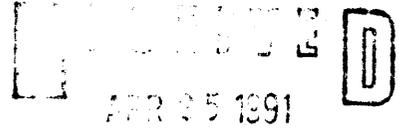


055

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service



National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

NATIONAL REGISTER

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name Sedro Woolley Main Post Office
other names/site number N/A

2. Location

street & number 111 Woodworth Street N/A not for publication
city, town Sedro Woolley N/A vicinity
state Washington code WA county Skagit code 057 zip code 98284

3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property	
		Contributing	Noncontributing
<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u> buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district	<u> </u>	<u> </u> sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	<u> </u>	<u> </u> structures
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<u> </u>	<u> </u> objects
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u> Total

Name of related multiple property listing:
Historic U.S. Post Offices In Washington, 1893 - 1941

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.

[Signature] 1/11/90
Signature of certifying official Date

U.S. Postal Service
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.

[Signature] 12/15/89
Signature of commenting or other official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register. [Signature] 8/7/91
 See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the National Register. See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register.
- removed from the National Register.
- other, (explain:)

[Signature] Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

U.S. Post Office

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

U.S. Post Office

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

Moderne

Other: Starved Classicism

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation Concrete

walls Brick

Sandstone

roof Tar composition

other

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

The Sedro-Woolley Main Post Office is a one-story red brick building on a raised basement platform. Its structure consists of reinforced concrete footings, basement walls and floor slabs, and brick walls. Red brick in common bond faces the exterior walls above the exposed concrete basement wall. The front facade is flat, symmetrical, divided into five flat-arched bays, and devoid of significant detailing. Granite steps and landing flanked by square concrete buttresses provide access to the centered main entry. A plain sandstone frieze with a slightly-projecting molded coping completes the facade. The building is covered by a flat roof.

PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The front facade (north) is flat and divided into five equally-spaced flat-arched bays. The main entry bay is centered and flanked on each side by two window bays. The entry bay is slightly recessed from the facade and framed by wood. Double aluminum-framed glass doors provide access to the building. Above the wooden door head is a nine-light transom window of wood sash. An ornate painted aluminum grille, in which a low-relief sculpted eagle is centered, is set in front of the window. Four granite steps and a granite landing, flanked by square concrete buttresses, approach the entry bay. Single free-standing bronze lanterns rest atop each of the buttresses.

The window bays are identical to each other and of the same dimensions as the entry. The windows are tripple-hung wooden sash with six lights in each section. Plain sandstone panels are set beneath the molded sandstone sills. At the tops of the bays is a plain sandstone frieze extending across the entire facade. Incised in the frieze and centered over the entry bay are the letters "UNITED STATES POST OFFICE" (above) and "SEDRO WOOLLEY WASHINGTON" (below). A slightly projecting molded coping (cornice) is above the frieze.

The west facade is divided into four equally-spaced flat-arched window bays. As with the front, the basement

 See continuation sheet

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Continuation Sheet**

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wall is concrete, and the main floor red brick with sandstone sills, window bay panels, frieze, and coping. The window sash is identical to that of the front.

The east facade is identical to the west except that the second bay from the front has been filled with brick to form a niche (no sash). Additionally, this bay is flanked on each side by single, double-hung, one-over-one-light wooden sash windows (centered between the adjacent bays).

The rear facade (south) uses the same materials and detailing as the front and sides. Centered in the facade is a loading platform which projects rearward. On either side are two flat-arched window bays with the same configuration and identical sash as the front and sides. The loading bay opens to the east and west and the north end is a red brick wall. A flat metal roof with marquees projecting over the east and west loading areas covers the platform.

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally statewide locally

Applicable National Register Criteria A B C D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) A B C D E F G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Architecture
Art
Politics/Government

Period of Significance

1939-1941

Significant Dates

Site acq.-1938
Const.-1939

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

N/A

Architect/Builder

Simon, Louis A., Supervising Architect/Federal Government

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

The Sedro-Woolley Post Office is an unaltered example of a small town single-purpose post office. Though the building is duplicated in other Washington cities, it is the only example of its type in Sedro-Woolley. The building and mural which it contains represent the efforts of the federal government, through its public works and arts programs to assist communities during a period of national economic emergency. The mural represents a significant type, period, and style of artistic expression which, through visual expression, relates the social history of the locality. Finally, the building symbolizes the linkage between the federal government and local citizens and their success in obtaining a federal post office.

ARCHITECTURE

The Sedro-Woolley MPO is a well-preserved and unaltered example of Starved Classical design. The building exhibits the modern or International design influence in its flat facades and lack of explicitly articulated historical design elements, yet retains Classical symmetry and proportion. Flat brick piers, extending from the exposed basement wall to a broad limestone band, divide the five bays of the facade. These elements are reductions of the pilasters and the entablature of the Beaus-Arts designs. Ornamentation is stripped and limited to the ornate grille in which is set a low-relief eagle sculpture (also standardized) which rests above the entry doors.

The design represents the culmination of the evolution of federal design in the vastly expanded public buildings programs beginning at the turn of the century. The build-

See continuation sheet

9. Major Bibliographical References

1. Sedro Woolley Courier-Times; various articles 1935 - 1939.
2. Original Building Plans; 1938.
3. Construction Progress Photographs; 21 February 1939 - 24 August 1939.
4. Barrett, Helen O., Anne S. Carlson & Margaret Willis, eds. Skagit County Grows UP: 1917 - 1941. Mount Vernon, WA: Skagit Valley Historical Society, 1983.
5. Sedro Woolley Washington: Memories and Memorials Past and Present. Sedro Woolley, WA: Rotary Club, 1986.

See continuation sheet

Previous documentation on file (NPS): N/A

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Specify repository:

USPS Facilities Service Center
San Bruno, CA 94099-0330

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of property 0.41

UTM References

A 1,0 5,5,6,2,6,0 5,3,7,2,4,3,0
Zone Easting Northing

B _____
Zone Easting Northing

C _____

D _____

Quadrangle Name: Sedro Woolley North
Quadrangle Scale: 1:24,000

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

Lots 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 & 8, Block 9, Town of Woolley. The site is on the Southwest corner of Woodworth Street and Second Street. Beginning at the Northeast corner, thence S100', W180', N100', and E180' to point of beginning

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The boundary includes the property originally purchased by the federal government for the post office site.

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title H.J. "Jim" Kolva, Project Manager; Steve Franks, Research Assistant
organization Institute for Urban & Local Studies date March 1989
street & number West 705 First Avenue telephone (509) 458-6219
city or town Spokane state WA zip code 99204

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ings prior to 1920 were designed in the Beaux-Arts tradition. Those buildings of the early-1930s carry over this tradition, yet begin to show the transition to the modern. While the Classical influence remains clear and the historical detailing retains its definition, the facades become flatter and tend toward simplicity. Federal architecture after the mid-1930s evidences the greater refinement and attention to the modern influence. This is strongly evident in the Sedro-Woolley MPO which represents the end of the design evolution, which essentially ended at the onset of World War II. As such, it is a significant legacy in the city's architectural heritage and is, therefore, significant under Criterion C.

The floor plans and design are based on standardized plans developed by the Office of Supervising Architect. There are numerous other examples of the exact design in the West. The Buhl, ID (1940), Greybull, WY (1940), Kent, WA (1940) Clarkston, WA (1941), Beaver, UT (1941), and Tillamook, OR (1941) MPOs have front facades identical to that of Sedro-Woolley (except for different roof types).

Representative of the Federal design philosophy of the mid- to late-1930s, the design is essentially a Classical box that has been stripped of the ornamentation of its earlier counterparts. Stripped Classicism has been used to term this stripped design style.

POLITICS/GOVERNMENT

Since the building is the city's first federally-constructed post office and is a legacy of the massive federal public works programs which were intended to assist communities during the Depression era, it is locally-significant under Criterion A. It also represents the efforts on the part of local citizens, through their elected officials in Washington, to secure a federal building. An important local building, its gift by the federal government was a testament to the permanency of the city.

It was in February 1935 that Congressman Mon C. Wallgren began his efforts to gain a federal appropriation for Sedro-Woolley. A year and one-half later, Wallgren's hard and diligent work paid off by the granting of an appropriation for a new post office. It was recognized by the local press as

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to the community was reflected in the local press during the building's dedication in August 1939. The August 24th issue of the Sedro-Woolley Courier-Times was bursting with local pride in its anticipation of the coming event. Photographs, public invitations, a schedule of events, a page of contractors ads (local companies whose products or crafts contributed to the building), and testimonials to those responsible for the building. J C. Skilling, federal engineer, stated: "A community is always benefitted by having such a building, which should promote civic pride and be a real asset."

ART

On the east wall of the lobby, over the Postmaster's door, is a mural entitled "Loggers and Millworkers." The oil on canvas mural was completed in 1941 by Albert C. Runquist. A painter and printmaker, Runquist was born in Aberdeen, WA in 1894. He studied at the University of Oregon, Portland Art Museum School, and the Art Student's League of New York, and exhibited in New York, Portland, and San Francisco. His other mural work includes the University of Oregon Library and Pendleton, OR High School. Runquist is listed in Who's Who In Northwest Art (1941) and Who Was Who In American Art.

The Sedro-Woolley MPO was one of eighteen in the state of Washington to receive a mural under the auspices of the Federal Works Agency Section of Fine Arts. Thus, it is locally significant under Criterion A for its association with the New Deal arts programs. The building is also significant under Criterion C in that the mural, as an integral part, represents a significant type, period, and style of artistic expression.

LOCAL CONTEXT

Sedro-Woolley, "The Gateway To the North Cascades," is located along the Skagit River in Skagit County. A local commercial center, Sedro-Woolley's economy is based primarily on farming, lumber and shingle mills, and recreation based on its scenic location--fishing, hunting, camping, rafting, etc. In 1987 Sedro-Woolley's estimated population was 6,330.

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commercial center, Sedro-Woolley's economy is based primarily on farming, lumber and shingle mills, and recreation based on its scenic location--fishing, hunting, camping, rafting, etc. In 1987 Sedro-Woolley's estimated population was 6,330.

One of the first pioneers to settle in the Skagit upriver area was Mortimer Cook, who arrived from California in 1884. Cook cleared a site for his home and a general store and soon started one of the first fully mechanized shingle mills in the Pacific Northwest. In 1886 the first shipment of shingles left via sternwheeler on the Skagit River. Also in 1886 the first post office was established, on January 1st, in, it is believed, Cook's general store. Mortimer Cook was the first postmaster. Cook wanted a unique name for the small community he founded; he considered (and for a short time used) the name "Bug." Other settlers were not so fond of the name and the name "Sedro"--a corruption of the Spanish word for cedar--was agreed on instead. The town was platted in 1889.

The shingle trade proved successful; Cook's mill was one of the first to ship shingles east when the railroad came in the late 1880s. Cook--and Sedro--soon had competition when Phillip A. Woolley came to the area in 1889. Woolley bought timberlands to the north and east of Sedro, constructed a sawmill and a shingle mill, and laid out his own town of Woolley. The town was platted in 1890. The same year a post office was established; Phillip Woolley was the first postmaster and the mail was carried from Sedro on foot.

Sedro, which prospered at first, began to meet increasing competition from Woolley, immediately north of it. The rivalry between the two towns was bitter; Woolley gained on Sedro in population and soon passed it. When it became obvious the two towns needed to merge, the problem of a name arose. When the post office, which did not favor long or hyphenated names, accepted Sedro-Woolley, one difficulty was overcome. In 1898 an election was held and voters approved the consolidation of the two communities. Thus, the town of Sedro-Woolley was born. The Sedro-Woolley post office was established on December 18, 1898.

In 1900 Sedro-Woolley had a population of 885. It jumped to 2,129 in 1910 and to 3,389 in 1920. In 1930 it

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dropped to 2,719. Since then Sedro-Woolley's population has climbed slowly but steadily, from 2,954 in 1940 to 3,299 in 1950; from 1960 to 1970 it grew from 3,705 to 4,598. In 1980 its population was 6,110.

Facing north, the Sedro-Woolley MPO is mid-block on the south side of Woodworth Street between Eastern Avenue and Metcalf Street, the city's primary downtown business street. East of the post office, across an alley, is the rear of the two-story brick Bingham-Holland Building (1905). South of this building are one- and two-story commercial buildings. Adjacent to the south of the post office is the side of the Thrifty Foods supermarket (one-story concrete block). West of the post office site, at the southeast corner of Eastern Avenue and Woodworth Street, is a vacant lot. To its south is a one-story brick auto parts store. Across Woodworth Street to the north are one-story brick and stucco commercial buildings (modern facades).

LOCAL NEWSPAPER COVERAGE OF THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE
SEDRO-WOOLLEY MAIN POST OFFICE

On February 7th, 1935 the Sedro-Woolley Courier-Times reported that Sedro-Woolley's post office business in January had increased 34 percent over business a year earlier and had increased 50 percent over January 1933. On August 1st the paper headlined "New Post Office For This City Considered Probable"; Congressman Mon C. Wallgren was attempting to get two new federal buildings for Skagit county: one for Sedro-Woolley and one for Anacortes. In "urging" the two projects, Wallgren had reminded officials that post office receipts had increased during the last three years and that, as the paper reported, "as these cities are important trade centers for the surrounding areas, federal office buildings will be of increasing importance and will represent a practical investment by the government." Other encouraging news that August was that the First National Bank would declare a \$30,000 dividend and a 15-week strike at the Lyman Sawmill was over.

On October 3rd the Courier-Times reported that more than a million dollars in WPA and PWA work relief projects had been requested for Skagit county. While there was "much confusion as to which work is to be authorized," it was believed that many projects had been approved, including

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drainage and road projects, a redecorating of the high school, a \$60,000 hospital project, and a \$68,380 bridge project. On November 7th it was reported that 100 men had started work on local WPA projects. In December Sedro-Woolley experienced "the best holiday trade in many years" and there was "a prevailing spirit of optimism in the outlook for continued business improvement in 1936" (December 26th article).

A similar article appeared a year later, on December 31, 1936 (news of the future post office did not appear in 1936), when the Courier-Times reported "With holiday trade the best it has been in several years, and business conditions generally better throughout the entire year of 1936, a spirit of optimism prevails and business men look forward to the coming months of 1937 with a spirit of confidence."

"New PO Prospects Bright" read a headline of August 26th. In response to inquiries, Congressman Wallgren had telegraphed that the building would soon be included in an appropriation. Less than a month later, on September 16th, it was reported that Postmaster Paul Rhodius had received word that \$70,000 had recently been appropriated. The paper wrote: "Several cities were being considered for new post-office buildings, but Sedro-Woolley, due to its greatly increased business, and antiquated housing and equipment, was given preference, Congressman Mon Wallgren having the final say." It was noted that postal inspectors would determine the site, not Postmaster Rhodius, but "meanwhile, he is besieged by interested citizens, and run ragged with questions concerning the local site." The paper gave full credit to Congressman Wallgren, "reputedly one of the hardest working and most influential representatives in Washington, D.C." who "has always evidenced keen interest in the welfare of this district." The new building was "just one more accomplishment to his credit" and would "be a decided asset to the city." (Another article that day noted the importance of the Northern State Hospital to the community; it employed 200 people and had a payroll averaging \$17,000 a month.)

On September 23rd, it was announced that bids were called for the new post office site. One week later it was reported that the city was offering a site: the City Council had voted to offer the old City Hall on Woodworth as part of

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a site. On Thursday, October 7th it was reported that four bids had been received and had been opened the previous Monday. The bids ranged from \$2,500 to \$10,000. A map showing the location of each property and its relation to "the railroad station, business center, etc." was to be prepared and sent to "the postal authorities"; Postmaster Rhodius expected that construction would start in July.

On November 11th it was announced that postal inspector J. E. Fitzgerald was in town to look at the sites and that the City Council and citizens offering one site (which included the old City Hall) had agreed to reduce the price several hundred dollars (the city had agreed to give the lots occupied by the old City Hall without cost). On December 16th it was reported that a site had been selected: the southwest corner of Woodworth and Second Streets would be home to the new federal building. The site included the old City Hall, which would be removed for the opening of Second Street.

In the summer of 1938 two other government-sponsored projects were reported: a new \$40,000 grade school gym (WPA grant of \$18,000) and a \$275,000 Skagit flood project (articles of June 30th and July 7th). At the same time the post office plans were completed and bids were called, to be opened August 19th. The city had also obtained a WPA appropriation to demolish the old City Hall and to build a new garage (July 14th article). When the plans arrived the Courier-Times described the building in detail, under the headline "Provide for Beautiful Structure; Arouse Much Interest" (July 21st).

"Good news for Sedro-Woolley came this week" wrote the Courier-Times on August 25th; A. F. Mowat of Seattle won the post office job with a low bid of \$53,737. Wallgren and Senator Lewis Schwellenbach had also telegraphed that a \$922 WPA project would assist in the paving of Second Street along the east side of the post office site through to Woodworth. Before long, on October 27th, it was reported that work would soon start on the post office; all deeds had been executed and \$3,400 had been paid for lots to Carol Brider, the D. M. Donnelly Estate, Fred Fellows, and the Lyman State Bank. At year's end a new \$400,000 Skagit flood project was announced.

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The new year of 1939 opened with news of Sedro-Woolley's post office. On January 5th it was reported that the post office had a record year in 1938. In February, ground was broken for the "fine new post office," with Harry Devin--the town's first postmaster--at the ceremony. Citizens gathered at the site each day to see what progress was made, and a WPA crew was working on 2nd Street (February 2nd article).

On July 27th it was reported that the "handsome new" post office would be dedicated on Saturday, August 26th and would be ready for use on Tuesday, September 5th. Dedication plans were confirmed on August 17th, when "appropriate speeches will be made and music will be enjoyed." The public was invited to inspect the new building from 7 to 10 p.m. on the 26th and Postmaster Rhodius was "asking every women's organization in the city to name a representative to act as an official hostess at the open house." (It was also reported that the big Skagit River erosion WPA project was being abandoned due to county commissioners' refusal to provide equipment, the opposition of local farmers, and the lack of county maintenance of previously done work. The WPA project office in Sedro-Woolley, which had opened in December 1935, would be closed and \$418,000 of WPA funds already appropriated would not be spent.)

On Thursday, August 24th the Courier-Times featured much news of the post office and its dedication to be held that Saturday. The paper wrote that "An impressive program has been prepared for this formal affair" and described in detail and building and dedication program. An invitation was published from Postmaster Rhodius for the public to attend the dedication and inspect the building at a one-time only open house. The American Legion, grade school band, local clergy, the mayor, and other dignitaries were to participate. Advertisements of various firms that had worked on the building were also featured (for example, the Skagit Lumber Company's add read "The Completion of Sedro-Woolley's New Post Office Is One More Forward Step in The Development Of Our City"; "We are happy to have had a share in the construction of this splendid building.") Many brief articles discussed the local labor and materials that were used ("The Goodyear Nelson Hardwood Lumber Co. of this city furnished its famous Mt. Baker brand maple flooring throughout.... This beautiful flooring has been given a

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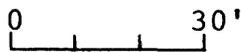
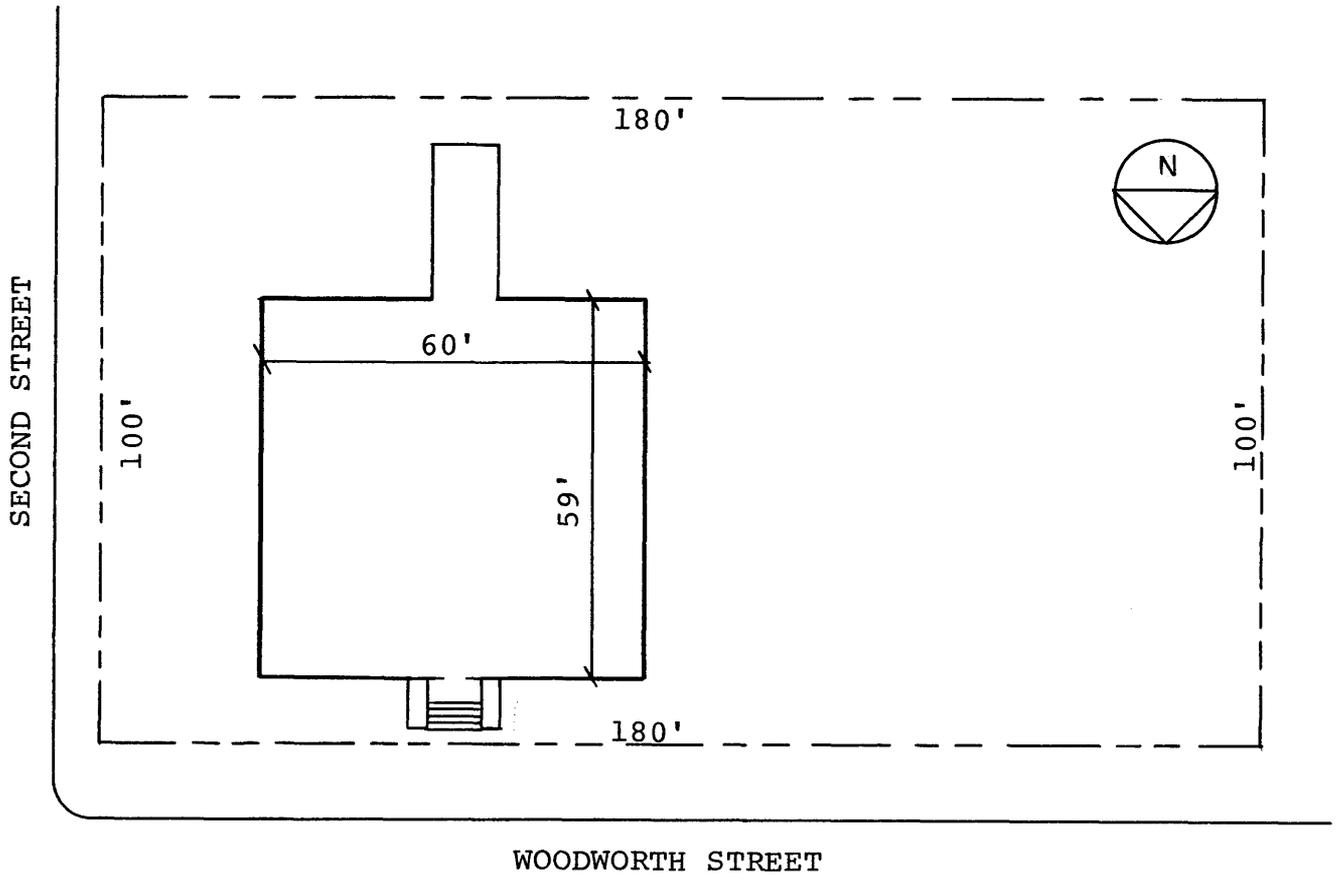
splendid finish and is attracting much attention"). The paper concluded by quoting J. C. Skilling, inspecting engineer for the building: "The excellence of our post office building is evidence that the government gets its money's worth. A community is always benefitted by having such a building, which should promote civic pride and be a real asset to the city."

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Section number Photos Page 1 SEDRO-WOOLLEY MPO

The following information is the same for all the photographs listed:

1. Sedro-Woolley MPO
2. Sedro-Woolley, Washington
3. Jim Kolva
4. August 1987
5. Negatives on file at USPS Facilities Service Center, San Bruno, CA.

Photo No. 1 (negative #3)

6. View to southwest

Photo No. 2 (negative #4)

6. View to south

Photo No. 3 (negative #2)

6. View to southeast

Photo No. 4 (negative #24A)

6. Mural, west end of lobby