

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

For NPS use only

# National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form

received \_\_\_\_\_  
date entered \_\_\_\_\_

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*  
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

## 1. Name

historic Bel Air Armory

and or common

## 2. Location

street & number North Main Street N/A not for publication  
city, town Bel Air N/A vicinity of First Congressional District  
state Maryland code 024 county Harford code 025

## 3. Classification

<b>Category</b>	<b>Ownership</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Present Use</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> In process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> not applicable	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

## 4. Owner of Property

name State of Maryland, Military Department Contact: Col. Raymond Clift  
728-3388 X244  
street & number Bolton and Hoffman Streets  
city, town Baltimore N/A vicinity of state Maryland 21201

## 5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Harford County Courthouse  
street & number Main Street  
city, town Bel Air state Maryland 21014

## 6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Maryland Historical Trust  
Historic Sites Inventory has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no  
date 1979  federal  state  county  local  
depository for survey records Maryland Historical Trust, 21 State Circle  
city, town Annapolis state Maryland 21401

# 7. Description

HA-1429

<b>Condition</b>		<b>Check one</b>	<b>Check one</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved	date <u>    N/A    </u>
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed			

## Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Bel Air Armory is on the east side of Main Street at 41 North Main in the Town of Bel Air, Harford County, Maryland. Closely resembling a castle or the U.S. Corps of Engineers insignia, this building, like others built at the same time around the state, is unmistakably an armory. The complex consists of the armory, which faces west on Main Street and its truck park and garages on the rear of the lot. Constructed in 1915 of Port Deposit granite, the building consists of the main block, five bays by three, two stories over a raised basement, and the field house to the east (rear) of the main block. The front elevation is strongly divided into five bays by the two projecting hexagonal towers which rise to three stories and are topped by crenelated battlements finished in stone coping. A stone water course sharply delineates the first story from the raised basement in both the main block and the towers which provides horizontal movement in the facade. This horizontal movement is reinforced by the corbelled table just under the crenelated battlements which top the main block. This level in the towers is a repetition of the stone water course supported by brackets. The block's fenestration shows a balance between horizontal and vertical thrust. The long, narrow windows are rather deeply set in with the tower windows being narrower than those of the main block in the first and second stories. The tower windows in the third story are mere slits. All the windows but the composite window in the second story of the center bay have stone sills and flat arches which halt the upward emphasis of the windows. The triple window in the middle bay in the second story has a segmental stone arch. This window is echoed in the projecting stone marquee over the double doors of the entry. Two flagpoles project from this marquee flanking the letters MNG (Maryland National Guard). Two additional flag poles rise from the battlements along the inside of the towers. The battlements, corbel strip, and water course continue around the building on the north and south elevations.

Behind the main block is the field house. Seven buttresses divide the side elevations (north and south) into bays all but the first (west) of which have two long narrow windows with stone sills and flat arches. The water course continues along the side elevations and, since the lot slopes fairly sharply, basement windows of increasing depth occur. This portion of the building has the curved roof of a field house. The rear (east) elevation of the building, here two full stories high, is plastered. Two pair of buttresses support the ends of this elevation. A small window is placed between the buttresses in the second story (first story from the Main Street side) and a door occurs in the first (or basement) story. Between the buttresses pairs centered is a tall double door with a sally port set in a round arched opening. This door is big enough to drive a small truck in. A long window set in a round-arched opening is on each side of the entry. A stone wall with buttresses continues from the east end of the north elevation to the end of the lot. At right angles to this wall and parallel with Main Street are the garages of the truck park. A wire mesh fence with stone piers completes the fencing of the lot.

The interior is in three sections. The west block has three floors of offices. The towers above that are accessible but not functional. The middle block is the field house which has a basketball court and a stage at the east end. The basketball court has been used in the past for drill. In the basement of this section are a day-room, class-rooms, kitchen facilities, and the armory - a secure storage facility for the company's weapons. Behind the field house, but under the same roof section, are more offices upstairs and down.

# 8. Significance

HA-1429

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-1946	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

**Specific dates** 1915 **Builder/Architect** Architect: John B. Hamme  
Contractor: Lawrence Whalen & Co.

**Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)**

Applicable Criteria: A, C.  
Applicable Exceptions: none  
Level of Significance: state

The Bel Air Maryland Armory is primarily significant for its association with the reorganization and expansion of the National Guard system in the twentieth century. It derives additional significance from its role as a social center for its community, a function it has served continuously since its construction date. Architecturally, the building embodies the distinctive characteristics of its type, including a T shaped plan with a two story front "head house" section and a one-story perpendicular "drill hall" extending to the rear; its facade is detailed to recall Medieval fortifications, with towers flanking the central entrance, crenellated parapets, and strip buttresses.

The Bel Air Armory, strikingly reminiscent of the U.S. Corps of Engineers insignia or a Scottish Gothic Revival castle, was the subject of a design competition during the first year of the Great European War. The winning design was by John B. Hamme of York Pennsylvania. The same design was subsequently used for the now demolished Edgewood Armory. The contract was let in November 1914 to Lawrence Whalen and Company with subsidiary contracts to Love Brothers and J. Nathan Dean of Bel Air. The lot on Main Street was purchased for \$2,600 from Aquilla B. Whitaker and Josephine M. Whitaker in March 1915. The stones for the foundation were obtained when the stone fence around the Van Bibber property on South Main Street was demolished. The granite for the building came from the Port Deposit Granite Company. This building is Bel Air's first and only armory and is still used by the local National Guard unit.

So divided were the Harford Countians before the Civil War that illicit units, pro and anti-Union, drilled in the county. Many men went South to fight for the Confederacy, while the county put companies C & H in the Seventh Regiment of U.S. Volunteers in the field under the command of Colonel Edwin H. Webster of Bel Air.

In 1877 a National Meeting of Militia Officers met in Richmond, Virginia, to form the National Guard Association to lobby for a better National Militia. The New York Militia was the first to borrow the name National Guard from the French. Soon it became universal. In the 1880s and 1890s most states reorganized their National Guards, moved, some scholars say, by the wave of labor violence that periodically swept the nation between 1877 and the end of the century as labor attempted to organize for better wages and working conditions.

In Bel Air the Jackson Guards, a company of around 80 men, was formed in 1887. It was named for Governor Elihu Jackson. The next year (1888) the Jackson Guards became Company D. First Maryland Regiment Infantry. The company met to drill and spend a week encamped with the rest of the Maryland National Guard.

See Continuation Sheet No. 1

HA-1429

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service****National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For NPS use only

received

date entered

Continuation sheet

Bel Air Armory

Harford County, Maryland

Item number

8

Page

1

In 1894 Company D was used to help break the United Mine Workers' strike in the western Maryland coal fields. Because of the use of the Militia, Union organizing ceased in western Maryland until 1899.

Company D was in federal service during the Spanish-American War but saw no combat. On April 25, 1898, the company marched down to the train station where it took the Maryland and Pennsylvania Railroad to Pimlico, outside Baltimore. The men camped there for two days before being sent to Fortress Monroe, Virginia, near Norfolk, for garrison duty. Later that summer (August 5) they were shipped to Puerto Rico, again for garrison duty, because the island had been secured (August 12) about the time they got there.

After the beginning of the Great War in Europe the preparedness campaign waged by interventionists like former President Theodore Roosevelt and former Army Chief of Staff General Leonard Wood brought further improvements. In Maryland several new armories, including the one at Bel Air, were built.

In the latter part of 1915 Bel Air's Company D was mobilized and sent to El Paso, Texas, as part of the campaign against Pancho Villa. The company was led by Major Robert Archer.

On August 5, 1917, the unit was mustered into federal service as Company D, 115th Infantry Regiment, 58th Brigade of the 29th Division. Under command of Major General Charles G. Norton, the division was sent to Camp McClellan, near Anniston, Alabama, in August 1917. It spent ten months there in training before being shipped to France. Altogether 1,000 Harford County men and 10 Harford County women served in the Allied Expeditionary Force in France. This includes enlistees, draftees, and the men of Company D. Of this number, forty-five lost their lives. They are remembered on the plaque placed in front of the armory after the War.

Company D was called to federal service again on February 3, 1941. The troops were quartered in the armory for two weeks before being sent to Fort Meade for further training. Bel Air's General Reckford was in charge of training with broomsticks and stove pipes in place of rifles and mortars. The unit took part in the giant maneuvers in North and South Carolina in the latter part of the year, and were passing through Virginia in convoy back to Fort Meade on December 7 when word came of the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. Company D was sent immediately to Philadelphia to guard railroad lines and utilities.

When first called to active duty the 29th Division was still a "square" division of two infantry brigades of two regiments each. In March, 1942, the division was "triangularized." The brigade structure disappeared and the division obtained the organization it would carry throughout World War II - three infantry regiments, the 176th, the 116th and the 115th with support

HA-1429

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For NPS use only
received
date entered

Continuation sheet	Bel Air Armory Harford County, Maryland	Item number	8 and 10	Page	2
--------------------	--	-------------	----------	------	---

units such as artillery, engineers, medics, and military police. Company D was in the First Battalion, 115th Infantry Regiment. (The 115th included the Maryland Troops. The 116th was from Virginia.) It was still a heavy weapons unit armed with machine guns and mortars. At the close of World War II, the entire division received the Croix de Guerre with palm; the First Battalion of the 115th (and Company D) received the Croix de Guerre with Silver Star for defense against the German counterattack near the Bois de Bretel, Normandy, July 11, 1944.

The Bel Air Armory has a long history as a local community gathering place. The town high schools have long held plays and seasonal dances in the auditorium and graduations were held there until the Bel Air High School built its own auditorium. The city's professional Ramsey Street players perform at the Armory and the annual town minstrel show is held there. In addition the Armory has housed local community services on long-term bases over the years, such as the Red Cross and the Harford County Library.

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA:

Verbal Boundary Description: In the town of Bel Air in said Harford County:

BEGINNING for the same at a point in the Northeasterly side of Main Street at the distance of forty-one feet measured along the said northeasterly side of said Main Street in a southeasterly direction, from the corner or angle formed by intersection of the northeasterly side of said street with the southeasterly side of Howard Street, said point of beginning being also at a stone set at the end of the third or south forty-eight degrees forty-five minutes west one hundred and seventy-two feet line of that tract of land conveyed by A.B. Whitaker and others to Francis H. Iglehart, by Deed dated January 8th, 1902, and recorded among the Land Records of Harford County aforesaid, in Liber WSF No. 104, folio 6, and running thence with the lines of said conveyance, reversely and magnetically to date, two courses, viz: (1) North forty-nine degrees thirty minutes east, one hundred and seventy-two feet to a stone, (2) north thirty-three degrees twenty-five minutes west forty-one feet to a stone set in the southeasterly side of said Howard Street, at the end of the first line of the lot conveyed to said Iglehart as aforesaid, and thence with and binding on the southeasterly side of said Howard Street, North forty-nine degrees thirty minutes east twenty feet to a stone now set, thence leaving said street and running for division across the Whitaker land two courses, viz: (1) south forty-three degrees forty minutes east one hundred and forty-one feet to a stone now set; (2) south forty-nine degrees thirty minutes west two hundred feet to a stone now set up on the northeasterly side of said Main Street, and thence with and binding on the north-easterly side of said street, north forty-three degrees twenty minutes west one hundred feet to the beginning: containing forty-eight one hundredth acres of land, more or less.

Boundary Justification: the nominated property comprises the total parcel historically associated with the resource.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only
received
date entered

Bel Air Armory

Continuation sheet Harford County, Maryland

Item number

9

Page 3

MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES:

- Eleanor Bruchey, "The Industrialization of Maryland 1860 - 1914", in Richard Walsh and William Lloyd Fox (eds.), Maryland, a History, 1632-1974. Baltimore, 1974.
- Graham A. Cosmas, An Army for Empire: The United States Army in the Spanish - American War. Columbia, Mo., 1971.
- Col. Vincent J. Esposito (ed.), The West Point Atlas of American Wars, Vol. II. New York, 1959.
- Joseph H. Ewing, 29 Let's Go! Washington, 1948.
- Order of Battle of the United States Army, World War II, European Theater of Operations, Paris, France, N.D.
- Laurence Stallings, The Doughboys: The Story of the AEF, 1917-1918. New York, 1963.
- Russell F. Weigley, History of the United States Army. London, 1968.
- C. Milton Wright, Our Harford Heritage. Baltimore, 1967.
- Newspapers: The Aegis, The Harford Democrat, The York, Pa., Dispatch.
- Interview with J. Glasgow Archer, 12 February 1979.
- Land Records, Harford County, Liber 106, folio 213.
- Vertical files, Harford County Library, Bel Air.
- (Belair) Aegis, Centennial edition, August 1, 1974.

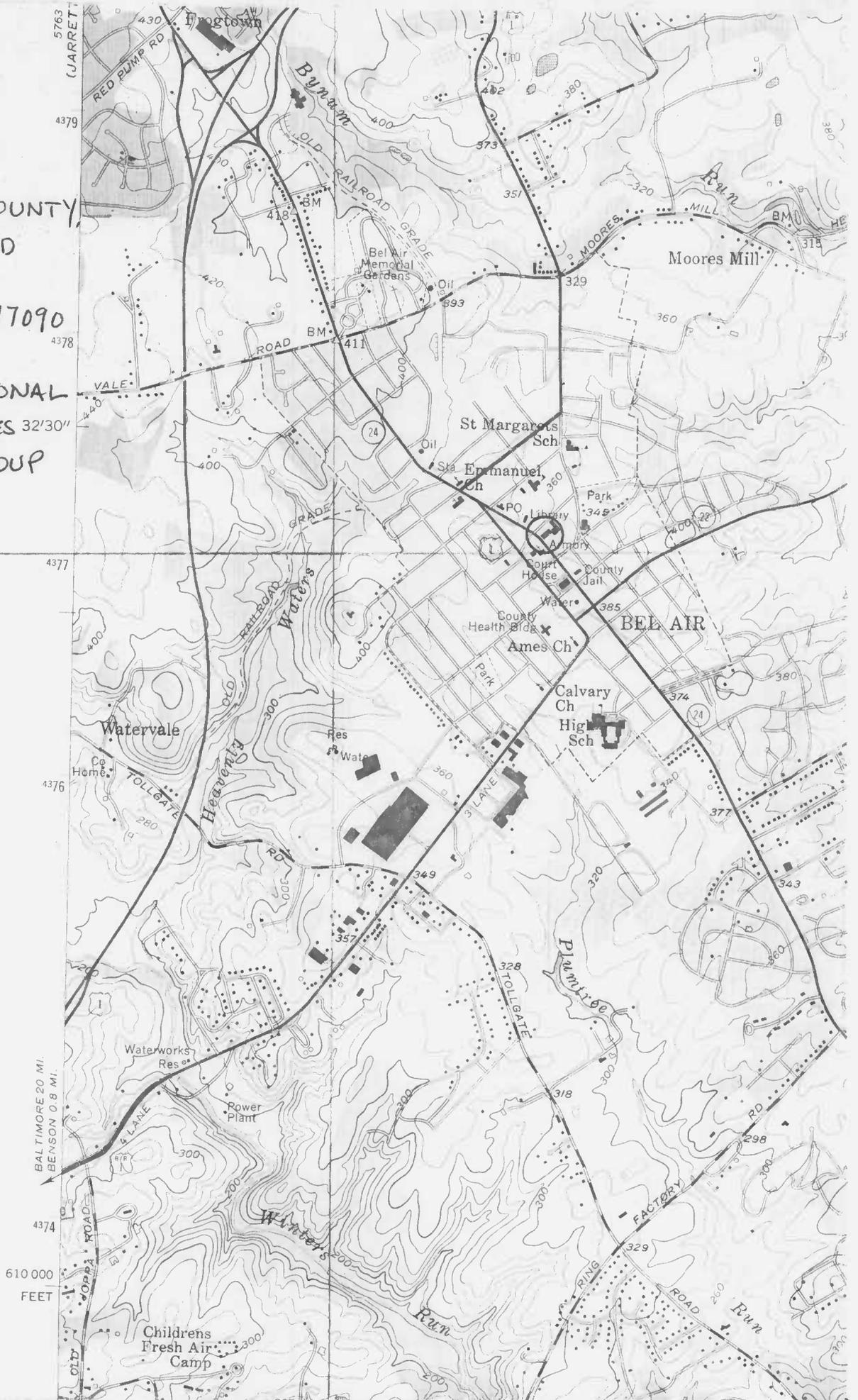
HA-1429

BEL AIR  
ARMORY

HARFORD COUNTY  
MARYLAND

18-383960-4377090

MARYLAND NATIONAL  
GUARD ARMORIES 32'30"  
THEMATIC GROUP



5763 (JARRET)  
4379  
4378  
4377  
4376  
4374  
610 000 FEET

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

HA-1429

See Continuation Sheet No. 3

# 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property 0.48 acres

Quadrangle name Bel Air, MD

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

### UTM References

A 

1	8	3	8	3	9	6	0	4	3	7	7	0	9	0
Zone		Easting				Northing								

B 

Zone		Easting				Northing								

C 

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

D 

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

E 

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

F 

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

G 

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

H 

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

### Verbal boundary description and justification

See Continuation Sheet No. 2

### List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state N/A code county code

state code county code

# 11. Form Prepared By

name/title M. Larew, architectural Historian

organization Town of Bel Air date revised: 29 January 1979  
7/85

street & number 39 Hickory Avenue telephone (301) 838-8700

city or town Bel Air state Maryland 21014

# 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national  state  local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature *J. M. A.* 8-14-85

title STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER date

### For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

date

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

Chief of Registration

date

INVENTORY FORM FOR STATE HISTORIC SITES SURVEY

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC

Bel Air Armory

AND/OR COMMON

**2 LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER

N. Main Street

1st

CITY, TOWN

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

STATE

Bel Air

VICINITY OF

COUNTY

Maryland

Harford

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE	
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL	<input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	<b>PUBLIC ACQUISITION</b>	<b>ACCESSIBLE</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

State of Maryland, Military Dept.

Telephone #: 728-3388

STREET & NUMBER

Bolton & Hoffman Sts.

CITY, TOWN

STATE, zip code

Baltimore

VICINITY OF

Maryland

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Harford County Courthouse

Liber #: 147

Folio #: 213

STREET & NUMBER

Main Street

CITY, TOWN

STATE

Bel Air

Maryland

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

DATE

FEDERAL  STATE  COUNTY  LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

# DESCRIPTION

NA-1429

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED      DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

## DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Bel Air Armory is on the east side of Main Street at 41 North Main in the Town of Bel Air, Harford County, Maryland. Closely resembling a castle or the U.S. Corps. of Engineers insignia, this building, like others built at the same time around the State, is unmistakably an armory. The complex consists of the armory, which faces west on Main Street and its truck park and garages on the rear of the lot. Constructed in 1915 of Port Deposit granite, the building consists of the main block, five bays by three, two stories over a raised basement, and the field house to the east (rear) of the main block. The front elevation is strongly divided into five bays by the two projecting hexagonal towers which rise to three stories and are topped by crenelated battlements finished in stone coping. A stone water course sharply deliniates the first story from the raised basement in both the main block and the towers which provides horizontal movement in the facade. This horizontal movement is reinforced by the corbelled table just under the crenelated battlements which top the main block. This level in the towers is a repetition of the stone water course supported by brackets. The block's fenestration shows a balance between horizontal and vertical thrust. The long, narrow windows are rather deeply set in with the tower windows being narrower than those of the main block in the first and second stories. The tower windows in the third story are mere slits. All the windows but the composite window in the second story of the center bay have stone sills and flat arches which halt the upward emphasis of the windows. The triple window in the middle bay in the second story has a segmental stone arch. This window is echoed in the projecting stone marquee over the double doors of the entry. Two flag poles project from this marquee flanking the letters MNG (Maryland National Guard). Two additional flag poles rise from the battlements along the inside of the towers. The battlements, corbel strip, and water course continue around the building on the north and south elevations.

Behind the main block is the field house. Seven buttresses divide the side elevations (north and south) into bays all but the first (west) of which have two long narrow windows with stone sills and flat arches. The water course continues along the side elevations and, since the lot slopes fairly sharply, basement windows of increasing depth occur. This portion of the building has the curved roof of a field house. The rear (east) elevation of the building, here two full stories high, is plastered. Two pair of buttresses support the ends of this elevation. A small window is placed between the buttresses in the second story (first story from the Main Street Side) and a door occurs in the first (or basement) story. Between the buttress pairs centered is a tall double door with a sally port set in a round arched opening. This door is big enough to drive a small truck in. A long window set in a round-arched opening is on each side of the entry. A stone wall with

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

buttresses continues from the east end of the north elevation to the end of the lot. At right angles to this wall and parallel with Main Street are the garages of the truck park. A wire mesh fence with stone piers completes the fencing of the lot.

The interior is in three sections. The west block has three floors of offices. The towers above that are accessible but not functional. The middle block is the field house which has a basketball court and a stage at the east end. The basketball court has been used in the past for drill. In the basement of this section are a day-room, class-rooms, kitchen facilities, and the armory - a secure storage facility for the company's weapons. Behind the field house, but under the same roof section, are more offices upstairs and down.

# SIGNIFICANCE

AK-1720

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES      1915

~~BUILDER~~/ARCHITECT : John B. Hamme  
Contractor: Lawrence Whalen & Co.

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Bel Air Armory, strikingly reminiscent of the U.S. Corps of Engineers insignia or a Scottish Gothic Revival castle, was the subject of a design competition during the first year of the Great European War. The winning design was by John B. Hamme of York, Pennsylvania. The same design was subsequently used for the now demolished Edgewood Armory. The contract was let in November 1914 to Lawrence Whalen and Company with subsidiary contracts to Love Brothers and J. Nathan Dean of Bel Air. The lot on Main Street was purchased for \$2,600 from Aquilla B. Whitaker and Josephine M. Whitaker in March 1915. The stones for the foundation were obtained when the stone fence around the Van Bibber property on South Main Street was demolished. The granite for the building came from the Port Deposit Granite Company. This building is Bel Air's first and only armory and is still used by the local National Guard unit.

The militia system pre-dates the settlement of the English colonies; its roots reach back to King Henry II (1154-89) and his Assize of Arms. Every English freeman was once a part-time soldier. This system had obvious benefits for the struggling English colonists, scattered on the edge of a forbidding but mighty continent. With no regular army upon which to depend, colonial defense was a local "do-it-yourself" project. The first English regular army troops on this continent served in the French and Indian War (1754-63); regular troops were assigned here from about 1756 to the end of the American Revolution. All other defense was done by citizen soldiers in the militia. The system worked reasonably well for Indian fighting and local defense. It worked less well in any extended operation, but until the formation of the U.S. Army in 1775, local militia was the only defense force available. With the revision of the U.S. government under the Constitution of 1787, the militia system was written into law. The Militia Act of 1792 provided that "every able-bodied free white male citizen between the ages of 18 and 45" was part of the Militia; behind the regular army, the Nation's second line of defense. The state governors gave commissions to all officers. The governor chose those of field rank. Officers below field rank were elected by their troops. All the men were expected to provide their own weapons and uniforms. The state provided the rest - sometimes. Militia musters occurred a couple of times a year. All the men turned out, had their weapons inspected, did a bit of close order drill, and then fell out to drink at the local tavern. While the system was unwieldy and inefficient, it served reasonably well, but the long period of peace after 1815 saw rot set in. The Militia units became more than ever social clubs, and by the Black Hawk War (1832) the system was on its last legs. The Mexican War (1846-48) and the Civil War (1861-65) were fought largely by Regulars and Volunteers while

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

the militia system became moribund. So divided were the Harford Countians before the Civil War that illicit units, pro and anti-Union, drilled in the county. Many men went South to fight for the Confederacy, while the county put companies C & H in the Seventh Regiment of U. S. Volunteers in the field under the command of Colonel Edwin H. Webster of Bel Air. These local units saw duty from after Antietam to Appomatox Courthouse.

After the War, "binding up the wounds" took some time. Men were not particularly interested in getting back in uniform and drilling, even socially, after that bloody conflict. In 1877 a National Meeting of Militia Officers met in Richmond, Virginia, to form the National Guard Association to lobby for a better National Militia. The New York Militia was the first to borrow the name National Guard from the French. Soon it became universal. In the 1880's and 1890's most states reorganized their National Guards, moved, some scholars say, by the wave of labor violence that periodically swept the nation between 1877 and the end of the century as labor attempted to organize for better wages and working conditions.

In Bel Air the Jackson Guards, a company of around 80 men, was formed in 1887. It was named for Governor Elihu Jackson. The next year (1888) the Jackson Guards became Company D, First Maryland Regiment Infantry. The company met occasionally to drill and spent a week encamped with the rest of the Maryland National Guard. In 1894 Company D was used to help break the United Mine Workers' strike in the western Maryland Coal fields. Because of the use of the Militia Union organizing ceased in western Maryland until 1899. During this period the organization of the guard was improved, but it was still appallingly deficient in weapons and equipment. Most companies were armed with the post Civil War single-shot, breech-loading Springfield and the artillery units were still using Muzzle-loaders. They had little target practice (no ammunition) and no drill above brigade. The drill still close order rather than the more modern open-order tactics used with the increased fire-power and new weapons of the last quarter of the nineteenth century.

Company D was in federal service during the Spanish-American War but saw no combat. On April 25, 1898, the company marched down to the train station where it took the Maryland and Pennsylvania Railroad to Pimlico, outside Baltimore. The men camped there for two days before being sent to Fortress Monroe, Virginia, near Norfolk, for garrison duty. Later that summer (August 5) they were shipped to Puerto Rico, again for garrison duty, because the island had been secured (August 12) about the time they got there. They did suffer most of the fortunes of that "bully little war" -- disease, boredom, and "embalmed beef".

The National Guard, like the regular Army, was reorganized in 1903. The Dick Act of that year provided improved weaponry and more regular drill. The Guard was armed with the five-shot box magazine Krag, still an Army cast-off (the Army had the new 1903 Springfield), but it was at least a repeater. Periodic inspection of units by both Guard and Regular Army officers was required, and provisions were made for joint maneuvers with the Army. The financing of these improvements ranged from weak to non-existent. Further, the Guard consisted almost entirely of infantry with few support units.

After the beginning of the Great War in Europe the preparedness campaign waged by interventionists like former President Theodore Roosevelt and former Army Chief of Staff General Leonard Wood brought further improvements. In Maryland several new armories, including the one at Bel Air, were built. From the armory architecture of the period -- traditional to the point of being medieval -- it appears that the implications of the changes in weaponry and tactics had not been fully assimilated at the local

level. They had not been assimilated by the General Staff, either, as World War I was to show. The 1916 National Defense Act did provide increased strength and funding for the National Guard as well as federal standards for officers and instructors.

In the latter part of 1915 Bel Air's Company D was mobilized and sent to El Paso, Texas, as part of the campaign against Pancho Villa. The company was led by Major Robert Archer.

On August 5, 1917, the unit was mustered into federal service as Company D, 115th Infantry Regiment, 58th Brigade of the 29th Division. The division was made up of National Guard units from Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, New Jersey, and the District of Columbia. The division insignia was the monad, the Korean symbol of eternal life, similar to the Chinese yin-yang symbol. Its colors were blue and gray symbolizing the fact that the division was composed of men whose forebears fought in both the Union and the Confederate Armies during the Civil War. It was called the Blue and Gray Division.

Under command of Major General Charles G. Norton, the division was sent to Camp McClellan, near Anniston, Alabama, in August 1917. It spent ten months there in training before being shipped to France. On arrival at the front the division was given responsibility for a "quiet" sector on the German-Swiss border; its mission was to control the Belfort Gap. After two months in that position, the Blue and Gray division was sent north on September 22, 1918, to take part in the Meuse-Argonne Offensive. The men of the division went "over the top" for the first time on October 8. In twenty-one consecutive days in the front line trenches they advanced six miles at a cost of 4,781 casualties, including 1,053 killed or died of wounds. The 29th sector was south of the Heights of the Meuse. The mission was to storm those heights attacking the intrenched positions of the Hindenberg Line with its pillboxes and machine gun nests. Company D was a heavy weapons (machine gun) unit. The division helped to take the Consenvoye Heights and the Borne de Cornouilles (Corned Willy Hill). On November 11, when the Armistice was declared, the 29th division was marching back to the line to join the Second (U.S.) Army's drive against the forts at Metz.

Altogether 1,100 Harford County men and 10 Harford County women served in the Allied Expeditionary Force in France. This includes enlistees, draftees, and the men of Company D. Of this number, forty-five lost their lives. They are remembered on a plaque placed in front of the armory after the War.

Between the wars the National Guard again fell on lean times. In a psychological reaction to the failure of the Versailles Treaty, Americans became more than usually anti-military, and funds were short, especially during the Great Depression. The regular army was pared to the bone, and National Guard funding fell in like measure. During these years the Maryland National Guard trained at Camp Ritchie, named for Maryland Governor Albert C. Ritchie. In 1939 as the European War began, the National Guard consisted of around 200,000 men. Both these men and the miniscule regular army were armed with the five shot 1903 Springfield rifle. Still, the Guard was in better condition than it had been in 1917.

Company D was called to federal service again on February 3, 1941. The troops were quartered in the armory for two weeks before being sent to Fort Meade for further training. Bel Air's General Reckord was in charge of training with broomsticks and stove pipes in place of rifles and mortars. The unit took part in the giant maneuvers in North and South Carolina in the latter part of the year, and were passing through Virginia in convoy back to Fort Meade on December 7 when word came of the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. Company D was sent immediately to Philadelphia to guard

railroad lines and utilities.

When first called to active duty the 29th Division was still a "square" division of two infantry brigades of two regiments each. In March, 1942, the division was "triangularized". The brigade structure disappeared and the division obtained the organization it would carry throughout World War II -- three infantry regiments, the 176th, the 116th and the 115th with support units such as artillery, engineers, medics, and military police. Company D was in the First Battalion, 115th Infantry Regiment. (The 115th included the Maryland Troops. The 116th was from Virginia.) It was still a heavy weapons unit armed with machine guns and mortars. The history of the First Battalion is not difficult to trace. Company D is harder to follow. The point of the triangular division was that each level had three maneuver units supplemented by support units. The maneuver units of the First Battalion were Companies A, B, and C. Each company received heavy weapons support from platoons of Company D, so that Company D did not operate as a unit.

The 29th Division arrived in the European Theater of Operations on October 11, 1942, when it sailed into the Firth of Clyde, Scotland, aboard the Queen Mary and the Queen Elizabeth. From that time until the men hit Omaha Beach on June 6, 1944, as part of the D-Day invasion, they were in training at various locations in Great Britain. In October 1942 the divisional commander was Major General Leonard T. Gerow. He was replaced on July 22, 1943, by Major General Charles H. Gerhardt, the man who would command the division throughout the rest of the war. The commander of the 115th Regiment was Colonel Eugene N. Slappey.

Omaha Beach was a crescent-shaped stretch of 7,000 yards of sandy beach flanked at each end by cliffs, lying some ten miles east of the Cherbourg Peninsula in Normandy. In the years before the war it had been one of the less pretentious of the French beaches, made famous only by the French Impressionist painters who visited it often and loved to paint its shifting light. By 1944 the sleepy beach had become a section of the great Atlantic Wall of Adolf Hitler's Fortress Europe. Marshal Erwin Rommel had seen to it that the beach between high and low water was defended by a series of obstacles designed to prevent an amphibious landing, and in the face of the bluffs and the cliffs were observation posts and machine guns in concrete pillboxes. There were two natural beach exits, roads leading to Vierville and les Moulins, and the heaviest beach defenses were clustered there. These areas were the 29th Division's portion of the beach, and the fighting for them was destined to be bloody. Of all of the D-Day beaches Omaha was to be the most difficult on which to establish a beachhead, and there the casualties were to be the heaviest.

The D-Day invasion force at Omaha Beach on H-Hour was to include 34,143 men and 3,306 vehicles, among them portions of the 29th Division, including the 116th and the first battalion of the 115th. The rest of the Division was to be committed later the first day. As a result of faulty navigation, a heavy running tide, and inadequate preparatory bombing, the landings on Omaha were shifted to the west, leaving the men in unfamiliar sectors with missions they could not accomplish. Particularly hampered were the engineers whose duty it was to demolish the underwater obstacles. The result was that the troops of the first wave, the 116th, piled up on the beach, dead and dying, with the survivors crouching in the pitiful shelter of the seawall. Around 10:00 A.M. Colonel Slappey landed the 115th somewhat east of his previously designated landing area. By nightfall the first battalion (and Bel Air's Company D) had attained lodgment around 2,000 yards from the beach, just south of the town of St. Laurent. This was the one of the two deepest penetrations of the day. The 29th Division had taken more

casualties that day than any other. Most of them were in the 116th by virtue of its being in the first assault wave, but the 115th had taken its share, too.

The hedgerow country of Normandy presented enormous obstacles to penetration, providing as it did shelter for defending troops. The beach-heads were steadily expanded, but the real break-out did not occur until the fall of St. Lo, July 17-18. It was the First Battalion of the 115th, including Company D, that captured the town after it had held out for more than a month. The division continued the pursuit through Normandy until mid-August. On August 22 the division was detached from V Corps, attached to VIII Corps and sent west to Finisterre to aid in the reduction of Brest and its submarine pens. This was accomplished on September 18.

After a short rest, the 29th was transferred over 650 miles to the Netherlands by motor and train, the railroad portion taken in old 40 and 8 boxcars (forty men or eight mules). The men of the division found themselves a little farther east on the Meuse River from where their fathers had served in World War I. They were now assaulting the West-wall of Hitler's fortifications, by the last of September inside Germany itself (Paris had fallen on August 25th). By November the division was held up before Julich on the Roer River. Upstream from the town, seven massive dams sat in the Hurtgen Forest. These dams controlled the whole river valley, and they had to be captured or destroyed before an advance could take place. By this time the division was attached to Simpson's Ninth Army. South of the 29th division's sector, terrific fighting took place in the Hurtgen Forest. During that battle and the December Battle of the Bulge, the 29th remained along the Roer. Julich fell on February 24, 1945. The division crossed the Rhine on March 23 and by April 25 it had reached the Elbe River where it shook hands with elements of the victorious Russian Army. The war in Europe was nearly over and the 29th had been in it all the way. In May the division was given the mission of occupying Bremen and Bremerhaven where it remained until December 24, when it took ship for home. By January 17 the division had been processed at Camp Kilmer, New Jersey, and the men went home. Some 3,000 of them never made it. Total division casualties were 28,776, of which 3,720 were killed. Total casualties for the 115th were 5,948, of which 1,047 were killed. The casualties represent 204.2 % of strength for 242 days of combat. The entire division received the Croix de Guerre with palm; the First Battalion of the 115th (and Company D) received the Croix de Guerre with Silver Star for defense against the German counterattack near the Bois de Bretel, Normandy, July 11, 1944. Individual awards for the division are impressive:

DSC	40
Legion of Merit	11
Silver Star	856
Soldiers Medal	25
Bronze Star	5,954
Air Medal	176

The 29th Infantry Division was not called up for the Korean War. The division was deactivated in a reorganization of the National Guard and some elements of it including the 115th, were transferred to the 28th Division. In the mid-1960's the mission of Bel Air's Company D changed.

No longer an infantry heavy weapons company, it became a helicopter unit. Its current designation is Company D (Attack Helicopter), 150th Aviation Battalion, 50th Armored Division. The division is based in New Jersey.

The Bel Air Armory has a long history as a local community gathering place. The town high schools have long held plays and seasonal dances in the auditorium and graduations were held there until the Bel Air High School built its own auditorium. The city's professional Ramsey Street players perform at the Armory and the annual town minstrel show is held there. In addition the Armory has housed local community services on long-term bases over the years, such as the Red Cross and the Harford County Library.

RECOMMENDATION: Continue use as a Maryland National Guard Armory with selected community activities.

**9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

"See Continuation Sheet" #7.

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

**10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY \_\_\_\_\_

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

This property occupies parcel 862 in the Town of Bel Air  
85' x 300' x 140' x 125' x 50' x 175'

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET #8.

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	COUNTY

**11 FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME / TITLE

M. Larew, Architectural Historian

29 January 1979

ORGANIZATION

Town of Bel Air

DATE

STREET & NUMBER

39 Hickory Avenue

838-8700

TELEPHONE

CITY OR TOWN

Bel Air

STATE

Maryland

The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature, to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 Supplement.

The Survey and Inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

RETURN TO: Maryland Historical Trust  
The Shaw House, 21 State Circle  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401  
(301) 267-1438

John Bentz Hamme (1862 - 1954), of York, Pennsylvania, was the architect of the Harford Mutual Fire Insurance Company building at 18 Office Street and of the Bel Air Armory. He was born in 1862 in Manchester Township, the son of Alfred and Maria Bentz Hamme. He received his early education at the York County Academy and graduated from Cornell University in 1888. He began his architectural practice in Seattle, Washington, in partnership with John Parkinson in 1890. Returning to York in 1901, he entered into partnership with Edward Leber at 14 West Market Street. In 1912 the partnership was desolved. A few years later his son, J. Alfred Hamme, joined him in his own firm. He had been a member of the American Institute of Architects since 1909.

Mr. Hamme designed a number of buildings in Seattle after the great fire there destroyed most of the town. After returning to York, he designed many buildings in Maryland and Pennsylvania, among them the Hood College Campus, the D. J. Baker Memorial Bell Tower, and the YMCA in Frederick, Maryland; Glatfelter Hall, the new chapel, and the Memorial Library at Gettysburg College and the chapel and library at Gettysburg Theological Seminary; the YMCA at Lewistown, Pennsylvania; William Penn Senior High School in York; St. Matthew's Lutheran Church and the Evangelical Church at Red Lion, and the Royal Fire Company House at York.

He also served in various civic capacities: Member of the Select Council of York, 1901-1904, Member of the City Planning Commission from its organization in 1909 to 1924, and Charter Member of the Royal Fire Company. During World War I he was project manager in the United States Housing Corporation and had control of important housing projects at Craddock, near Portsmouth, Virginia, the naval base at Norfolk, Virginia, at Morgan and Pomton Lakes, New Jersey, and at Arlington, Massachusetts. After the war Governor Gifford Pinchot appointed him to the Giant Power Commission.

Hamme was a Mason, a member of the Huguenot Society, the Sons of the American Revolution and of St. Matthew's Lutheran Church where he was a Sunday School Teacher and a member of the church council.

He was married to the former Minnie Kohler; they had one son, J. Alfred Hamme, like his father, an architect. J. Alfred Hamme was associated with his father in the Harford Mutual project in 1930; he was not mentioned in connection with the Bel Air Armory (1914). Probably he was too young.

Source for John B. Hamme  
Obituary, York, Pa., Despatch,  
October 19, 1954

## #9 Bibliography

- Eleanor Bruchey, "The Industrialization of Maryland 1860 - 1914", in Richard Walsh and William Lloyd Fox (eds.), Maryland, a History, 1632-1974. Baltimore, 1974.
- Graham A. Cosmas, An Army for Empire: The United States Army in the Spanish - American War. Columbia, Mo., 1971.
- Col. Vincent J. Esposito (ed.), The West Point Atlas of American Wars, Vol. II. New York, 1959.
- Joseph H. Ewing, 29 Let's Go! Washington, 1948.
- Order of Battle of the United States Army, World War II, European Theater of Operations, Paris, France, N.D.
- Laurence Stallings, The Doughboys: The Story of the AEF, 1917-1918. New York, 1963.
- Russell F. Weigley, History of the United States Army. London, 1968.
- C. Milton Wright, Our Harford Heritage. Baltimore, 1967.
- Newspapers: The Aegis, The Harford Democrat, The York, Pa., Dispatch.
- Interview with J. Glasgow Archer, 12 February 1979.
- Land Records, Harford County, Liber 106, folio 213.
- Vertical files, Harford County Library, Bel Air.
- (Belair) Aegis, Centennial edition, August 1, 1974.

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

In the Town of Bel Air in said Harford County:

BEGINNING for the same at a point in the Northeasterly side of Main Street at the distance of forty-one feet measured along the said Northeasterly side of said Main Street in a Southeasterly direction, from the corner or angle formed by intersection of the Northeasterly side of said Street with the Southeasterly side of Howard Street, said point of beginning being also at a stone set at the end of the third or South forty-eight degrees forty-five minutes West one Hundred and seventy-two feet line of that tract of land conveyed by A.B. Whitaker and others to Francis H. Iglehart, by Deed dated January 8th, 1902, and recorded among the Land Records of Harford County aforesaid, in Liber WSF No. 104, folio 6, and running thence with the lines of said conveyance, reversely and magnetically to date, two courses, viz: (1) North forty-nine degrees thirty minutes East, one hundred and seventy-two feet to a stone, (2) North Thirty-three degrees twenty-five minutes West forty-one feet to a stone set in the Southeasterly side of said Howard Street, at the end of the first line of the lot conveyed to said Iglehart as aforesaid, and thence with and binding on the Southeasterly side of said Howard Street, North forty-nine degrees thirty minutes East twenty feet to a stone now set, thence leaving said Street and running for division across the Whitaker land two courses, viz: (1) South forty-three degrees forty minutes East one hundred and forty-one feet to a stone now set; (2) South forty-nine degrees thirty minutes West two hundred feet to a stone now set up on the Northeasterly side of said Main Street, and thence with and binding on the Northeasterly side of said Street, North forty-three degrees twenty minutes West one hundred feet to the beginning; containing forty-eight one hundredths acres of land, more or less.

CHAIN OF TITLE

Bel Air Armory  
Bel Air, Maryland  
HA-1429

106/213  
3/13/1915  
Deed

From Aquilla B. Whitaker, widower, and Josephine M.  
Whitaker, widow, to the State of Maryland.

Consideration: \$2,600 in fee simple.

LEE

P 854

190

ROBERT B. LAWRENCE, JR.

999/594

P. 856

JOHN 454 0 P.

CORNELIUS HELFRICH, ETAL  
1046 / 804

P 855

187 30

119 30

06/41

129 40

50.00

7-4

FREDERICK WARD ASSOC., INC.  
981/158

P. 865

MD. NATIONAL  
GUARD ARMORY  
STATE OF MD.

P. 862

(13)

74.76

SNYDER PHARMACY

INC

943/635

P 861

MARVIN L. GETZ

631/517

P 860

105.3

46

(45)

(41)

AMES KONSTANT  
522 470

56

MARVIN L. LUTZ  
871/529

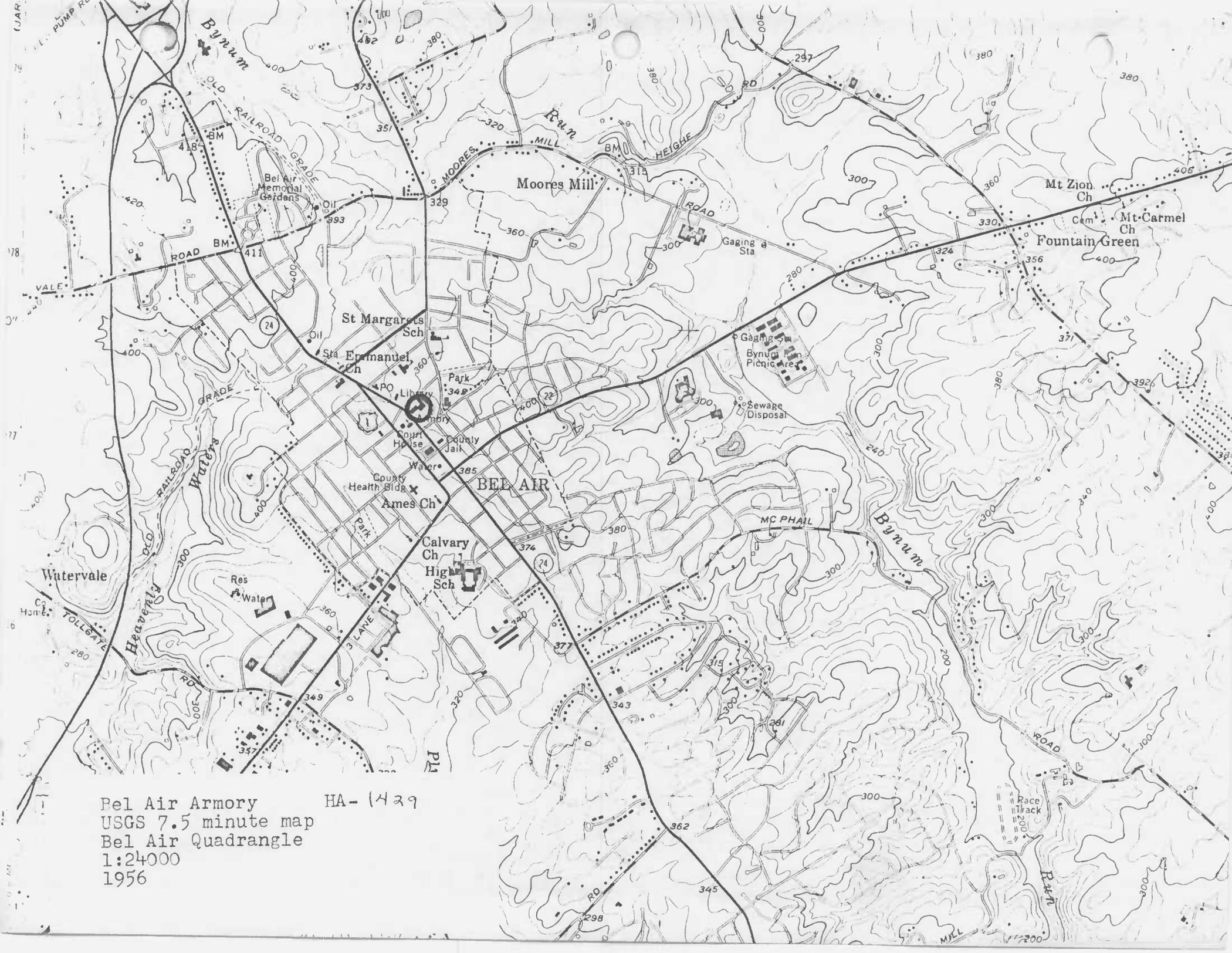
P 867

HA-1429

Bel Air Armory  
Md Dept of Assessments & Taxation  
Harford County Map No. 24  
Scale: 1" = 50'

Revised 1 Aug 79

M



Pel Air Armory  
USGS 7.5 minute map  
Bel Air Quadrangle  
1:24000  
1956

HA-1429

HA-1429

1915

BEL AIR ARMORY

Bel Air

Public (Restricted)

The Bel Air Armory is a two story structure with full basement located on the main thoroughfare of Bel Air, county seat of Harford County. The building emulates a medieval fortification, and is constructed of grey Port Deposit granite.

The building was erected for the uses of Company D, 115th Infantry Regiment, of the 29th Division of the National Guard. The building was designed by John B. Hamme and built by the contracting company of Lawrence Whalen and Company. The Armory has housed various community services over the years, including the local Red Cross and the Harford County Library.

INVENTORY FORM FOR STATE HISTORIC SITES SURVEY

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC

Bel Air Armory

AND/OR COMMON

**2 LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER

N. Main Street

1st

CITY, TOWN

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Bel Air

— VICINITY OF

STATE

COUNTY

Maryland

Harford

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE <input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL <input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL <input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	<b>PUBLIC ACQUISITION</b>	<b>ACCESSIBLE</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT <input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT <input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL <input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MILITARY <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

State of Maryland, Military Dept.

Telephone #: 728-3388

STREET & NUMBER

Bolton & Hoffman Sts.

CITY, TOWN

STATE, zip code

Baltimore

— VICINITY OF

Maryland

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Harford County Courthouse

Liber #: 147

Folio #: 213

STREET & NUMBER

Main Street

CITY, TOWN

STATE

Bel Air

Maryland

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

DATE

— FEDERAL — STATE — COUNTY — LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

hA-1429

**7 DESCRIPTION**

<b>CONDITION</b>		<b>CHECK ONE</b>	<b>CHECK ONE</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Bel Air Armory is on the east side of Main Street at 41 North Main in the Town of Bel Air, Harford County, Maryland. Closely resembling a castle or the U.S. Corps. of Engineers insignia, this building, like others built at the same time around the State, is unmistakably an armory. The complex consists of the armory, which faces west on Main Street and its truck park and garages on the rear of the lot. Constructed in 1915 of Port Deposit granite, the building consists of the main block, five bays by three, two stories over a raised basement, and the field house to the east (rear) of the main block. The front elevation is strongly divided into five bays by the two projecting hexagonal towers which rise to three stories and are topped by crenelated battlements finished in stone coping. A stone water course sharply delinates the first story from the raised basement in both the main block and the towers which provides horizontal movement in the facade. This horizontal movement is reinforced by the corbelled table just under the crenelated battlements which top the main block. This level in the towers is a repetition of the stone water course supported by brackets. The block's fenestration shows a balance between horizontal and vertical thrust. The long, narrow windows are rather deeply set in with the tower windows being narrower than those of the main block in the first and second stories. The tower windows in the third story are mere slits. All the windows but the composite window in the second story of the center bay have stone sills and flat arches which halt the upward emphasis of the windows. The triple window in the middle bay in the second story has a segmental stone arch. This window is echoed in the projecting stone marquee over the double doors of the entry. Two flag poles project from this marquee flanking the letters MNG (Maryland National Guard). Two additional flag poles rise from the battlements along the inside of the towers. The battlements, corbel strip, and water course continue around the building on the north and south elevations.

Behind the main block is the field house. Seven buttresses divide the side elevations (north and south) into bays all but the first (west) of which have two long narrow windows with stone sills and flat arches. The water course continues along the side elevations and, since the lot slopes fairly sharply, basement windows of increasing depth occur. This portion of the building has the curved roof of a field house. The rear (east) elevation of the building, here two full stories high, is plastered. Two pair of buttresses support the ends of this elevation. A small window is placed between the buttresses in the second story (first story from the Main Street Side) and a door occurs in the first (or basement) story. Between the buttress pairs centered is a tall double door with a sally port set in a round arched opening. This door is big enough to drive a small truck in. A long window set in a round-arched opening is on each side of the entry. A stone wall with

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

NA 4927

# 8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD		AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)	
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION			

SPECIFIC DATES      1915      ~~OWNER~~/ARCHITECT : John B. Hamme  
 Contractor: Lawrence Whalen & Co.

### STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Bel Air Armory, strikingly reminiscent of the U.S. Corps of Engineers insignia or a Scottish Gothic Revival castle, was the subject of a design competition during the first year of the Great European War. The winning design was by John B. Hamme of York, Pennsylvania. The same design was subsequently used for the now demolished Edgewood Armory. The contract was let in November 1914 to Lawrence Whalen and Company with subsidiary contracts to Love Brothers and J. Nathan Dean of Bel Air. The lot on Main Street was purchased for \$2,600 from Aquilla B. Whitaker and Josephine M. Whitaker in March 1915. The stones for the foundation were obtained when the stone fence around the Van Bibber property on South Main Street was demolished. The granite for the building came from the Port Deposit Granite Company. This building is Bel Air's first and only armory and is still used by the local National Guard unit.

The militia system pre-dates the settlement of the English colonies; its roots reach back to King Henry II (1154-89) and his Assize of Arms. Every English freeman was once a part-time soldier. This system had obvious benefits for the struggling English colonists, scattered on the edge of a forbidding but mighty continent. With no regular army upon which to depend, colonial defense was a local "do-it-yourself" project. The first English regular army troops on this continent served in the French and Indian War (1754-63); regular troops were assigned here from about 1756 to the end of the American Revolution. All other defense was done by citizen soldiers in the militia. The system worked reasonably well for Indian fighting and local defense. It worked less well in any extended operation, but until the formation of the U.S. Army in 1775, local militia was the only defense force available. With the revision of the U.S. government under the Constitution of 1787, the militia system was written into law. The Militia Act of 1792 provided that "every able-bodied free white male citizen between the ages of 18 and 45" was part of the Militia, behind the regular army, the Nation's second line of defense. The state governors gave commissions to all officers. The governor chose those of field rank. Officers below field rank were elected by their troops. All the men were expected to provide their own weapons and uniforms. The state provided the rest - sometimes. Militia musters occurred a couple of times a year. All the men turned out, had their weapons inspected, did a bit of close order drill, and then fell out to drink at the local tavern. While the system was unwieldy and inefficient, it served reasonably well, but the long period of peace after 1815 saw rot set in. The Militia units became more than ever social clubs, and by the Black Hawk War (1832) the system was on its last legs. The Mexican War (1846-48) and the Civil War (1861-65) were fought largely by Regulars and Volunteers while

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

**9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

"See Continuation Sheet" #7.

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

**10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY \_\_\_\_\_

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

This property occupies parcel 862 in the Town of Bel Air  
85' x 300' x 140' x 125' x 50' x 175'

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET #8.

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	COUNTY
STATE	COUNTY

**11 FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME / TITLE

M. Larew, Architectural Historian

29 January 1979

ORGANIZATION

Town of Bel Air

DATE

838-8700

STREET & NUMBER

39 Hickory Avenue

TELEPHONE

CITY OR TOWN

Bel Air

STATE

Maryland

The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature, to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 Supplement.

The Survey and Inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

RETURN TO: Maryland Historical Trust  
The Shaw House, 21 State Circle  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401  
(301) 267-1438

buttresses continues from the east end of the north elevation to the end of the lot. At right angles to this wall and parallel with Main Street are the garages of the truck park. A wire mesh fence with stone piers completes the fencing of the lot.

The interior is in three sections. The west block has three floors of offices. The towers above that are accessible but not functional. The middle block is the field house which has a basketball court and a stage at the east end. The basketball court has been used in the past for drill. In the basement of this section are a day-room, class-rooms, kitchen facilities, and the armory - a secure storage facility for the company's weapons. Behind the field house, but under the same roof section, are more offices upstairs and down.

the militia system became moribund. So divided were the Harford Countians before the Civil War that illicit units, pro and anti-Union, drilled in the county. Many men went South to fight for the Confederacy, while the county put companies C & H in the Seventh Regiment of U. S. Volunteers in the field under the command of Colonel Edwin H. Webster of Bel Air. These local units saw duty from after Antietam to Appomatox Courthouse.

After the War, "binding up the wounds" took some time. Men were not particularly interested in getting back in uniform and drilling, even socially, after that bloody conflict. In 1877 a National Meeting of Militia Officers met in Richmond, Virginia, to form the National Guard Association to lobby for a better National Militia. The New York Militia was the first to borrow the name National Guard from the French. Soon it became universal. In the 1880's and 1890's most states reorganized their National Guards, moved, some scholars say, by the wave of labor violence that periodically swept the nation between 1877 and the end of the century as labor attempted to organize for better wages and working conditions.

In Bel Air the Jackson Guards, a company of around 80 men, was formed in 1887. It was named for Governor Elihu Jackson. The next year (1888) the Jackson Guards became Company D, First Maryland Regiment Infantry. The company met occasionally to drill and spent a week encamped with the rest of the Maryland National Guard. In 1894 Company D was used to help break the United Mine Workers' strike in the western Maryland Coal fields. Because of the use of the Militia Union organizing ceased in western Maryland until 1899. During this period the organization of the guard was improved, but it was still appallingly deficient in weapons and equipment. Most companies were armed with the post Civil War single-shot, breech-loading Springfield and the artillery units were still using Muzzle-loaders. They had little target practice (no ammunition) and no drill above brigade. The drill still close order rather than the more modern open-order tactics used with the increased fire-power and new weapons of the last quarter of the nineteenth century.

Company D was in federal service during the Spanish-American War but saw no combat. On April 25, 1898, the company marched down to the train station where it took the Maryland and Pennsylvania Railroad to Pimlico, outside Baltimore. The men camped there for two days before being sent to Fortress Monroe, Virginia, near Norfolk, for garrison duty. Later that summer (August 5) they were shipped to Puerto Rico, again for garrison duty, because the island had been secured (August 12) about the time they got there. They did suffer most of the fortunes of that "bully little war" -- disease, boredom, and "embalmed beef".

The National Guard, like the regular Army, was reorganized in 1903. The Dick Act of that year provided improved weaponry and more regular drill. The Guard was armed with the five-shot box magazine Krag, still an Army cast-off (the Army had the new 1903 Springfield), but it was at least a repeater. Periodic inspection of units by both Guard and Regular Army officers was required, and provisions were made for joint maneuvers with the Army. The financing of these improvements ranged from weak to non-existent. Further, the Guard consisted almost entirely of infantry with few support units.

After the beginning of the Great War in Europe the preparedness campaign waged by interventionists like former President Theodore Roosevelt and former Army Chief of Staff General Leonard Wood brought further improvements. In Maryland several new armories, including the one at Bel Air, were built. From the armory architecture of the period -- traditional to the point of being medieval -- it appears that the implications of the changes in weaponry and tactics had not been fully assimilated at the local

level. They had not been assimilated by the General Staff, either, as World War I was to show. The 1916 National Defense Act did provide increased strength and funding for the National Guard as well as federal standards for officers and instructors.

In the latter part of 1915 Bel Air's Company D was mobilized and sent to El Paso, Texas, as part of the campaign against Pancho Villa. The company was led by Major Robert Archer.

On August 5, 1917, the unit was mustered into federal service as Company D, 115th Infantry Regiment, 58th Brigade of the 29th Division. The division was made up of National Guard units from Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, New Jersey, and the District of Columbia. The division insignia was the monad, the Korean symbol of eternal life, similar to the Chinese yin-yang symbol. Its colors were blue and gray symbolizing the fact that the division was composed of men whose forebears fought in both the Union and the Confederate Armies during the Civil War. It was called the Blue and Gray Division.

Under command of Major General Charles G. Norton, the division was sent to Camp McClellan, near Anniston, Alabama, in August 1917. It spent ten months there in training before being shipped to France. On arrival at the front the division was given responsibility for a "quiet" sector on the German-Swiss border; its mission was to control the Belfort Gap. After two months in that position, the Blue and Gray division was sent north on September 22, 1918, to take part in the Meuse-Argonne Offensive. The men of the division went "over the top" for the first time on October 8. In twenty-one consecutive days in the front line trenches they advanced six miles at a cost of 4,781 casualties, including 1,053 killed or died of wounds. The 29th sector was south of the Heights of the Meuse. The mission was to storm those heights attacking the intrenched positions of the Hindenberg Line with its pillboxes and machine gun nests. Company D was a heavy weapons (machine gun) unit. The division helped to take the Consenvoye Heights and the Borne de Cornouilles (Corned Willy Hill). On November 11, when the Armistice was declared, the 29th division was marching back to the line to join the Second (U.S.) Army's drive against the forts at Metz.

Altogether 1,100 Harford County men and 10 Harford County women served in the Allied Expeditionary Force in France. This includes enlistees, draftees, and the men of Company D. Of this number, forty-five lost their lives. They are remembered on a plaque placed in front of the armory after the War.

Between the wars the National Guard again fell on lean times. In a psychological reaction to the failure of the Versailles Treaty, Americans became more than usually anti-military, and funds were short, especially during the Great Depression. The regular army was pared to the bone, and National Guard funding fell in like measure. During these years the Maryland National Guard trained at Camp Ritchie, named for Maryland Governor Albert C. Ritchie. In 1939 as the European War began, the National Guard consisted of around 200,000 men. Both these men and the miniscule regular army were armed with the five shot 1903 Springfield rifle. Still, the Guard was in better condition than it had been in 1917.

Company D was called to federal service again on February 3, 1941. The troops were quartered in the armory for two weeks before being sent to Fort Meade for further training. Bel Air's General Reckord was in charge of training with broomsticks and stove pipes in place of rifles and mortars. The unit took part in the giant maneuvers in North and South Carolina in the latter part of the year, and were passing through Virginia in convoy back to Fort Meade on December 7 when word came of the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. Company D was sent immediately to Philadelphia to guard

railroad lines and utilities.

When first called to active duty the 29th Division was still a "square" division of two infantry brigades of two regiments each. In March, 1942, the division was "triangularized". The brigade structure disappeared and the division obtained the organization it would carry throughout World War II -- three infantry regiments, the 176th, the 116th and the 115th with support units such as artillery, engineers, medics, and military police. Company D was in the First Battalion, 115th Infantry Regiment. (The 115th included the Maryland Troops. The 116th was from Virginia.) It was still a heavy weapons unit armed with machine guns and mortars. The history of the First Battalion is not difficult to trace. Company D is harder to follow. The point of the triangular division was that each level had three maneuver units supplemented by support units. The maneuver units of the First Battalion were Companies A, B, and C. Each company received heavy weapons support from platoons of Company D, so that Company D did not operate as a unit.

The 29th Division arrived in the European Theater of Operations on October 11, 1942, when it sailed into the Firth of Clyde, Scotland, aboard the Queen Mary and the Queen Elizabeth. From that time until the men hit Omaha Beach on June 6, 1944, as part of the D-Day invasion, they were in training at various locations in Great Britain. In October 1942 the divisional commander was Major General Leonard T. Gerow. He was replaced on July 22, 1943, by Major General Charles H. Gerhardt, the man who would command the division throughout the rest of the war. The commander of the 115th Regiment was Colonel Eugene N. Slappey.

Omaha Beach was a crescent-shaped stretch of 7,000 yards of sandy beach flanked at each end by cliffs, lying some ten miles east of the Cherbourg Peninsula in Normandy. In the years before the war it had been one of the less pretentious of the French beaches, made famous only by the French Impressionist painters who visited it often and loved to paint its shifting light. By 1944 the sleepy beach had become a section of the great Atlantic Wall of Adolf Hitler's Fortress Europe. Marshal Erwin Rommel had seen to it that the beach between high and low water was defended by a series of obstacles designed to prevent an amphibious landing, and in the face of the bluffs and the cliffs were observation posts and machine guns in concrete pillboxes. There were two natural beach exits, roads leading to Vierville and les Moulins, and the heaviest beach defenses were clustered there. These areas were the 29th Division's portion of the beach, and the fighting for them was destined to be bloody. Of all of the D-Day beaches Omaha was to be the most difficult on which to establish a beachhead, and there the casualties were to be the heaviest.

The D-Day invasion force at Omaha Beach on H-Hour was to include 34,143 men and 3,306 vehicles, among them portions of the 29th Division, including the 116th and the first battalion of the 115th. The rest of the Division was to be committed later the first day. As a result of faulty navigation, a heavy running tide, and inadequate preparatory bombing, the landings on Omaha were shifted to the west, leaving the men in unfamiliar sectors with missions they could not accomplish. Particularly hampered were the engineers whose duty it was to demolish the underwater obstacles. The result was that the troops of the first wave, the 116th, piled up on the beach, dead and dying, with the survivors crouching in the pitiful shelter of the seawall. Around 10:00 A.M. Colonel Slappey landed the 115th somewhat east of his previously designated landing area. By nightfall the first battalion (and Bel Air's Company D) had attained lodgment around 2,000 yards from the beach, just south of the town of St. Laurent. This was the one of the two deepest penetrations of the day. The 29th Division had taken more

casualties that day than any other. Most of them were in the 116th by virtue of its being in the first assault wave, but the 115th had taken its share, too.

The hedgerow country of Normandy presented enormous obstacles to penetration, providing as it did shelter for defending troops. The beach-heads were steadily expanded, but the real break-out did not occur until the fall of St. Lo, July 17-18. It was the First Battalion of the 115th, including Company D, that captured the town after it had held out for more than a month. The division continued the pursuit through Normandy until mid-August. On August 22 the division was detached from V Corps, attached to VIII Corps and sent west to Finisterre to aid in the reduction of Brest and its submarine pens. This was accomplished on September 18.

After a short rest, the 29th was transferred over 650 miles to the Netherlands by motor and train, the railroad portion taken in old 40 and 8 boxcars (forty men or eight mules). The men of the division found themselves a little farther east on the Meuse River from where their fathers had served in World War I. They were now assaulting the West-wall of Hitler's fortifications, by the last of September inside Germany itself (Paris had fallen on August 25th). By November the division was held up before Julich on the Roer River. Upstream from the town, seven massive dams sat in the Hurtgen Forest. These dams controlled the whole river valley, and they had to be captured or destroyed before an advance could take place. By this time the division was attached to Simpson's Ninth Army. South of the 29th division's sector, terrific fighting took place in the Hurtgen Forest. During that battle and the December Battle of the Bulge, the 29th remained along the Roer. Julich fell on February 24, 1945. The division crossed the Rhine on March 23 and by April 25 it had reached the Elbe River where it shook hands with elements of the victorious Russian Army. The war in Europe was nearly over and the 29th had been in it all the way. In May the division was given the mission of occupying Bremen and Bremerhaven where it remained until December 24, when it took ship for home. By January 17 the division had been processed at Camp Kilmer, New Jersey, and the men went home. Some 3,000 of them never made it. Total division casualties were 28,776, of which 3,720 were killed. Total casualties for the 115th were 5,948, of which 1,047 were killed. The casualties represent 204.2 % of strength for 242 days of combat. The entire division received the Croix de Guerre with palm; the First Battalion of the 115th (and Company D) received the Croix de Guerre with Silver Star for defense against the German counterattack near the Bois de Bretel, Normandy, July 11, 1944. Individual awards for the division are impressive:

DSC	40
Legion of Merit	11
Silver Star	856
Soldiers Medal	25
Bronze Star	5,954
Air Medal	176

The 29th Infantry Division was not called up for the Korean War. The division was deactivated in a reorganization of the National Guard and some elements of it including the 115th, were transferred to the 28th Division. In the mid-1960's the mission of Bel Air's Company D changed.

No longer an infantry heavy weapons company, it became a helicopter unit. Its current designation is Company D (Attack Helicopter), 150th Aviation Battalion, 50th Armored Division. The division is based in New Jersey.

The Bel Air Armory has a long history as a local community gathering place. The town high schools have long held plays and seasonal dances in the auditorium and graduations were held there until the Bel Air High School built its own auditorium. The city's professional Ramsey Street players perform at the Armory and the annual town minstrel show is held there. In addition the Armory has housed local community services on long-term bases over the years, such as the Red Cross and the Harford County Library.

RECOMMENDATION: Continue use as a Maryland National Guard Armory with selected community activities.

#9 Bibliography

- Eleanor Bruchey, "The Industrialization of Maryland 1860 - 1914",  
in Richard Walsh and William Lloyd Fox (eds.), Maryland, a  
History, 1632-1974. Baltimore, 1974.
- Graham A. Cosmas, An Army for Empire: The United States Army in  
the Spanish - American War. Columbia, Mo., 1971.
- Col. Vincent J. Esposito (ed.), The West Point Atlas of American  
Wars, Vol. II. New York, 1959.
- Joseph H. Ewing, 29 Let's Go! Washington, 1948.
- Order of Battle of the United States Army, World War II,  
European Theater of Operations, Paris, France, N.D.
- Laurence Stallings, The Doughboys: The Story of the AEF,  
1917-1918. New York, 1963.
- Russell F. Weigley, History of the United States Army.  
London, 1968.
- C. Milton Wright, Our Harford Heritage. Baltimore, 1967.
- Newspapers: The Aegis, The Harford Democrat, The York, Pa.,  
Dispatch.
- Interview with J. Glasgow Archer, 12 February 1979.
- Land Records, Harford County, Liber 106, folio 213.
- Vertical files, Harford County Library, Bel Air.
- (Belair) Aegis, Centennial edition, August 1, 1974.

HA-1429  
Belair Armory  
Harford County  
Geographical Data

Continuation Sheet #8

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

In the Town of Bel Air in said Harford County:

BEGINNING for the same at a point in the Northeasterly side of Main Street at the distance of forty-one feet measured along the said Northeasterly side of said Main Street in a Southeasterly direction, from the corner or angle formed by intersection of the Northeasterly side of said Street with the Southeasterly side of Howard Street, said point of beginning being also at a stone set at the end of the third or South forty-eight degrees forty-five minutes West one Hundred and seventy-two feet line of that tract of land conveyed by A.B. Whitaker and others to Francis H. Iglehart, by Deed dated January 8th, 1902, and recorded among the Land Records of Harford County aforesaid, in Liber WSF No. 104, folio 6, and running thence with the lines of said conveyance, reversely and magnetically to date, two courses, viz: (1) North forty-nine degrees thirty minutes East, one hundred and seventy-two feet to a stone, (2) North Thirty-three degrees twenty-five minutes West forty-one feet to a stone set in the Southeasterly side of said Howard Street, at the end of the first line of the lot conveyed to said Iglehart as aforesaid, and thence with and binding on the Southeasterly side of said Howard Street, North forty-nine degrees thirty minutes East twenty feet to a stone now set, thence leaving said Street and running for division across the Whitaker land two courses, viz: (1) South forty-three degrees forty minutes East one hundred and forty-one feet to a stone now set; (2) South forty-nine degrees thirty minutes West two hundred feet to a stone now set up on the Northeasterly side of said Main Street, and thence with and binding on the Northeasterly side of said Street, North forty-three degrees twenty minutes West one hundred feet to the beginning; containing forty-eight one hundredths acres of land, more or less.

John Bentz Hamme (1862 - 1954), of York, Pennsylvania, was the architect of the Harford Mutual Fire Insurance Company building at 18 Office Street and of the Bel Air Armory. He was born in 1862 in Manchester Township, the son of Alfred and Maria Bentz Hamme. He received his early education at the York County Academy and graduated from Cornell University in 1888. He began his architectural practice in Seattle, Washington, in partnership with John Parkinson in 1890. Returning to York in 1901, he entered into partnership with Edward Leber at 14 West Market Street. In 1912 the partnership was dissolved. A few years later his son, J. Alfred Hamme, joined him in his own firm. He had been a member of the American Institute of Architects since 1909.

Mr. Hamme designed a number of buildings in Seattle after the great fire there destroyed most of the town. After returning to York, he designed many buildings in Maryland and Pennsylvania, among them the Hood College Campus, the D. J. Baker Memorial Bell Tower, and the YMCA in Frederick, Maryland; Glatfelter Hall, the new chapel, and the Memorial Library at Gettysburg College and the chapel and library at Gettysburg Theological Seminary; the YMCA at Lewistown, Pennsylvania; William Penn Senior High School in York; St. Matthew's Lutheran Church and the Evangelical Church at Red Lion, and the Royal Fire Company House at York.

He also served in various civic capacities: Member of the Select Council of York, 1901-1904, Member of the City Planning Commission from its organization in 1909 to 1924, and Charter Member of the Royal Fire Company. During World War I he was project manager in the United States Housing Corporation and had control of important housing projects at Craddock, near Portsmouth, Virginia, the naval base at Norfolk, Virginia, at Morgan and Pomton Lakes, New Jersey, and at Arlington, Massachusetts. After the war Governor Gifford Pinchot appointed him to the Giant Power Commission.

Hamme was a Mason, a member of the Huguenot Society, the Sons of the American Revolution and of St. Matthew's Lutheran Church where he was a Sunday School Teacher and a member of the church council.

He was married to the former Minnie Kohler; they had one son, J. Alfred Hamme, like his father, an architect. J. Alfred Hamme was associated with his father in the Harford Mutual project in 1930; he was not mentioned in connection with the Bel Air Armory (1914). Probably he was too young.

Source for John B. Hamme  
Obituary, York, Pa., Despatch,  
October 19, 1954

CHAIN OF TITLE

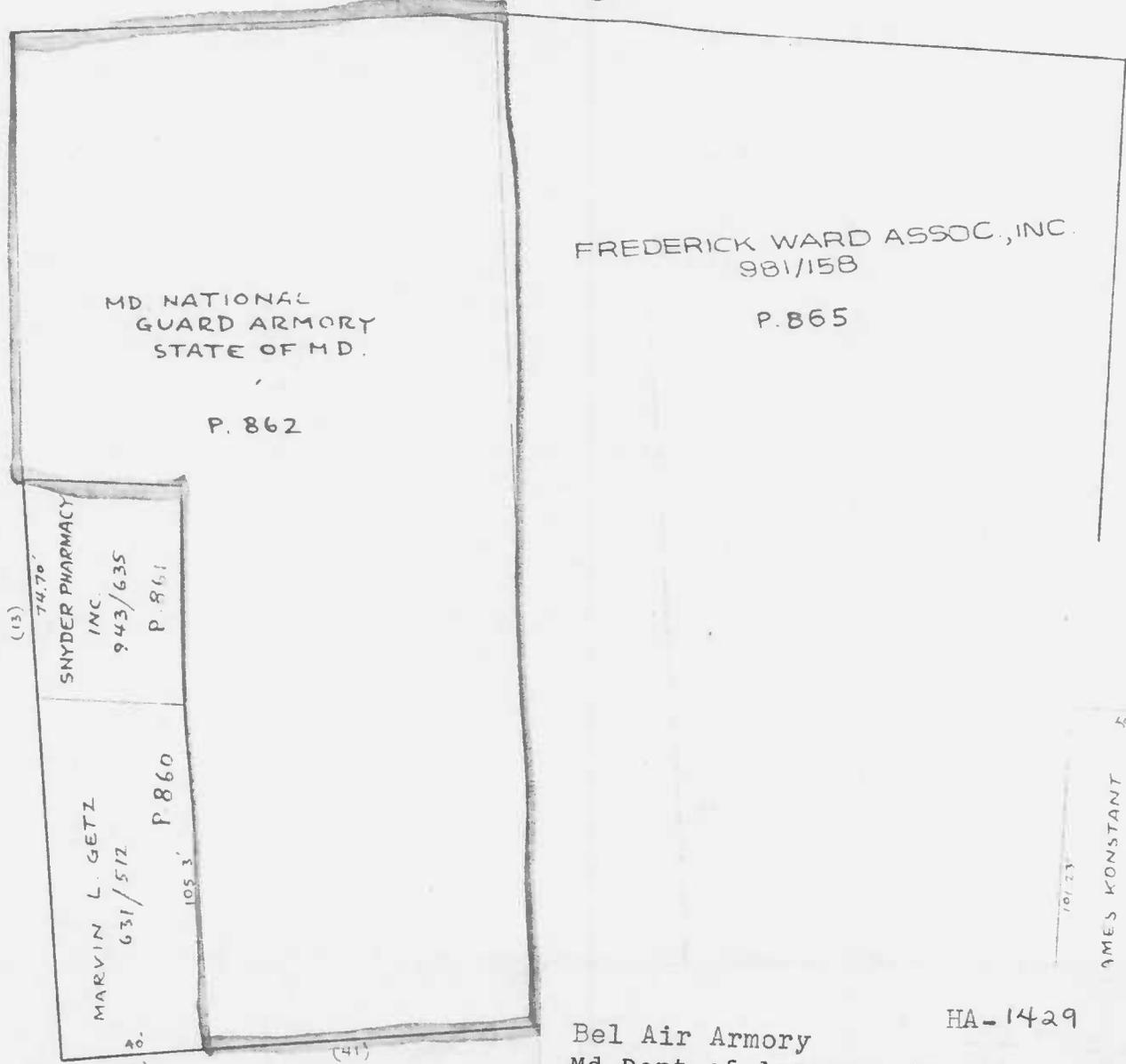
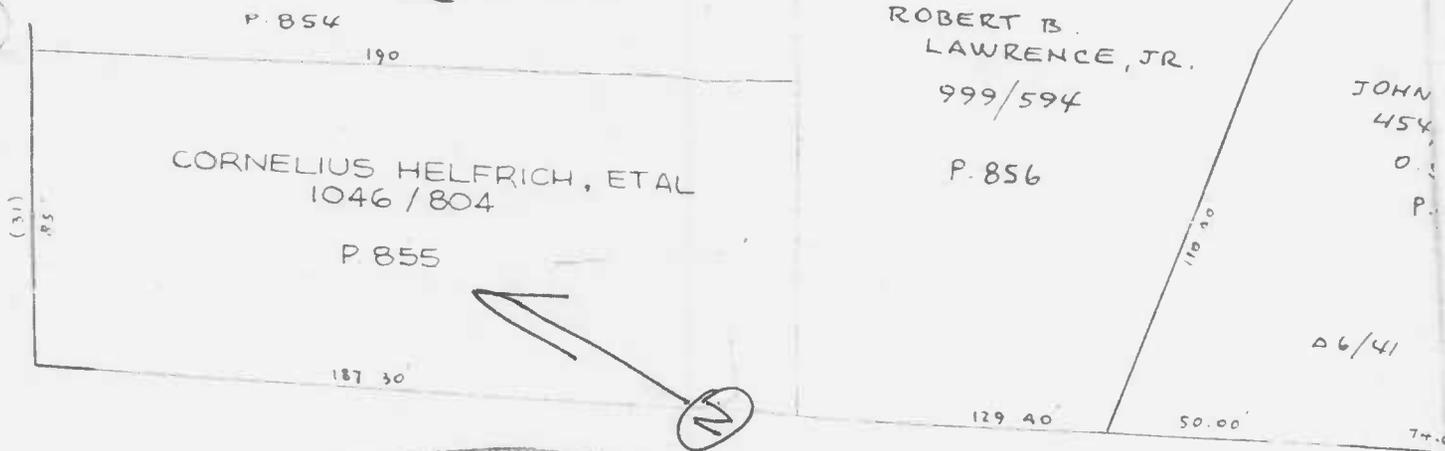
Bel Air Armory  
Bel Air, Maryland  
HA-1429

106/213  
3/13/1915  
Deed

From Aquilla B. Whitaker, widower, and Josephine M.  
Whitaker, widow, to the State of Maryland.

Consideration: \$2,600 in fee simple.

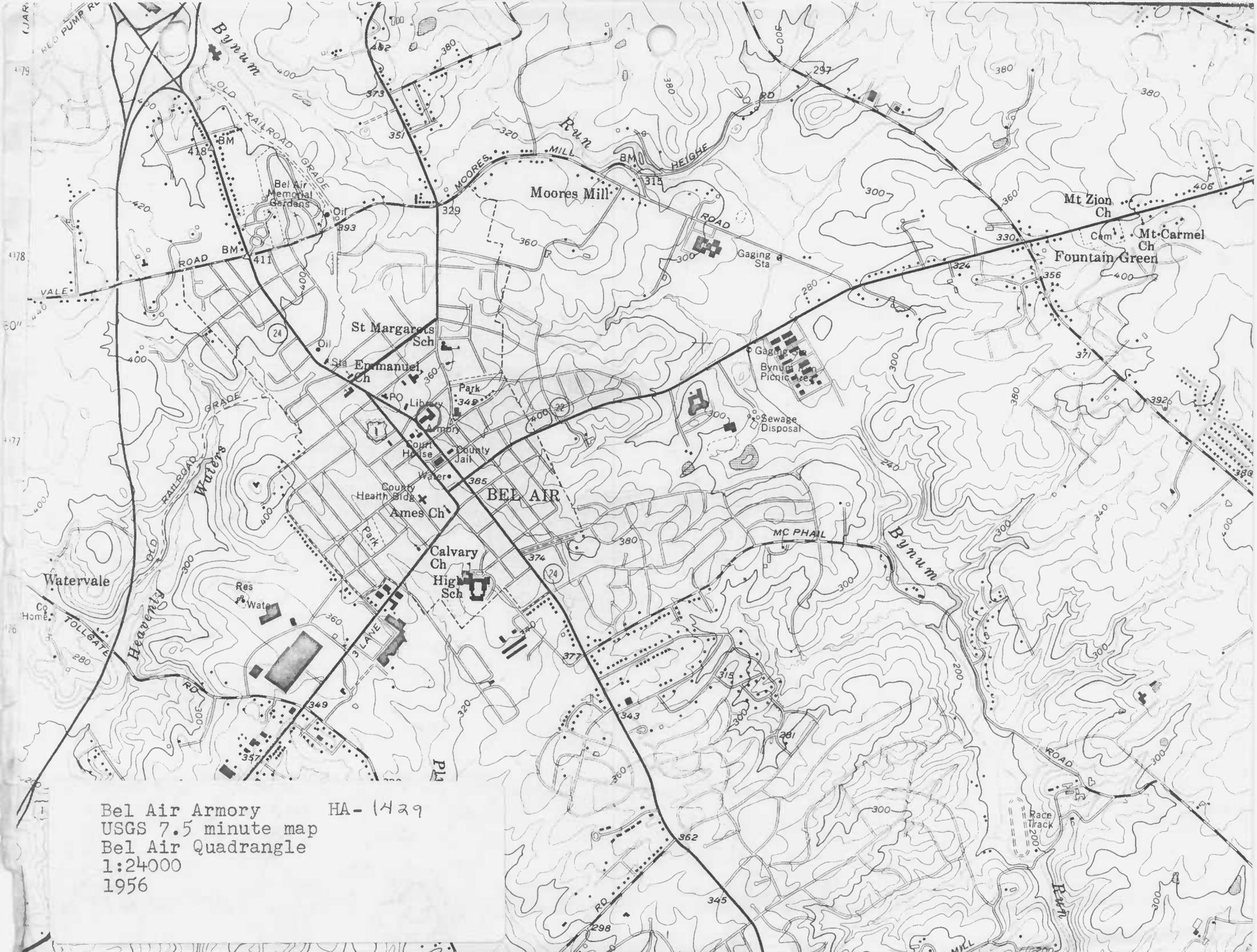
LEE



Bel Air Armory  
Md Dept of Assessments & Taxation  
Harford County Map No. 24  
Scale: 1" = 50'  
Revised 1 Aug 79

HA-1429

M



Bel Air Armory HA-1429  
USGS 7.5 minute map  
Bel Air Quadrangle  
1:24000  
1956

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST  
 21 STATE CIRCLE  
 SHAW HOUSE  
 ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

HISTORIC SITES SURVEY FIELD SHEET  
 Individual Structure Survey Form

SURVEY NUMBER:	HA-1429
NEGATIVE FILE NUMBER:	
UTM REFERENCES:	Zone/Easting/Northing
U.S.G.S. QUAD. MAP:	
PRESENT FORMAL NAME:	Bel Air Armory
ORIGINAL FORMAL NAME:	
PRESENT USE:	Armory
ORIGINAL USE:	"
ARCHITECT/ <del>ENGINEER</del> :	John B. Hamme
BUILDER/CONTRACTOR:	Laurence Whalen & Co.
PHYSICAL CONDITION OF STRUCTURE:	Excellent ( ) Good (X) Fair ( ) Poor: ( )
THEME:	Architecture
STYLE:	
DATE BUILT:	1914 - 15

COUNTY:	Harford
TOWN:	Bel Air
LOCATION:	Main St. Bel Air, Maryland 21014
COMMON NAME:	Bel Air Armory
FUNCTIONAL TYPE:	
OWNER:	Military Dept., State of Md.
ADDRESS:	Fifth Regiment Armory Bolton & Hoffman, Balto., Md.
ACCESSIBILITY TO PUBLIC:	Yes (X) No ( ) Restricted ( )
LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE:	Local ( ) State (X) National ( )

GENERAL DESCRIPTION:

Structural System

- Foundation: Stone(X) Brick( ) Concrete( ) Concrete Block( )
- Wall Structure
  - Wood Frame: Post and Beam( ) Balloon( )
  - Wood Bearing Masonry: Brick( ) Stone( ) Concrete( ) Concrete Block( )
  - Iron( ) D. Steel( ) E. Other:
- Wall Covering: Clapboard( ) Board and Batten( ) Wood Shingle( ) Shiplap( ) Novelty( ) Stucco( ) Sheet Metal( ) Aluminum( ) Asphalt Shingle( ) Brick Veneer( ) Stone Veneer( )  
Bonding Pattern: \_\_\_\_\_ Other: \_\_\_\_\_
- Roof Structure
  - Truss: Wood( ) Iron( ) Steel(X) Concrete( )
  - Other:
- Roof Covering: Slate( ) Wood Shingle( ) Asphalt Shingle(X) Sheet Metal( ) Built Up( ) Rolled( ) Tile( ) Other:
- Engineering Structure:
- Other:

Appendages: Porches( ) Towers(X) Cupolas( ) Dormers( ) Chimneys( ) Sheds( ) Ells( ) Wings ( ) Other:

Roof Style: Gable( ) Hip( ) Shed( ) Flat( ) Mansard( ) Gambrel( ) Jerkinhead( ) Saw Tooth( ) With Monitor( ) With Bellcast( ) With Parapet( ) With False Front( ) Other:

Number of Stories: 3 levels in front

Number of Bays: \_\_\_\_\_

Approximate Dimensions: \_\_\_\_\_

Entrance Location: Main St.

THREAT TO STRUCTURE:
No Threat(X) Zoning( ) Roads( )
Development( ) Deterioration( )
Alteration ( ) Other:

LOCAL ATTITUDES:
Positive( ) Negative( )
Mixed( ) Other:

ADDITIONAL ARCHITECTURAL OR STRUCTURAL DESCRIPTION:

Stage basketball and drill  
2nd floor skylight over stairwell  
3 levels in forward part  
Basement: kitchen, arms, lockers, boiler

RELATED STRUCTURES: (Describe)

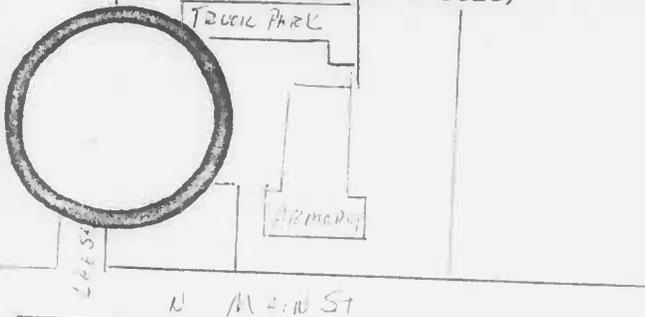
truck park around yard in back - garages for trucks

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE:

Infantry on World War I and II  
(Company D was the heavy weapons company.)  
Post Korean War: 220th Reconnaissance and then 224th Aviation  
Battalion  
Now D Company, 150th Aviation Battalion

REFERENCES:

MAP: (Indicate North In Circle)



SURROUNDING ENVIRONMENT:

Open Lane( ) Woodland( ) Scattered Buildings( )  
Moderately Built Up( ) Densely Built Up( )  
Residential( ) Commercial(X)  
Agricultural( ) Industrial( )  
Roadside Strip Development( )  
Other:

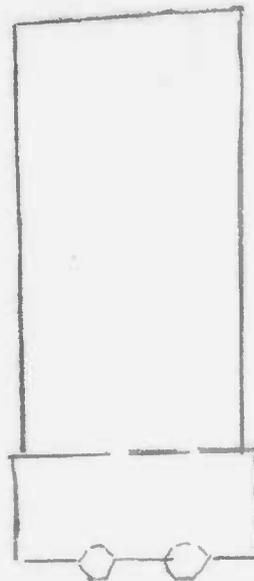
M. Larew

RECORDED BY:  
Town of Bel Air

ORGANIZATION:  
29 January 1979

DATE RECORDED:





TRACED BY

M. LAREW

SANBORN MAP 1962

BEL AIR ARMORY  
37 N. MAIN  
BEL AIR

HA-1429

SCALE 1" = 50'





Bel Air Armory

HA-1429

Harford County, Maryland

photo: Susanne Moore

neg loc: Md Hist Trust, Annapolis, Md

July 1980

West elevation

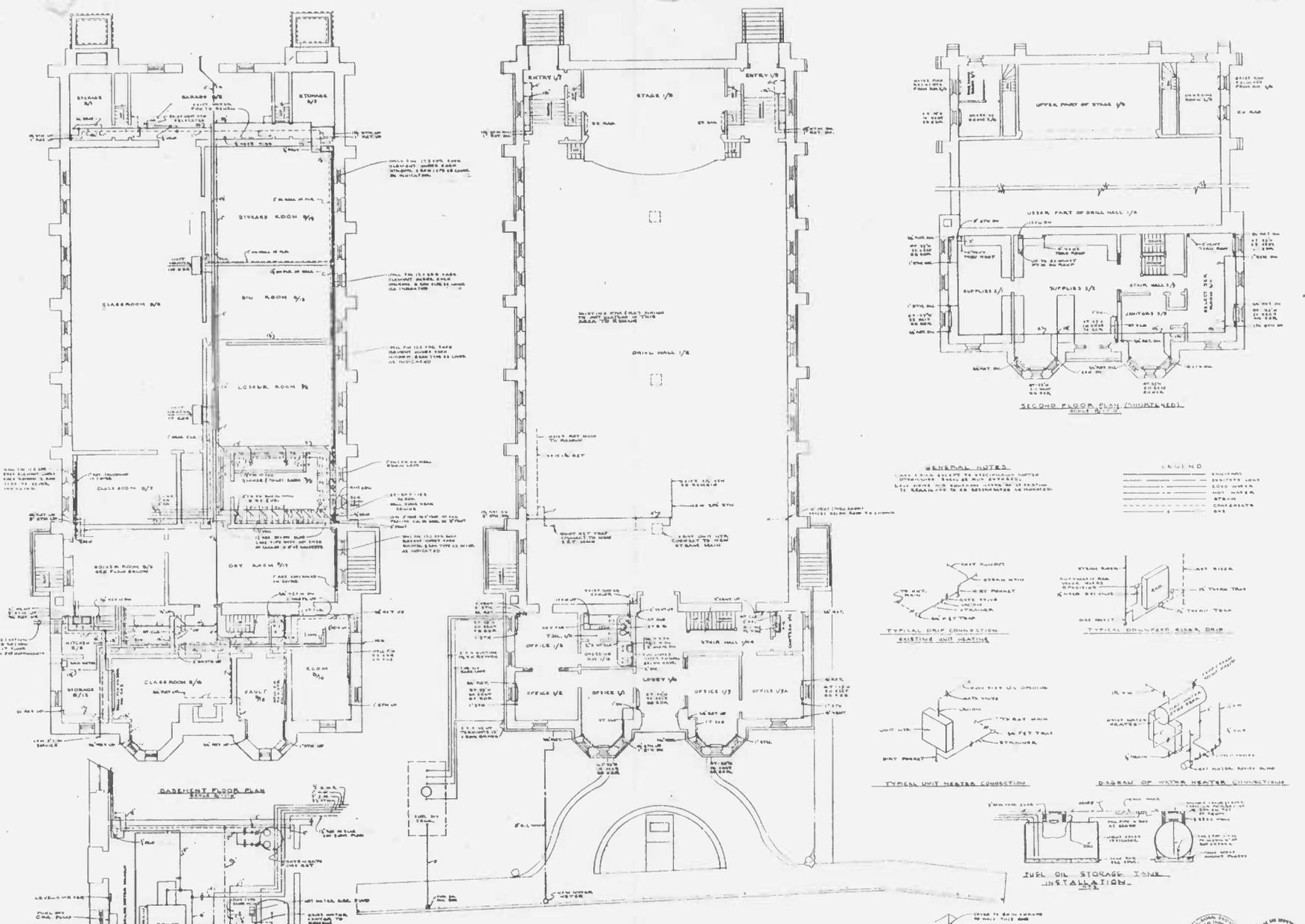
1/3



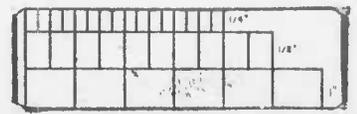
Bel Air Armory  
Harford County, Maryland  
photo: Susanne Moore  
neg loc: Md Hist Trust, Annapolis, Md  
July 1980  
Southwest corner  
3 /3



Bel Air Armory  
Harford County, Maryland  
photo: Susanne Moore  
neg loc: Md Hist Trust, Annapolis, Md  
July 1980  
East elevation  
2/3



APPROVED  
*[Signature]*  
 STATE OF MARYLAND  
 DEPARTMENT OF GENERAL SERVICES  
 DIVISION OF ARCHITECTURE  
 1000 PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE  
 ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21403  
 DATE: 10/1/53  
 PROJECT: BEL AIR ARMORY



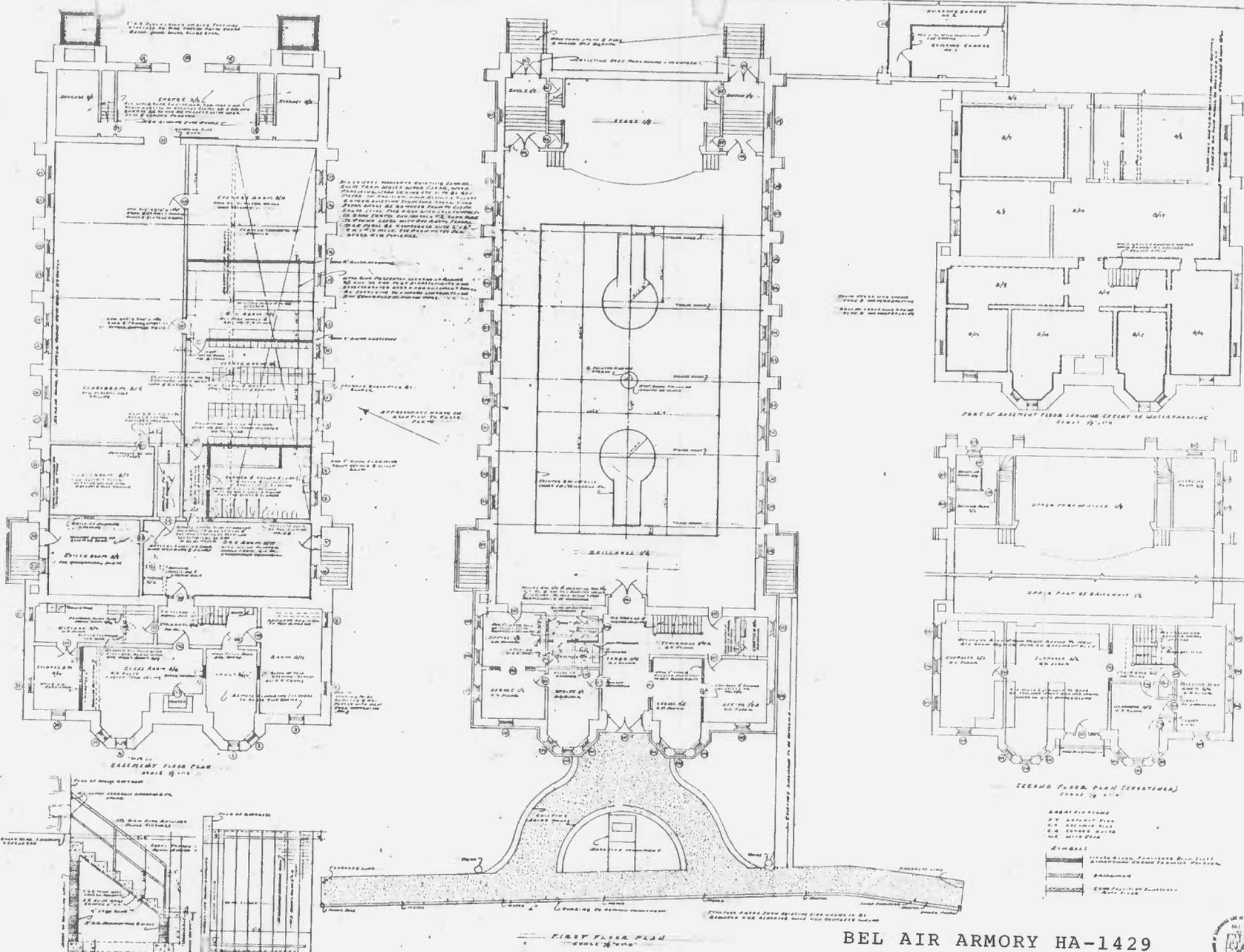
30X

BEL AIR ARMORY HA-1429

Reduction from original on file at Maryland Dept of General Services

ALEX. SHAW & KENDALL DUFF  
 ASSOCIATED ARCHITECTS  
 BEL AIR, MARYLAND  
 EXPANSION & REHABILITATION OF  
 THE BEL AIR ARMORY  
 BEL AIR, MARYLAND PROJECT # 15111  
 OCT. 1, 1953  
 SHEET NO. 57 OF 560 M.Z.

FILE NO. 18 M 48

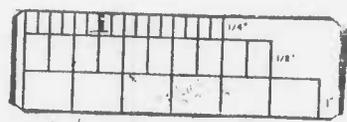


BEL AIR ARMORY HA-1429  
 Reduction from original on file  
 at Md Dept of General Services



ALEX. SHAW & KENDALL DUFF			
ASSOCIATED ARCHITECTS			
300 N. CALVERT STREET			
BALTIMORE, MARYLAND			
DRAWN BY: [Signature]			
CHECKED BY: [Signature]			
DATE: 1/24/49			
SCALE: 1/8" = 1'-0"			
SHEET NO. 544			
OF 1			

APPROVED  
 [Signature]  
 STATE OF MARYLAND  
 DEPARTMENT OF GENERAL SERVICES  
 [Signature]



30X



HA-1429



HA-1429



HA-1429



HA-1429



HA - 1429



HA - 1429



BEL AIR ARMO. Ry - N. MAIN ST., BEL AIR  
E + N ELEVATION S.

M. L. ARLOW, 1979

HA-1429



BEL AIR ARMORY - N. MAIN ST., BEL AIR  
W. ELEVATION OF GARAGES IN TRUSS PART  
M. LARSEN, 1979  
HA - 129



HA - 1429

Bel Air Army N. Main Bel Air

e + n elev

M. Larew, 1978







MNO

BEL AIR ARCADE - N. MAIN ST., BEL AIR

W + PORTION OF S. ELEVATIONS

M. F. AREW, 1979

HA 1429



