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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED DEC 12 1978

DATE ENTERED APR 30 1979

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

FOR FEDERAL PROPERTIES

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS**1 NAME**

HISTORIC

United States Post Office and Court House, Medford, Oregon

AND/OR COMMON

Federal Building-U.S. Courthouse (6th and Holly Building)

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

310 West 6th Street

CITY, TOWN

Medford

__ NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

__ VICINITY OF

04

STATE

Oregon

CODE

41

COUNTY

Jackson

CODE

029

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

 DISTRICT BUILDING(S) STRUCTURE SITE OBJECT

OWNERSHIP

 PUBLIC PRIVATE BOTH

PUBLIC ACQUISITION

 IN PROCESS BEING CONSIDERED

STATUS

 OCCUPIED UNOCCUPIED WORK IN PROGRESS

ACCESSIBLE

 YES: RESTRICTED YES: UNRESTRICTED NO

PRESENT USE

 AGRICULTURE COMMERCIAL EDUCATIONAL GOVERNMENT INDUSTRIAL MILITARY MUSEUM PARK PRIVATE RESIDENCE RELIGIOUS SCIENTIFIC TRANSPORTATION OTHER:**4 AGENCY**

General Services Administration, Public Buildings Service

REGIONAL HEADQUARTERS: (If applicable)

Regional Headquarters Building

STREET & NUMBER

GSA Center, 10PG

CITY, TOWN

Auburn

__ VICINITY OF

STATE

Washington 98002

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE.

REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Jackson County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

Oakdale Avenue

CITY, TOWN

Medford

STATE

Oregon

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

Inventory of Historic Places, GSA Region 10

DATE

July 1972

 FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCALDEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

Regional Headquarters Building, GSA Center, 10PG

CITY, TOWN

Auburn

STATE

Washington

7 DESCRIPTION

| CONDITION | | CHECK ONE | CHECK ONE |
|------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT | <input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED | <input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD | <input type="checkbox"/> RUINS | <input checked="" 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 1914 site plan indicates the presence of several large oak trees that were subsequently removed. The new landscape plan provided for the planting of poplar, locust and fir trees at various locations around the site. Six maples were to be planted at the front of the building. Before-and-after photos taken sometime around 1920 show the building with the six maple trees at least twenty feet tall, then without them. (See photocopy of postcards.) No explanation is given for their removal.

A macadam driveway with hitching rails provided access from both Holly and 6th Streets. Areas of grass bordered the driveway and surrounded the building on three sides. Charles Cavanaugh of Medford won the original landscaping contract. The Superintendent of Construction, John H. Holmes, commended him for producing "a fine thick stand of grass from seed on all the grass areas around the building" in the final report. The driveway has been enlarged to provide parking space for fifteen cars and only a small planting strip remains separating the building from the sidewalks on the south (6th Street) and east (Holly Street) sides.

The building's main facade faces south toward 6th Street. It is divided horizontally by a granite grade course, a string course at the floor line of the first storey, another three feet above at window sill height, and a third at the floor line of the second storey. Brickwork between the second and third string courses creates the effect of banded rustication.

Seven bays divide the facade vertically. The five central bays protrude about one foot and contain three openings each. In the first storey these are recessed, multipaned, double-hung (ten over ten) sash windows. These have glazed arches over the lintel and wood panels beneath the sill. Over each arch is a centre pointed radiating voussoir. Originally the central three ground floor openings contained doors. In 1939 two of them were replaced by windows and only one central door remains. Also in 1939 the street-facing granite steps were replaced by double side steps to the east and west of the entrance. A wrought-iron balustrade borders the steps. The original wrought-iron and glass lamps remain wall mounted between the five central bays. The first storey windows in the two end bays are similar to the others, but with rectangular transoms over the windows instead of arches and without the wood panels below.

The plinths of two sets of double and four single brick pilasters rest on the third string course. The pilasters separate the bays of the second and third storeys. The seven French windows of the second storey are rectangular with ten lights in each half, four-light transoms overhead and wrought-iron protective grilles across the bottom third. The five center windows have brick surrounds with semicircular blind arches. The arches contain two sandstone bas-relief panels with a garlanded floral motif. The two windows in the end bays are similar, but with only flat radiating arches and brick keystones.

The third storey windows are double hung (eight over eight) with flat radiating arches over. The five center arches have terra cotta keystones. The terra cotta pilaster capitals are reminiscent of the Roman Doric order. The pilasters give the

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Statewide Inventory of Historic Sites and Buildings
1970 State
Department of Transportation
State Historic Preservation Office
Parks & Recreation Branch
525 Trade Street, S.E.
Salem, Oregon 97310

Survey of Federal Government Buildings in Oregon
1968 State
Department of Transportation
State Historic Preservation Office
Parks & Recreation Branch
525 Trade Street, S.E.
Salem, Oregon 97310

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illusion of supporting the entablature. Above the terra cotta architrave, on the brick frieze, were originally the words "U.S. Post Office and Court House" inscribed in bronze. These were changed in 1966 to read "United States Court House." The title "Federal Building" in similar letters was placed above the entrance on the first storey. Above the frieze is a denticulated cornice and a stone parapet which shields the flat composition roof. The parapet was originally broken by balustrades, but these have been capped.

Early photos of the main facade show canvas awnings over all of the second and third storey windows.

The east and west facades are almost identical to each other. They have seven bays of windows and details like those of the main facade. The four front bays are original; the other three were added in 1939. The newer section is indistinguishable from the older but is recessed about two feet. On the west facade a recessed mailing platform has been enclosed by aluminum framed windows and panels of buff colored enameled metal.

The rear facade is similar to the east and west facades. It has seven window bays, a protruding brick chimney that extends the full height of the building and a metal fire escape with doors opening onto it from the second and third floors. The first storey windows in the sixth and seventh bays have been closed with louvres and bricks.

The ground floor of the building originally held the postal service lobby, postal workroom, the postmaster's office and a money order, registry and postal saving office.

The lobby had a terrazzo floor with grey marble borders and base. The wainscot, postal service screen, vestibule, desks and trim were stained Oregon pine. The cornice and walls were of plaster, as was the ceiling which was furred to 14 feet 1 inch. Other first floor areas had wood floors and trim and plaster walls. The postal inspection lookout (an enclosed wood and plaster catwalk with louvered openings) over the workroom and other areas used by postal employees allowed constant unseen surveillance of operations. Marble stairs with wrought iron railings led up from the first floor. Metal stairs led down to the basement "swing room," toilets, janitor's area and storage spaces.

In 1939 the terrazzo and marble were removed from the lobby and replaced by new terrazzo and marble. At the same time, the workroom was extended to more than double its original size and provided with a large skylight. In 1965 the Postal Service moved to a new location and the first floor and basement were extensively remodeled. The basement and first floor were converted to office space. The wood

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screen, desks and vestibule were removed from the lobby. Vinyl asbestos tile, suspended acoustical tile ceilings and fluorescent lights were installed throughout. Only the marble steps behind the elevator at the west end of the lobby remain as they were.

On the east, west, and south sides of the second floor courtroom were offices of the U.S. Marshal, the clerk of the court and the district attorney, judge's chambers, a library, and assorted storage and toilet facilities. The courtroom had 17 foot 6 inch ceilings and extended into the third floor. It had a felt sound deadening material between the chair rail and picture moulding with plaster above and below. The doors were covered with red imitation leather and secured with leather-headed tacks. The floors on the second floor were stained Oregon pine as was the wood trim. Wood doors had brass hardware, chipped glass windows and glazed transoms. The corridors had marble base and trim and terrazzo floors. Walls were of plaster. The third floor interior was similar. It housed the grand jury, the petit jury and the Board of Investigation, and other unassigned office space, storage and toilet facilities.

In the 1939 extension of the entire building a light well was created against the north wall of the courtroom to provide light for the Postal Service workroom below. Additional office space was arranged around the light well on both second and third floors. Details and finishes were similar to those of the earlier section of the building.

In the modernization of 1965 some changes were made in the second and third floor offices including the installation of suspended acoustical ceilings, vinyl asbestos tile flooring and fluorescent lights throughout. The felt on the walls of the courtroom was replaced by gypsum board and the judge's stand and other furnishings were replaced by newer designs. Two round windows opening from the courtroom into the light well were hidden by the suspended ceiling as were the arched fanlights over the tall courtroom windows. (The round windows had been located over rectangular windows in the end bays of the courtroom before the 1939 extension.)

Although the courtroom has been extensively altered, the corridors and offices of the second and third floors retain much of their original character and appearance. The corridors are virtually unchanged except for the suspended ceiling on the second floor and a line of fluorescent lights. Some of the rooms retain their original oak furniture. The interior, as well as the exterior, has been maintained well over the years.

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 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS | <input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY | <input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT | <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY) |
| | | <input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION | | |

SPECIFIC DATES Designed 1914
 Built 1915-1916

BUILDER/ARCHITECT Office of the Supervising Architect (Oscar Wenderoth)

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

In 1908 the Medford Daily Tribune (subtitled "A Live Paper in a Live Town") described Medford's first post office:

"Made out of an old soap box, it can be seen in the windows of Hussey's cash store. . .It was constructed in 1883 by J. S. Howard, 'the Father of Medford,' at that time postmaster, mayor, express agent, store keeper and general poh-bah of the crossroads."¹

Miss Jane Snedikor's "History of Medford," written in 1933, claims that a cigar box was actually the community's first post office, the soap box (22 inches high, 9 inches deep, and divided into nine compartments) being a later innovation. The early post office was eventually modernized and expanded to include a dry goods box and a 30 compartment case built of 1 inch by 6 inch lumber.²

Medford soon outgrew these ad hoc facilities. The Oregon and California railroad passed through in the 1880's and by 1890 the town's population had grown to 1,791.

In 1908, when the town was only 25 years old, a 35 foot by 100 foot storeroom served as cramped workspace for the half-dozen postal employees. The Daily Tribune complained that the 500 lock boxes did not meet the public demand and added,

"Only the masterly inactivity of the city council in not enforcing street signs and house numbering prevents as many letters being brought to each house in the city daily as were brought to Medford of 1883!"³

Monthly postal receipts had grown to over \$1,000.00. The growth-oriented Tribune described the situation enthusiastically.

"The few stragglers coming for mail have been multiplied into thousands and a long line of expectants stand in wait anxiously after every train. The \$2.00 or \$3.00 monthly receipts have now been rolled into over \$1,000.00 a month. . .Twenty-five years have witnessed the silent farm made into a bustling city; have seen the chaparral give way to brick blocks and paved streets; the one county store has been supplanted by scores of modern emporiums of commerce equal to those of a large city; the youngest town of Southern Oregon has blossomed into a lusty metropolis. . .Will the growth of Medford continue? Yes, if the spirit of

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

See continuation sheet number 6.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 125' X 140'

UTM REFERENCES

| | | | | | | | | | |
|---|------------|--------------|------------|----------------|------------|---|------|---------|----------|
| A | <u>1,0</u> | <u>5,1,0</u> | <u>325</u> | <u>4,6,8,5</u> | <u>225</u> | B | | | |
| | ZONE | EASTING | NORTHING | | | | ZONE | EASTING | NORTHING |
| C | | | | | | D | | | |

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION (See accompanying survey plat map.)

Beginning at the Southeasterly corner of Lot 1, Blk. 66, of the town (city) of Medford, and running thence

- South 54 degrees 30' West, 140 feet; thence
- North 35 degrees 30' West, 125 feet, thence
- North 54 degrees 30' East, 140 feet; thence
- South 35 degrees 30' East, 125 feet to the place of beginning.

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

| STATE | CODE | COUNTY | CODE |
|-------|------|--------|------|
| None | | | |
| STATE | CODE | COUNTY | CODE |

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Kristine Bak Operational Planning Staff

ORGANIZATION

DATE

General Services Administration, PBS

STREET & NUMBER

TELEPHONE

Regional Headquarters Building, GSA Center, 10PG

(206) 833-6500

CITY OR TOWN

STATE

Auburn

Washington 98002

12 CERTIFICATION OF NOMINATION

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

YES X

NO

NONE

Michael A. Mackay
STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

In compliance with Executive Order 11593, I hereby nominate this property to the National Register, certifying that the State Historic Preservation Officer has been allowed 90 days in which to present the nomination to the State Review Board and to evaluate its significance. The evaluated level of significance is None National State Local.

FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE

Michael A. Mackay 12-6-78

TITLE Historic Preservation Officer, GSA, Region 10

DATE

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I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

Charles G. Johnson
DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

DATE

4-30-79

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

ATTEST: *W. Ray Tuce*
for KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

4/30/79

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progress rules the future--nothing can stop her. And progress means a united effort for the upbuilding of the city and the development of resources--not the wasting of energy in factional fights, or in discord--but a long pull, and a strong pull, and a pull altogether."⁴

In 1910 postal receipts had increased to over \$2,000.00 monthly, "due to the heavy influx of people of substance and extension of business in all commercial life."⁵ An October 2, 1910 newspaper article reported:

"No better criterion of a city's growth can be named than its postal receipts."⁶

A July 1910 headline read: "Many Offer Lot for New Post Office."⁷ Congress had allocated \$110,000 for a new U.S. Post Office and Court House for Medford. The site was to be at least 140 feet by 140 feet and within 80 rods of a railroad depot. A number of sites were offered by Medford landowners. That of Bert and May Anderson and W. C. and Flossie Green at the corner of Holly Street and West 6th Street was chosen. A payment of \$1.00 formalized the property donation on March 13, 1911.

Treasury Department Supervising Architect Oscar Wenderoth signed the building drawings dated 1914 and 1915. (Originally from Philadelphia, Mr. Wenderoth had worked as a draftsman for 15 years before being appointed to the supervisory position in 1912. He assisted in the planning of many government buildings, mainly post offices, before his retirement due to failing sight in 1929.)

Construction began in 1915 and lasted into 1916. An identical ~~Second Renaissance Revival style~~ building was under construction in Pendleton, Oregon, at the same time.

A major extension of the Medford building was begun in 1939 and completed in 1940 at a cost of \$230,000. It increased the depth of the 90 foot by 58 foot building by 38 feet to the rear.

Treasury Department Supervising Architect at the time of the extension was Louis A. Simon. Superintendent of Architecture was W. G. Noll. The contractor for the project was L. H. Hoffman of Portland, and James L. Murphy was construction engineer. The extension was designed to match, as much as possible, the existing building.

In 1916 the new Federal Building stood as a symbol of community achievement for the citizens of Medford. It remains a monument of the optimistic pre-war period. It provides a visual reminder of the history of the city and an illustration of past aesthetic ideals and concepts of public image making.

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ADDENDUM

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The Medford building is undeniably of a hybrid style, as was typical of government architecture of the period. It has elements of the Georgian Revival, particularly in its window treatment and red brick exterior finish. Its massing, rusticated first storey, high basement, and original balustraded parapet relate to the Second Renaissance Revival. (Similar features may be found in the 1892-95 Portland, Oregon, City Hall which is a more pure expression of the Second Renaissance Revival style.) As with many older federal buildings in the Western regions, the building's architectural importance derives at least as much from its historical and physical context as from its absolute, inherent qualities. Medford is approaching its 100th year of existence and acknowledging the value of its urban area as an expression of the city's character as it has evolved over the years. The Federal Building has been a participant in two-thirds of that evolution.

Medford's official comprehensive plan for urban development includes an emphasis on urban center growth to counteract "urban sprawl."

"The city should develop and implement programs aimed at preservation and upgrading of the city core . . . and encouraging renovation of existing buildings."⁸

Several older buildings within a few blocks of the Federal Building have already been upgraded and carefully renovated for continued use. The handsome and sturdy Federal Building fits well in this plan and adds quality and dignity to the area.

- 1 "Medford's First Post Office," Medford Daily Tribune, July 1910, Southern Oregon Historical Society archives, Jacksonville Museum, Jacksonville, Oregon.
- 2 Miss Jane Snedcor, "History of Medford," circa 1933, Soughern Oregon Historical Society archives.
- 3 "Medford's First Post Office."
- 4 Ibid.
- 5 "Medford's Postal Receipts Increase 53%," Medford Daily Tribune, October 4, 1910, Southern Oregon Historical Society archives.
- 6 "Gain of 96% Made," Medford Daily Tribune, October 2, 1910, Southern Oregon Historical Society archives.
- 7 "Many Offer Lot for New Post Office," Medford Daily Tribune, July 1910, Southern Oregon Historical Society archives.
- 8 "Federal Space Situation Report," prepared by the Operational Planning Staff, Public Buildings Service, General Services Administration, Region 10, November 1977.

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ARTICLES AND ABSTRACTS:

"Gain of 96% Made," Medford Daily Tribune, October 2, 1910, Southern Oregon Historical Society archives.

Hamilton, Eva, Untitled article on the history of the Postal Service in Oregon, Southern Oregon Historical Society archives, Jacksonville Museum, Jacksonville, Oregon.

"Many Offer Lot for New Post Office," Medford Daily Tribune, July 1910, Southern Oregon Historical Society archives.

"Medford's First Post Office," Medford Daily Tribune, circa 1908, Southern Oregon Historical Society archives.

"Medford Postal Receipts Increase 53%," Medford Daily Tribune, October 4, 1910, Southern Oregon Historical Society archives.

Snedicor, Miss Jane, "History of Medford," circa 1933, Southern Oregon Historical Society archives.

BOOKS:

Withey, Henry F., and Elsie Rathburn Withey, Biographical Dictionary of Architects (Deceased), Los Angeles: Hennessey & Ingolls, 1970.

INTERVIEWS:

GSA Maintenance crew, Medford Federal Building-U.S. Courthouse, June 12-13, 1978.

MISCELLANEOUS INFORMATION SOURCES, GSA FILES:

Architectural Drawings, U.S. Post Office and Courthouse, Medford, Oregon, 1914.
Construction Specifications for U.S. Post Office and Court House, Medford, Oregon, 1914.

"Federal Space Situation Report," prepared by the Operational Planning Staff, Public Buildings Service, GSA, Region 10, November 1977.

Furniture and Equipment Lists and Illustrations for the U.S. Post Office and Court House, Medford, Oregon, 1915.

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Inspection and Progress Photographs, U.S. Post Office and Courthouse, Medford, Oregon, 1915-1917, 1939-1940.

"Inventory Form of Historic Places," prepared by the Operational Planning Staff, Public Buildings Service, GSA, July 1972.

Progress and Financial Records of the Medford Post Office and Court House addition, 1939-1940.

Specifications for landscaping, U.S. Post Office and Court House, Medford, Oregon, 1917.

STATE SURVEYS:

Survey of Federal Government Buildings in Oregon, Department of Transportation, State Historic Preservation Office, Parks & Recreation Branch, Salem, Oregon, 1968.

SE 1/4 NE 1/4 SEC. 25 T. 37 S. R. 2 W. W.M.

1" = 100'
37 2W 25AA

