

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR FEDERAL PROPERTIES

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
RECEIVED	OCT 28 1983
DATE ENTERED	

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

1 NAME

HISTORIC

United States Post Office, Courthouse and Custom House

AND/OR COMMON

United States Post Office

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

West 904 Riverside Avenue

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Spokane

VICINITY OF NA

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

05

STATE

Washington

CODE

2100

COUNTY

Spokane

CODE

063

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

- DISTRICT
- BUILDING(S)
- STRUCTURE
- SITE
- OBJECT

OWNERSHIP

- PUBLIC
- PRIVATE
- BOTH
- PUBLIC ACQUISITION**
- IN PROCESS NA
- BEING CONSIDERED NA

STATUS

- OCCUPIED
- UNOCCUPIED
- WORK IN PROGRESS
- ACCESSIBLE**
- YES: RESTRICTED
- YES: UNRESTRICTED
- NO

PRESENT USE

- AGRICULTURE
- MUSEUM
- COMMERCIAL
- PARK
- EDUCATIONAL
- PRIVATE RESIDENCE
- ENTERTAINMENT
- RELIGIOUS
- GOVERNMENT
- SCIENTIFIC
- INDUSTRIAL
- TRANSPORTATION
- MILITARY
- OTHER:

4 AGENCY

REGIONAL HEADQUARTERS: (If applicable)

General Services Administration

STREET & NUMBER

15th & "C" Streets, SW.

CITY, TOWN

Auburn

VICINITY OF NA

STATE

Washington

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Spokane County Courthouse, Assessor's Office

STREET & NUMBER

West 1116 Broadway

CITY, TOWN

Spokane

STATE

Washington

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE
City of Spokane's Landmarks Survey

DATE
1979

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

City-County Office of Historic Preservation

CITY, TOWN

Spokane

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

GENERAL

The Spokane Post Office, Courthouse and Custom House was designed in the Office of the Supervising Architect of the Treasury Department, James Knox Taylor,¹ in 1906-1907. Design ideals of Beaux Arts Classicism and of the Second Renaissance Revival² prevailed in Taylor's office at the time. Influences of both styles are manifest in the building.

A central projection of the building's south (front) facade is broken into advancing and receding planes providing visual diversity of light and shadow. Strictly symmetrical massing and monumental coupled columns lend the building a sense of formal dignity.

Embellished consoles beneath the second story belt course and beneath the lintels of the second story aedicular window enframingent, balustrades above the belt course and on the parapet, and the denticulated cornice add delicacy and "human scale" to the otherwise massive building.

The building's horizontal divisions are emphasized by the treatment of the stone facing: The raised basement is of smooth grey granite, the ground story is of smooth limestone with banded rustication, and the second and third stories are of smooth Bedford limestone.

Arched fenestration in the ground story relieves the otherwise strict rectangularity of the building elevations.

Striking interior features include the public and postal lobby on the first floor, with its black and white marble and its ornamental plaster work, and the third floor courtroom with a 21'-11" domed ceiling.

ORIGINAL BUILDING

The original rectangular 178' x 109'-7" building occupied almost the entire lot except for a driveway on the north (rear), and wrapped around a 63' x 48' light well. A tin roof hipped up toward the lightwell. Walls were of brick with stone facing and terra cotta interior partitions.

ORIGINAL SITE

The original building site covered 22,000 square feet (200' north/south; 110' east/west), bounded by Lincoln Street on the east and Riverside Avenue on the south.

ORIGINAL FOUNDATION

Column footings extend 6' below the basement floor line and range from a width of 4'-6" to 7'-3".

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

ITEM NUMBER 7

PAGE 2

ORIGINAL BUILDING EXTERIOR

South (Front) Elevation

The symmetrical south elevation included a central facade 73'-10" wide projecting 6' forward from the 108'-8" main body of the building. From ground level to roof top the building was about 71'-8" tall.

A flight of seven granite steps, 57' wide with a 4' landing projected 10'-6" from the central facade. Four granite cheekblocks 3' wide and 7' deep flanked three entrances opening onto the landing. Each cheekblock was surmounted by garlanded cast iron lamp posts with five opalescent globes each.

The projecting central facade contained three identical bays 18' on center apart. In the ground story of each bay was an arched doorway 6' wide and 9'-6 1/2" tall to the springline of the 3'-3" radius round arch. In the second story of each bay was a double sash-type window, each double hung, 4 over 4, half 2'-9" wide by 7' tall. Directly above each half was a set of two fixed lights 2'-9" wide by 2'-9" tall. In the third story of each bay was a single sash-type window, double hung, 4 over 4, 2'-8" wide by 5'-8 3/4" tall, flanked by two sash-type windows double hung, 2 over 2, 1'-10" wide by 5'-8 3/4" tall.

Six monumental Tuscan columns flanking the second and third story window bays, are paired on either side of the central bay.

Narrow lights, less than 1' wide and only about 4' tall were located directly in line with the cheekblocks, on the ground floor and above the outer two cheekblocks only in the second and third stories.

The main body of the building extended 17'-4" beyond each end of the projecting central facade of the south elevation. Each extension contained one window bay similar to those of the central projection, but with an arched window 6'-8" to the arch springline in place of a doorway. These windows were double sash-type, double-hung, 4 over 4, surmounted by a fan-light in the arch. Basement windows appeared in each end bay also, extending about 1'-6" above ground level.

The raised basement of the south elevation was faced in smooth grey granite. A moulded stone course divided this from the smooth limestone with banded rustication facing the ground story. The rustication emphasized the voussoirs and the slightly projecting keystone of each arched opening in the ground story.

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

ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 3

A belt course divided the ground story from the second story. Six garlanded consoles (one beneath each column) "supported" the belt course. The window bays of the projecting central facade of the south elevation recede about 4' from the wall plane; the flanking window bays of the main body of the building receded about 2' from the wall plane. The small balconies created above the belt course by these set-backs were enclosed by small stone balustrades.

Two garlanded consoles supported the lintels of the aedicular window enframing of each second story window in the projecting central facade. An ornamental keystone was in the center of each lintel. The enframing of the second story windows of the flanking bays were similar, but less elaborate. The three parts of the third story windows were separated by slightly rounded pilasters.

The walls of the second and third stories were faced with smooth limestone. The frieze of the entablature was plain, with just six smooth modillion-like oval plaques, one above each column. The denticulated cornice projected about 2'-8". The 5'-8" parapet was pierced by balustrades above each window bay.

The attic and roof extended about 9' higher than the parapet, but were scarcely visible from street level. A brass-capped flagpole over 30' tall was mounted behind the parapet at the center of the building facade.

Window sash and frame was of painted wood. Basement windows were covered by iron grilles. Cast iron sliding grilles over the three entry doors had ornamental borders of geometric pattern.

East Elevation

The east elevation was similar to the main body of the south elevation, but with 10 window bays, 16' apart on center. A street level entrance similar to a south elevation entrance, but with a garlanded aedicular enframing, was located in the southernmost bay. The ground sloped from an altitude of 1,894' at the south corner, down to 1,889' at the north corner, and the basement windows became gradually taller as the slope allowed, until they reached a height of about 5' at the north end.

West Elevation

The west elevation was similar to the east elevation, but without an entrance. Some of the ground story arches contained masonry rather than frame and sash, and some contained smaller window openings, but the arches, themselves, retained a uniform appearance.

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

ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 4

Rear (North) Elevation

The original north elevation contained flanking window bays similar to those of the south elevation, with the basement story almost completely exposed.

An 11' wide projection 6' from the main body of the building contained a window bay 12' on center from each end bay. One vertical two light window, about 8" wide and 4' to 5'-6" tall was located on each story of these projecting bays.

Between the projecting bays, two rusticated columns and two rusticated half-columns framed a 20' deep mailing platform recess.

The mailing platform recess was at the level of the basement story. A 12' driveway passed behind the columns providing access to the 7' mailing platform. Mail lifts ran from this platform up to the ground story, where a larger glass enclosed platform extended to the mid-point of the columns.

The three window bays above the mailing platform recess were identical. In the second story of each bay was a double sash-type window, each double hung, 3 over 3, half 2'-3" wide by 5'-5" tall. Over each double window was a flat arch with a projecting keystone and two small consoles beneath a moulded entablature.

In a reverse of the pattern of the rest of the building, the third story windows in these three bays were larger than the second story windows. In each third story bay was a single sash type window 3' wide and 7' tall, double hung, 6 over 6, with a single horizontal three light window over. This window was flanked by two windows 1' wide and 7' tall with four lights, and a single one light window over. Over each bay was a flat arch with a projecting keystone.

Pilasters on the second and third stories continued in line with the columns of the basement and ground stories.

Light Court

The light court was faced with white glazed brick. Its western and eastern elevations contained flat arched double hung 1 over 1 windows in four bays about 16' on center apart. The windows in the second story were about 8' x 3'; those in the third story were 5'-11 1/2" x 3'; those in the fourth story were 5'-6" x 3'; and in the penthouse were horizontal, 2'-6" x 3' with two lights.

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

ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 5

The fenestration of the north and south light courts was similar, but in three bays, and arranged in groups of three with each 2'-6" wide window flanked by two 1'-6" wide windows, except in the penthouse.

ORIGINAL BUILDING INTERIOR

First Floor

The south central building entrance contained a wood and glass revolving door, as did the southeast corner entrance. The other two south entrances contained four wood and glass doors each.

All three south entrances led directly into the public lobby. The public lobby was 15' deep; 68' wide and 17' tall. Black, white, grey and red marble mosaic and terrazzo enriched the floor in a pattern of three 12' circles with two 7' circles between and large diamond shapes just inside each door and at corridor intersections.

Lobby walls were of plaster in geometric ornamental panels, interspersed with marble pilasters with Ionic capitals. The base and wainscot were also marble (white, veined in dark grey). The original woodwork and lobby desks were of dark-stained oak.

The coffered lobby ceiling and ornamental cornice were of plaster.

The three main entrances faced the postal service screen which originally contained six general delivery windows and glazed clerestory windows.

The public lobby culminated in the entrance to the money order division at the west end, and the south east entrance vestibule at the east end. The south east vestibule, six steps lower than the lobby, contained a revolving door. (All finishes in public areas of the first floor were similar to that of the public lobby, but with a simpler floor pattern.)

Two narrower corridors, both about 70' long and 9'-10" wide, ran at right angles to the public lobby along two sides of the postal workroom. Mail drops, carrier and stamp windows and an information window occupied the service screen on the inner side of the eastern corridor. On the outer side, two elevators and a marble stairway 5' wide were just north of the vestibule. These were originally followed by offices of the postmaster, assistant postmaster, and cashier. The western corridor had postal lockboxes along the inner side, and money order and registry offices along the outer side.

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

ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 6

Office finish generally included plaster walls, cornice, and ceiling, and wood chairrail, base and floor. The postmaster's office had the added amenity of a wood wainscot. A toilet with terrazzo floor, marble border, and 4' marble wainscot was located off the cashier's office.

Behind the postal service screen the post office workroom extended from the public lobby at the south to the upper mailing platform and mail lifts at the north end of the building. Four large skylights overhead illuminated the work room. The workroom and adjacent work and storage areas had plaster walls and ceiling, 7'-1" tongue and groove wainscot and a wood floor and base. An enclosed lookout gallery formed a T-shape running from above the vault in the cashier's office to above the vault in the registry, with a long arm stretching the length of the upper part of the workroom.

Non-public stairways led down from the money order division, up from the northeast corner of the workroom and up and down from the clerk's office and the northwest corner of the workroom.

Mezzanine Floor

The distance from the first floor to the second floor was 19'-1". At the mezzanine level, 9'-8" above the first floor, was the enclosed lookout, a store room in the northwest corner and a women's retiring room and restroom above the cashier's office.

Second Floor

The distance from the second floor to the third floor was 15'. The second floor was primarily offices and work space, with a railway mail service dormitory with toilet and shower in the northwest corner.

Restrooms faced onto the light well from the south, and land offices faced onto the lightwell from the north. A corridor formed an inner ring, running along the lightwell on the east and west. Offices of the Customs Collector, Internal Revenue, Postal Service, and Land Office (averaging about 18' deep) encircled the corridor. Most second floor offices had a wood floor, base, 5" chairrail, and 2" picture moulding, and plaster walls and ceiling. The corridors were terrazzo with marble borders. Toilets and retiring rooms had terrazzo floors with marble borders, and marble wainscoting 6' high.

Third Floor

The third floor contained an arrangement of offices, restrooms and corridors on three sides that was similar to that of the second floor. The third floor

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

ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 7

offices were occupied by the weather bureau, the district attorney, the marshal and deputy marshal (this office contained a holding cell and toilet facilities), witness and jury rooms, the offices of the clerk of court, grand jury room, and judge's chambers and library. Most offices and other rooms on the third floor had finishes similar to those of second floor offices.

The north end of the third floor, however, was occupied by a 16'-10" wide courtroom lobby and a domed courtroom approximately 37' x 50' and over 21'-11" high. The courtroom walls and cornice were ornamental cast plaster. The oval dome was of ornamental cast plaster with a translucent glass oval skylight in a metal frame. Courtroom woodwork was dark-stained oak. The dividing rail was of brass tubing with a wrought iron gate mounted on square ornamented cast iron posts. Courtroom doors were covered in pigskin with brass tacks and had oval beveled plate glass windows.

Eight steps led down from the courtroom lobby to an arcaded courtroom vestibule 8'-4" deep, about 34' wide.

The courtroom lobby and vestibule floor was terrazzo with marble borders, base, wainscot and pilasters, and ornamental plaster walls, arches, and ceiling.

Attic

The attic floor remained mostly unfinished, containing the upper part of the courtroom dome, the elevator shaft, and a finished stair landing.

Basement

At the core of the basement was a boiler room approximately 80' x 58'. It was surrounded by storage rooms, an engineer's room, a mailing room, the offices of the Superintendent of Mails, a "swing room" and a toilet room for mail carriers and a toilet reached by a flight of stairs coming down from the first floor registry office. The north end of the basement (at the ground level due to the slope of the earth) opened onto the recessed mailing platform and driveway.

Finishes on this floor were similar to that of the workroom except for swing room and Office of the Superintendent of Mails which were like first floor offices.

EXTENSION AND REMODELING

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

ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 8

Exterior

Plans for the "Extension & Remodeling" of the United States Post Office, Court House, and Custom House in Spokane were completed in the late autumn of 1939. Louis A. Simon³ was the Supervising Architect of the Federal Works Administration⁴ at that time, but W. G. Noll was the Chief of Architecture who signed and approved the plans for the Spokane building extension.

A note to the plans reads, "It is the intent that all new work shall match and joint with the present work."

The designers conscientiously carried out that intent, and the extension retains the appearance of the original building with the exception of the roofline (hipped metal on the older half, flat built up roofing on the newer).

The eastern and western elevations were extended by seven bays, differences between older and newer fenestration occurring only in the exposed basement story where public entrances were added in the eleventh bay from the south, and service and driveway entrances provided in the two northernmost bays. The seam between the older and newer building halves is scarcely noticeable. Fenestration in the extension is similar to original fenestration.

The extension covered the original north (rear) elevation. The new north elevation is five bays wide and similar to the northernmost bay of the east and west elevations. Granite lintels surmount three of the five basement story openings of the north elevation. All five openings are blocked by metal grilles.

New bronze handrails were added to the south entrance steps.

Interior

The elevator received new cars and doors, new bulletin boards and signage were added, and the small money order lobby at the west end of the public lobby was closed and became office space, but the main public lobby and the west lobby remained basically unchanged by the extension.

The east lobby, however, was enlarged 16' in width by the removal of the row of offices opposite the service screen, and extended 78' in length. Finish materials and motif of the original lobby were maintained in the enlarged lobby. New stairwells were added at the end of the east lobby and opposite on the west side. The workroom approximately doubled in size. Adjacent offices were shifted or enlarged, but function and finishes similar to the original were retained.

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

ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 9

The original mezzanine rooms were removed, and a new women's restroom was added at mezzanine level at about the mid-point of the building's west side. The lookout was extended for surveillance of the entire workroom.

Few changes other than routine office partition alterations occurred on the second floor of the original building. The railway dormitory was eliminated.

A second light court was added outside the north wall of the original building, the original corridors were extended, and a room arrangement similar to the original was employed in the second floor extension.

The third floor was extended in a similar manner. Offices were finished on the fourth (attic) floor.

Subsequent Alterations

Surprisingly few changes have been made in the building. Many offices retain original dimensions and finishes, although original lighting fixtures have been removed and replaced by suspended fluorescents. Carpeting has been installed in many offices, and acoustical tile ceilings in some.

Windows remain operable in most rooms, but from lack of maintenance (painting) sills have cracked and rotted in places.

Original or 1940's incandescent light fixtures remain in some of the upstairs corridors, but flush fluorescent panels have been installed in the public lobbies.

The most serious damage has occurred in the south lobby, where the revolving doors have been removed. Replacement vestibules at the southeast and southwest entrances make little or no attempt to match the original woodwork. The new vestibules are of light-colored wood and are of odd proportions. The only remaining revolving door vestibule contains vending machines. A glass and aluminum partition at the southeast end of the south lobby is intrusive also.

The other dramatic alteration of the building interior has been the installation of a grey suspended acoustical ceiling with flush fluorescent lighting fixtures in the courtroom. This ceiling hides the handsome courtroom dome which still exists, apparently relatively undamaged, above.

The original five-globed lampstands have been removed from the building's cheekblocks, and aluminum handrails added to the steps.

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

ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 10

A second-story "skybridge" connects the post office building's west side with the adjacent 1967 Federal Building-U.S. Courthouse.

Few of the changes to the original building are irreversible, and the building retains a general appearance very similar to when it was built.

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

Designed: 1906-1907 James Knox Taylor
 Built: 1909 Extended: 1939-1941 Extension: Louis A. Simon
SPECIFIC DATES BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Spokane is the major urban center of the largely agricultural Inland Empire of Eastern Washington, Northern Idaho, and Western Montana. About 176,700 of the Inland Empire's 1,248,000 residents live in the city of Spokane. Spokane is not only the commercial center of the Inland Empire, but also its cultural center. The city is located 276 miles due east of Seattle, and 350 miles northeast of Portland. Few works of formal architecture of substantial quality can be found between Spokane and those two cities.

One such building is the U.S. Post Office which stands near the heart of Spokane's busy Central Business District and the popular Riverfront Park (site of Expo '74) and Civic Center. Although it is overshadowed in height by the adjacent 1967 U.S. Courthouse, the Post Office Building commands attention by virtue of the outstanding quality of its design, detailing, and materials.

The building's history as the first major work of Federal architecture in the Inland Empire adds conceptual strength to its visual dignity.

What is now the city of Spokane was originally settled in 1871. The settlement developed along the Spokane River and had a population of 1,000 when it was incorporated as "Spokane Falls" in 1881.

By 1902 the city boasted a population of 50,000 and was growing so rapidly that the 1920 population was expected to hit 125,000.

In the Spokesman-Review of February 23, 1902, Congressman Wesley L. Jones insisted that a new "public building" was essential for the accommodation of Spokane's brisk and increasing postal business:

"Primarily a government building should be erected here because of the government business done here. U.S. Courts are held here. U.S. Land offices, Internal Revenue Office, U.S. Deputy Marshal, Post Office Inspection Headquarters, and Railway Mail Headquarters are here. From this point railway mail clerks go, and mail is distributed to all parts of eastern, southern, and northeastern Washington. The Post Office receipts at this point far exceed those of any other point in the state except Seattle. The Government pays in rentals from \$5,000 to \$7,000 a year for quarters. I doubt if there is another city in the U.S. of this size, doing an equal amount of Government business without a public building.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

See attached continuation sheets pages 14-16

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY .76

UTM REFERENCES

A

1	1	4	6	9	6	0	0	5	2	8	0	0	0
ZONE		EASTING				NORTHING							

B

ZONE		EASTING				NORTHING							

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Block 1 and Block 2 and vacated strip between said blocks.
Glover's Addition - Resurvey Block 2.

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
N/A			

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
N/A			

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE
Kristine Bak

August 8, 1980

ORGANIZATION
Planning Staff, Real Estate Division, OPBRP, GSA

DATE

STREET & NUMBER
Regional Headquarters Building, GSA Center 10PEP

TELEPHONE
931-7265

CITY OR TOWN
Auburn, Washington 98002

STATE

12 CERTIFICATION OF NOMINATION

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

YES

NO

NONE

Jacob E. Mc...
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 National State Local.

FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE

TITLE

W Roth

DATE 26 OCT 83

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

Ann Dinkie

DATE

10/8/83

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST:

DATE

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

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

ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 11

"There is no public building in Spokane County, in fact we have but one public building in the State of Washington, and that is at Port Townsend, 400 miles away. A building has been authorized for Seattle, 300 miles distant.

"Building material such as granite, marble, brick and lumber is near at hand, and with the excellent transportation facilities, the comparative cost of the building should be small.

"The general character of the business done (in Spokane) is handling produce, marbles, minerals, wood, lumber, and manufacturing. It is the great business and manufacturing center of the territory in the Northwest lying between the Rocky Mountains on the east and the Cascades on the west. It is the greatest railroad center in the Northwest having three transcontinental and five branch lines.

"Citizens do not think they should be asked to donate a site...property is rapidly increasing in value...a splendid site, if purchased soon, can be secured for from \$35,000 to \$50,000."⁵

Apparently one year later was not "soon" enough, for the price finally settled upon for the site at Riverside and Lincoln was \$100,000. The sale was negotiated by Arthur D. Jones and Company, representing the owners in the transaction. The Government acquired the deed in 1903 from the Consolidated Improvement Company. (A prominent member of that company was James Glover, the "Father of Spokane.")

Despite the high hopes of the community, July, 1905, found Spokane still bickering with the Government over the size of its proposed building and, of course, the money for it.

In the Spokesman-Review of July 6, 1905, Postmaster Millard T. Hartson said emphatically,

"We must have a five-story building; a three-story one will not accommodate the business. I found that the plans for the three-story structure did not provide offices for several of the Federal officials here. No organized body, to my knowledge, took any action looking into the delay in building.

"Mr. Taylor, the Supervising Architect of the Treasury, positively refused to draw plans for a foundation of a five-story building unless it was settled that a five-story building was to be erected. If he moved now it would commit us to a three-story building with no chance of adding two more stories. I have urged, therefore, that nothing be done until Congress meets, as I feel confident that we can get the additional \$200,000 then to permit the erection of two more floors.

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

ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 12

"The increase in postal business for the last year in Spokane was 14.5%...it is evident that we must put up a Federal building that will provide for the future.

"It will take two years to complete the building after work starts."⁶

The new U.S. Post Office, Custom House, and Courthouse (with five stories including the basement and partial fourth floor) was designed in the office of the Supervising Architect of the Treasury Department, James Knox Taylor, in 1906-1907.

Postmaster Hartson never had the pleasure of moving into the building. By October 2, 1909, when the Postal Service made its weekend move into its new quarters, W. P. Edris was postmaster.

An extension of the original building became necessary in the mid-1930's. The site directly north of the Post Office Building was purchased from the Home Securities Company, and the two-story brick building occupying that site was demolished in 1938-1939. Plans for the extension were drawn in the office of Louis A. Simon, Supervising Architect for the Federal Works Administration, in October, 1939, under the direction of W. G. Noll, Chief of Architecture. The plans were approved in January, 1940, and the construction contract awarded to James Leck Co., of Minneapolis, on July 30, 1940. Construction of the extension was completed in 1941.

The designers and builders of the extension deliberately and carefully respected the materials and appearance of the original building. While gaining in size, it lost nothing in appearance. No visible division exists between the exterior walls of the original building and the extension.

The historic architectural integrity of the Spokane Post Office Building has remained intact to a degree that is unusual in buildings of its age, type, and geographic location.

The 1979 Federal Space Situation Report for Spokane describes the Post Office Building as "structurally sound" and having "an amount and type of space which would satisfy some of the long-term space needs of agencies that cannot be accommodated" in the adjacent 1967 U.S. Court House. In addition, "the U.S.P.O. fulfills several criteria of Federal Space Planning Policy. It's an existing Federal property located in the central business district of the city..."⁷

The 1978 Spokane Downtown Plan produced by Spokane, Unlimited, Inc., states that, "Those structures of highest significance from an architectural or

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

ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 13

historical standpoint should be preserved and rehabilitated whenever economically and structurally possible."⁸

Local as well as Federal policy is clearly favorable to the continued existence, reuse, and rehabilitation of this handsome and historic building.

A brief discussion is appropriate relating to the 50-year guidelines for properties. It should be noted that the major enlargement of the building took place 43 years ago in 1940, and its current configuration clearly dates from that year. However, such great care was taken to imitate the Beaux-Arts classification of the original design that the building maintains a turn-of-the-century appearance. The building's primary areas of significance are related to Taylor's original styling of the building and the exceptional impact of the structure on the community of Spokane. Both of these elements date to 1907 and are not subject to the requirements for buildings less than 50 years old.

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

ITEM NUMBER 9 PAGE 14

FOOTNOTES

1. James Knox Taylor, a native of Knoxville, Illinois, was educated at M.I.T., and worked in the office of Cass Gilbert in New York. Taylor moved to Washington, D.C., in 1895 and worked for three years as a senior draftsman in the Office of the Supervising Architect for the Treasury Department before becoming Supervising Architect. He retained that position for fifteen years, directing the design of many Federal buildings including the U.S. Post Office and Custom House in San Francisco. Taylor retired in 1912 and went into private practice in Boston. He died in Tampa, Florida in 1929.

2. Both styles were popular in the U.S. between 1895 and 1920.

3. Louis A. Simon was born in Baltimore in 1867. He studied architecture at M.I.T. and began work in the Office of the Supervising Architect of the Treasury Department in 1896. He became head of the Architectural Division in 1905 and remained in that position until he was made Supervising Architect thirty years later. President Franklin D. Roosevelt issued five Executive Orders extending Simon's term of office beyond statutory retirement age. Simon retired in 1941 at the age of 74, and died in 1958 at the age of 91. Simon designed the Roosevelt Library at Hyde Park, was a strong advocate of American Colonial Architecture in Government Buildings, and was responsible for the appearance of more courthouses, post offices, and other Government structures than any previous architect.

4. Under John M. Carmody, Federal Works Agency.

5. "Erect One At Spokane," Spokesman-Review, Spokane, Washington, February 23, 1902, p.13, col.2.

6. "No Work on Federal Building," Spokesman-Review, Spokane, Washington, July 6, 1905, p.7, col.1.

7. "Federal Space Situation Report, Spokane, Washington," Operational Planning Staff, Public Buildings Service, GSA Region 10, Auburn, Washington, November 8, 1979, p.14.

8. "Spokane, The Downtown Plan," Spokane Unlimited, Inc., Spokane, Washington, 1978.

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

ITEM NUMBER 9

PAGE 15

ARTICLES:

Spokesman-Review, Spokane, Washington.

"Erect One at Spokane," February 23, 1902, p.13, col.1.

"Are Ready To Take Title," February 12, 1903, p.1, col.7.

"Will Soon Get \$100,000," February 25, 1903, p.5, col.3.

"No work on Federal Building," July 6, 1905, p.7, col.1.

"Post Office Will Move September 25," September 16, 1909, p.9, col.4.

"No Interruption of Delivery," October 2, 1909, p.8, col.2.

BOOKS:

Withey, Henry F. and Withey, Elsie Rathburn.

Biographical Dictionary of American Architects (Deceased).

Los Angeles: Hennessey and Ingolls, 1970.

BROCHURES:

"Spokane, The Downtown Plan," Spokane Unlimited, Inc., Spokane, Washington: 1978.

Miscellaneous Information Sources, GSA Center, Region 10, Auburn, Washington:

Drawings. Blueprint copies of original drawings for "United States Post Office, Custom House, and Courthouse, Spokane, Washington," Office of the Supervising Architect, Treasury Department, 1906-1907.

Drawings. Blueprint copies of original drawings for "Extension and Remodeling, United States Post Office, Courthouse, and Custom House, Spokane, Washington," Federal Works Agency, Federal Works Administration, 1939.

"Federal Space Situation Report, Spokane, Washington, Fifth Congressional District," Operational Planning Staff, Public Buildings Service, GSA Region 10, Auburn, Washington, November 8, 1979.

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

ITEM NUMBER 9 PAGE 16

"Specifications for the Extension and Remodeling of the United States Post Office, Courthouse, and Custom House at Spokane, Washington," Federal Works Agency, Federal Works Administration, Washington, D.C., March 12, 1940.

(Thanks to Clair Bishop, Spokane City/County Preservation Officer, for Research Assistance.)