

OKLAHOMA LANDMARKS INVENTORY NOMINATION

Oklahoma Historic Preservation Survey, Oklahoma State University, 502 Math-Science Bldg., Stillwater, OK 74078

SOURCE OF NOMINATION: Contract Survey

TONKAWA ARMORY

LOCATION: Third and North Streets in Tonkawa, Oklahoma 040, Kay County 071

CLASSIFICATION: building; public; public acquisition--N/A; occupied; unrestricted; present use--educational

OWNER: Tonkawa School Board, Box 10, Tonkawa, OK 74653

LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION: Kay County Courthouse, Newkirk, OK 74647

DESCRIPTION: good condition; altered; original site

The Tonkawa National Guard Armory is a two-story, rectangular (136' x 124') structure constructed of native limestone which has been cut, rusticated, and laid in a random coursed ashler pattern. The flat roof with parapets is built of concrete with coverings of asphalt and building paper, except over the drill hall, where an arched gable roof is constructed of steel. On the south side are located four garage doors under brick round arches. Centrally located is a single doorway recessed within an extended segment of the wall. Fixed metal windows are single spaced with stone slip sills. The armory retains its architectural integrity despite the attachment of a concrete block addition to the east side and a metal addition on the west side.

SIGNIFICANCE: 1936-1937; builder/architect: Bryan Nolen, State WPA architect, and K. Ahler, District Architect

Construction of the Tonkawa National Guard Armory was significant as being representative of the WPA concern for national defense. Until recently, the armory served as a training center for local National Guard units. Moreover, the project provided jobs for unemployed workers during the Depression. The building contractor, Robert Schwab, reported that the "outstanding feature" in the construction of the building was the conversion of the labor force into efficient and skilled workers. It also poured wages from some 68,000 man-hours of labor into the local economy. Schwab noted too that as a WPA project, the armory was impressive due to its "massive size, architectural beauty, and its sense of security and stability." The armory remains notable architecturally for its scale, style, type, workmanship, materials, and state of preservation.

GEOGRAPHICAL DATA:

Acreage: Less than one acre

Quadrangle: Tonkawa, Okla.
1:24,000/7.5 min.

UTM: 14 651640 4061660

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION: Nominated property is described as follows: in the University Preparatory School Second Addition, Tonkawa original from the intersection of North and Third Streets, go 89 feet east and 44 feet north to point of beginning; then 124 feet

east, 136 feet north, 124 feet west, 136 feet south to point of beginning.

PICTURE REFERENCE: 16-a; 16-b