centered their lives around agricultural production. Thereafter, many people became involved in petroleum exploration/production and oil field services. The agricultural depression in the late 1920s in Stephens County was compounded by overproduction of petroleum and a consequent drastic drop in oil prices in the early 1930s, a catastrophe that put hundreds out of work. The effects were severe in Stephens County and in Duncan, Oklahoma. By September of 1934, 2,732 Stephens County families, comprising 34.7 percent of the county population, were receiving direct relief through programs such as the Federal Emergency Relief Administration and the Public Works Administration. But the impact from these programs was limited. Creation of the Works Progress Administration in May 1935 brought a new attack on the problems of the Depression. The WPA was designed to combat record national levels of unemployment by setting up public works projects. WPA work gave men and women a dignified way to earn a meager living. By September of 1935, the number of families on relief had been reduced to 1,693, or 23.8 percent of the county population, and by September of 1936, 1,027 persons in Stephens County were on WPA projects.⁵

By late summer of 1935 Stephens County municipalities had submitted a number of proposed WPA projects. The Duncan City Commission submitted several proposals, one of which was for the armory. Duncan was initially approved to receive an armory, but was one of 19 cities for which armories were scheduled and then not placed back on the final list. It took the intervention of Oklahoma Congressmen and Senators to get Duncan back on the list of approved cities. After several sites were considered, the city commission selected a site in Fuqua Park for the new building and deeded the property to the state.⁶

Groundbreaking for the Duncan Armory took place on October 24, 1935, and construction proceeded through the rest of the year, through 1936, and into 1937.⁷ Due to labor shortages, materials shortages, and weather-related shutdowns, a short project expanded into a long one. In January of 1936, WPA administrator General William S. Key ordered project supervisors to rearrange the work schedule from one eight-hour shift to two six-hour shifts per day. This would accomplish two purposes: it would employ more workers, a bona-fide WPA goal, and it would

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bring the project back onto its original schedule. The number of men working on the armory increased from 32 to 42. A Union revival meeting with seating for 1,000 in the drill hall was held in the armory during the first weeks of April, 1937, while the last finishing touches were being completed. Finally finished in April, 1937, the armory was dedicated on May 21, 1937. On that day, Duncan celebrated with an open house, parade, cornerstone laying ceremony, banquet, and band concert. General Key, state WPA director, and other state and local dignitaries, participated in the dedication, and the program concluded with a dance in the new armory.⁸

WPA projects in 1935-1937 propped up the sagging economy of Stephens County. By the middle of 1936 alone, estimated WPA expenditures in Stephens County totalled more than \$516,972 on projects ranging from farm-to-market roads to a stadium and sewer cleaning. Seventy-five percent of the expenditures went to labor alone. The WPA's cost on the armory project was between \$60,000 to \$70,000, with the city contributing the land. In human terms, thousands of person-hours of labor went into the armory's construction. In hard numbers, a monthly average of 42 men were employed on the project. These figures testify to the labor-intensive nature of WPA projects, which were designed to provide as much work as possible for those on relief rolls. Most of the hours were consumed in hand labor--stone cutting, concrete-pouring, and installing the wood-block floor in the 80' by 110' drill room (more than 200,000 pine blocks were cut, primed, set in asphalt, sanded, oiled, and polished, in sections). A concrete floor would have sufficed, but ample time and labor were available to create a more complex floor.⁹

Upon completion, the Duncan Armory became the home of the Service Battery F, 158th Field Artillery, 45th Infantry Division, Oklahoma National Guard. Reorganized under the national Defense Act of 1920, the Guard was an integral part of United States military preparedness. Since 1920, approximately five-sixths of America's military strength lay with "citizen soldiers"--National Guard divisions and Reserve divisions in nine corps areas across the Nation. Each corps area had one Regular Army division, two National Guard divisions, and three Reserve divisions. Oklahoma, along with New Mexico, Arizona, and Colorado, formed one division of the National Guard within the Eighth Corps. Despite inadequate training facilities, the Oklahoma National Guard provided service during various natural disasters and civil disturbances in the 1920s and 1930s. Because the Guard paid its members a monthly fee, which they spent locally to feed and clothe their families, Oklahoma communities actively competed to secure local Guard units during these years. In Duncan, the local field artillery unit had been established in 1935 with forty men.¹⁰

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The National Guard received only one-tenth of the War Department's budget in the interwar years, and equipment was surplus from World War I. Many units needed permanent training, drilling, and storage facilities, as Guard members were required to meet 48 drills per year. Units without permanent armories usually rented space in warehouses that often lacked proper security. Four hundred new armories created by the cooperative effort of the federal and local governments helped correct this serious deficiency.¹¹

The new Duncan Armory provided permanent housing for the unit, which formerly had been housed in a building at the stock pavilion (fair grounds), drilling in the gymnasium.¹² The new facility was more than adequate for the detachment's needs. The building was divided into areas serving specific functions. The entire south section housed the drill hall, comprising the stage and the drill floor. The front, or north, section, housed the arms vault, supply room, dressing room, classroom, offices, storage rooms, locker room, and garage. Underground, on the west side, beneath the stage, was a rifle range. Thus the building provided for virtually every training need, except for field training exercises.

Due in large measure to the WPA armory-building program, the 45th Infantry Division was able to achieve a level of military efficiency and readiness that prepared it to be among the first four National Guard divisions federalized in late 1940 by President Roosevelt. After the United States entered World War II, the 45th saw action in North Africa, Sicily, and Italy.¹³

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE:

The Duncan Armory exemplifies WPA military architecture in Oklahoma. In the mid-1930s two armory plans were developed by Major Bryan W. Nolen, an Oklahoma City architect and National Guard officer selected in 1935 to serve on the staff of WPA administrator General William S. Key. Nolen's exterior design indicates the building's functions. He planned for every armory to have a drill hall section, usually having a high ceiling and either a barrel or a flat roof and also a flat-roofed, single-story extension (office, garage, and arms storage section) on one or both sides, the number depending on the number of guard units (one, two, or four) to be housed in the building. Design was flexible, allowing for changes in orientation of the building depending on street locations or size of the property. The WPA preferred to use locally purchased building materials, and therefore armories were constructed of native stone, usually quarried locally, or brick, manufactured within the state. Using locally quarried stone, which was labor-intensive, was a means of reaching the WPA goal of maximizing employment.

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WPA architectural philosophy rejected ornate features, intricate designs, and elaborate trim; therefore, WPA armories tend to be straightforwardly utilitarian. They have a strong horizontal massing which is often relieved only by vertical Art Deco detailing or by virtue of being a provincial interpretation of a romantic high style, such as Tudor. The massive pilasters and parapet over the entrance are vertical Art Deco touches that lighten the otherwise military appearance of the Duncan Armory.

The overall appearance and detailing reflect the minimal funding for materials, as well as the use of unskilled and skilled labor. The WPA armories, as exemplified by the Duncan facility, may not be architectural masterpieces in the classical sense, but they served the WPA's purpose - to make work, and to provide secure space for national defense units. WPA armories exemplify the New Deal's practical determination to "do something - and to do something now." As David Baird notes in his survey of WPA structures of Oklahoma, WPA buildings are "the architecture of the poor," "mute reminders of the emotional distress and physical pain many Oklahomans suffered during the 1930s and of the enlightened relief effort by the Federal government that alleviated much of the suffering." In type, style, scale, materials, and workmanship, WPA armories, of which the Duncan Armory is an excellent example, are unique when compared to the rest of the built environment.

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ENDNOTES

1. Dianna Everett, Clinton Armory National Register of Historic Places Nomination, and Marlow Armory National Register of Historic Places Nomination, Oklahoma State Historic Preservation Office, 1994.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid.
5. Ibid.
6. The Duncan Weekly Eagle, August 1, 1935; November 22, 1935.
7. Duncan Weekly Eagle, October 24, 1935.
8. Duncan Weekly Eagle, January 21, 1936; April 6, 1937; May 21, 1937.
9. Duncan Weekly Eagle, May 8, 1936; May 21, 1937.
10. Everett, Marlow Armory National Register Nomination, 1994; Duncan Weekly Eagle, June 20, 1935.
11. Everett, Marlow Armory National Register Nomination, 1994.
12. Duncan Weekly Eagle, May 23, 1935.
13. Everett, Marlow Armory National Register Nomination, 1994.

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Stillwater: Oklahoma State University, 1987.

Duncan Weekly Eagle, January 1, 1935 - May 28, 1937.

Everett, Dianna. "Clinton Armory National Register of Historic Places
Nomination": Oklahoma State Historic Preservation Office, 1994.

Everett, Dianna. "Marlow Armory National Register of Historic Places
Nomination": Oklahoma State Historic Preservation Office, 1994.

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VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION:

This property consists of Lots 6 (six), 7 (seven), and 8 (eight) of Block 113 (one hundred thirteen), city of Duncan, Stephens County, a property measuring approximately 190 feet north-south by 150 feet east-west.

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION:

The boundaries include the area historically associated with the Duncan Armory but exclude the other buildings, structures, and objects located in Fuqua Park which do not relate or contribute to the significance of the Duncan Armory.