

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES REGISTRATION FORM

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 CASSVILLE POST OFFICE
other names/site number N/A

2. Location

street & number 1813 Cassville Road (Old Dixie Highway)
city, town Cassville (N/A) vicinity of
county Bartow code GA 015
state Georgia code GA zip code 30123

(N/A) not for publication

3. Classification

Ownership of Property:

- private
- public-local
- public-state
- public-federal

Category of Property

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property:

	<u>Contributing</u>	<u>Noncontributing</u>
buildings	1	0
sites	0	0
structures	0	0
objects	0	0
total	1	0

Contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: 0

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A

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 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 the National Register criteria. () See continuation sheet.

Elizabeth A. Lyon
Signature of certifying official

7/17/92
Date

Elizabeth A. Lyon
State Historic Preservation Officer,
Georgia Department of Natural Resources

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

Signature of commenting or other official

Date

State or Federal agency or bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

**Entered in the
National Register**

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register

Alonzo Byers 8/31/92

determined eligible for the National Register

determined not eligible for the National Register

removed from the National Register

other, explain:

see continuation sheet

fu
Signature, Keeper of the National Register Date

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions:

GOVERNMENT/post office

Current Functions:

COMMERCE/TRADE/specialty shop

7. Description

Architectural Classification:

NO STYLE

Materials:

foundation	field stone
walls	wood
roof	asphalt shingles
other	N/A

Description of present and historic physical appearance:

The Cassville Post Office is located in the small north Georgia town of Cassville, a former county seat. The post office is located on the main road through the small town of Cassville near a few commercial buildings as well as residential structures. It is a one-story, frame, rectangular building, approximately 14' wide x 25' deep, with a gable at each end and a shed front entrance. The building is in good to fair condition and is on a field stone foundation.

The exterior of the sides and rear of the building is covered in board-and-batten vertical siding of southern yellow pine. The front elevation has white painted clapboard siding. Roofing material is "T"-lock asphalt shingles. The remaining sides are unpainted.

The exterior features no architectural ornamentation, typical of this type of building, except for the shed roof brackets on the front and side porches which were most likely made on site. The front facade features a wooden paneled door and a six-over-six window. The south side has a second entrance door with shed roof porch; the north side has two windows. Original exterior hardware was replaced except for cast brass hinges.

On the interior, there are three rooms and a rest room. The front door leads into the former post office lobby. There was, until very recently, a wall separating the lobby from the room behind. This other room was the work area behind which is a storage room and a single rest room. The mail boxes which partitioned off the lobby area from the work area have been removed, thus creating one large room. The mail boxes are now stored in the back room.

The interior includes original beaded tongue-and-groove board siding on the walls and ceilings although partially covered over in

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the work area. The lobby walls are 1 x 4 flat board installed horizontally. New linoleum was installed over 1/4-inch plywood over the original wooden floor in the 1950s.

Other features include some original hardware as well as bronze post office boxes (now stored in the rear room) which were brought to the post office from the Cartersville post office in the 1960s.

The building is wood frame built of southern yellow pine on fieldstone-pier foundation supporting 4 x 12 perimeter beams. Craftsmanship is typical of period.

There originally was a double fireplace which provided the heat and a place for cooking. It has been removed. Electricity and gas were installed as soon as service became available. Plumbing was added 15 years ago.

The grounds were originally occupied by a wagon shop. The property has not been disturbed since the wagon shop burned and the present building constructed, over a century ago. Asphalt paving has been added to the front of the property to create a driveway and thus has extended the property.

There are no other buildings on the property.

The archaeological potential of the property includes the possibility of remains from the various activities in the town during the Civil War, mostly in 1864-1865. Before the Civil War, a wagon shop occupied the site but was burned along with the town by General William T. Sherman's United States forces. There are no visible remains left.

The Town of Cassville is still a small town. The post office is near all the other remaining historic structures. There are a few churches which date prior to the Civil War and many turn-of-the-century homes in the town. There are only 2 or 3 commercial buildings, none of which are more than 50 years old. This is by far the oldest commercial and government-related building in town.

Changes to the property have been minimal, since it was of a basic utilitarian design to start with. A toilet area was constructed from part of the back storage room by partitioning it off and installing a door. The toilet consists of a wall-hung lavatory and water closet, installed approximately 15 years ago. The double fireplace mentioned earlier, central chimney, and an adjoining closet were removed in the 1960s when the post office was upgraded to third class and required by postal authorities to install a safe on a concrete pad. The post

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office boxes were removed and the front two rooms merged into one room.

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): N/A

A B C D E F G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions):

ARCHITECTURE
COMMUNICATIONS
POLITICS/GOVERNMENT

Period of Significance:

1889-1942

Significant Dates:

ca. 1889

Significant Person(s):

N/A

Cultural Affiliation:

N/A

Architect(s)/Builder(s):

Unknown

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Significance of property, justification of criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above:

Narrative statement of significance (areas of significance)

The Cassville Post Office is significant in architecture because it is a good example of a small-town commercial-mixed use building built in Georgia in the late 19th century. This building was built to be the home and office of a widow, who was the town's postmistress. Its simple, original floorplan included living space as well as the post office itself. After the 1915 death of the postmistress for whom it was built, it ceased to be used as a residence. Its simple, straightforward design gives it the look of a commercial building, a general store. It is also significant in communications because, during the years it served as the U. S. Post Office, this building would have been the center for the town's communication activities, primarily people meeting at the post office and sharing local news, where local happenings would have been posted for official notice, and where the county newspaper would have been delivered. This post office was served by Mrs. Sallie L. Bruce as postmistress for twenty-seven years, (December) 1887- (July) 1915, and, according to local tradition, this building was built by her brother for her use and livelihood about 1889 or later. It is significant in politics/government because of its continued use for nearly a century (half of which was within the historic period) as a U. S. Government facility. Subsequent postmasters used this building, except for breaks in 1915-1921 and 1934-1935, until 1989, when activities were moved to a new building. Throughout this period it was the major governmental building in this small town and the only one associated with the Federal government. It has always been privately owned.

National Register Criteria

The Cassville Post Office meets National Register Criterion A because it fits into the spectrum of events "that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history". This is due to the fact that as a United States Post Office, it served as the focal point of communication for a small town. It was the town's only post office, the center for mail, newspapers, and gossip. It was this type of facility that was the hub of activity as the American frontier was expanded toward the nation's "Manifest Destiny" of being from "sea to shining sea". It also reflects one of the few roles a woman played in a community outside the home in the late 19th and early 20th century. Denied the right to vote by the constitution, and presumably the right to run for office, nevertheless, Mrs. Sallie Bruce was a government-salaried official as the postmistress here, one of the few women-held posts in the Federal government.

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The post office meets criterion C due to its utilitarian design and workmanship. Built much the same way a country store would have been, the building served as an office and a home for Mrs. Bruce, the postmistress. She lived "behind the shop" or "within the shop" just as many others lived "above the shop". The straightforwardness of the design was all that was needed since the mail was rarely stored for any length of time, and people were not there to be entertained or to otherwise linger. The battens on the exterior are about the only ornamentation on the entire building and are somewhat unusual in that most extant buildings of this type have weatherboard siding.

Criteria Considerations (if applicable)

N/A

Period of significance (justification)

The period of significance runs from the construction of the building ca. 1889 until 1942, the end of the historic period. The building continued in use as a post office until 1989.

Contributing/Noncontributing Resources (explanation, if necessary)

N/A

Developmental history/historic context (if applicable)

The Cassville Post Office is located in Cassville, northwest of Atlanta, in Bartow County. This is in an area of the state which was opened for white settlement in 1832 as part of the Cherokee Land Lottery from whence the Cherokee Indians were removed during the Trail of Tears in 1838-1839.

Since this property is a post-Civil War building, and the town of Cassville reached its high point just before the war, the earlier history of Cassville is not necessarily pertinent to this nomination, but a brief summary is in order.

Cass County, the original name for Bartow County, was created in 1832 out of the Cherokee territory opened by the land lottery. In 1833, Cassville was laid out as the county seat and a post office was established there. The town was built around a central square, and a brick courthouse and jail were completed by 1837. Cassville soon became the largest, most prosperous, and most culturally affluent town

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in northern Georgia. The town became so prosperous that residents decided to petition the legislature to ask that the new-fangled state-owned and operated railroad, the Western and Atlantic, leading from future city of Atlanta to Chattanooga, Tennessee, be routed away from Cassville. This choice led to the eventual demise of the town. This detour put the railroad through Cartersville, and eventually brought forth that town's growth, especially after the burning of Cassville.

At the time (1845) when the railroad was diverted, Cassville had a population of between 800 and 900 and two small colleges, while Cartersville had a population of about 150 but was described as conducting "considerable business" in its four or five hotels and stores. In a few years, however, Cartersville was close to equalling Cassville in population and was fighting to be named county seat. Cassville residents successfully opposed the move in 1857.

It was the Civil War of 1861-1865 that brought the end of prosperity to the town of Cassville. The Civil War destroyed both colleges and led to the further decline of Cassville. Eight Confederate hospitals existed in the town when the war came. Over 10,000 Confederates were treated, and about 300 were buried in the Confederate Cemetery. The town's residents suffered greatly. Federal troops burned all the town's buildings except for three residences and three churches. The town's destruction led to the county seat being removed to Cartersville. Cassville residents were financially unable to rebuild county buildings and in 1867, the courthouse was permanently moved to Cartersville, where it remains today. The railroad bypass made things worse, for eventually, Cassville could only be reached by horse or stagecoach, while Cartersville was a major rail center.

By 1900, Cartersville had a population of 3135, gas and electric lights, waterworks, an ice factory, two banks, and a public school system. Cassville had only a tannery, although it was described as "flourishing."

Although the town never regained its former prominence, it did not completely die out. After the war, the town became a small farming community center and was occupied primarily by farmers. There was an old store next door to the Cassville Post Office that Mr. McTier had built for his sister, Mrs. Bruce. The store sold cloth and cow seed. There was also a sawmill yard. Local farmers like McTier grew cotton and corn. There were two cotton gins and two general stores. Some farmers trucked vegetables into Cartersville. Cass Station was about one and a half miles down the road from Cassville. There was a post office there for the railroad and a large mercantile store.

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The depression of 1929-1941 ruined Cassville's bank and some individuals. But it did not affect the majority of farmers. They continued farming and supported Cassville's two remaining stores, which extended credit in return for crops at harvest time.

The town had schools continually from the Civil War up until the mid-1930s when schools were consolidated. The three church congregations that remained after the war have survived to the present day.

Farming continued over the years with little change. The blacksmith shop continued in operation up until the early 1940s because there were farmers still using mules in the area then.

During the early 1940s, the Dixie Highway was built through the town and its presence contributed strongly to the proliferation of "spread lines" that sold chenille bedspreads to out-of-state travellers from the 1940s through the early 1960s. There were manufacturing machines in the store that was next to the old post office. At one time there were about six employees and several machines. The factory would take orders from travellers as well as from out-of-state business.

When the old Dixie Highway was rerouted, the spread line industry died. Today there are still farming operations in the area, but most of the small town's residence commute to their jobs.

It was in the post-Civil War situation, in the recently burned and eclipsed town of Cassville, that the Cassville Post Office Building was built. It has survived for over a century. When it was established at its present location, it succeeded other post office locations in Cassville dating back to 1833 when the first post office was established there. All of the other earlier locations have been lost.

It was typical in the period for the Post Office to move along with the appointment of the Postmaster. Normally, it was located in the appointee's home or place of business according to John Sorenson, historian with the U. S. Postal Service in Washington, D.C.

The site where the Cassville Post Office building is located was the setting of a harness/carriage shop before the Civil War (1861-1865) and was owned and operated by H. H. Holmes. Immediately after the war, the site was used for a wagon shop where a wagon shop building formerly existed. As far as is known, there have been no archaeological excavations performed at the site.

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The Cassville Post Office has always been privately owned, and was built on land owned by H. H. Holmes who operated the wagon\carriage and harness shop pre-Civil War. It was destroyed during the war.

In 1893, H. H. Holmes (husband of Rachel McTier) died and John C. McTier, his brother-in-law, was named his administrator. At the estate sale, Belton O. Crawford (1827-1903), McTier's father-in-law, purchased the lot and buildings. Since the post office is dated ca. 1887-1889, McTier built it while Holmes still owned the lot.

John Calvin McTier (born November 19, 1853 - died June 20, 1941) built the post office/home for his widowed sister, Mrs. Sallie L. Bruce sometime in the 1880s. Mrs. Bruce served as Postmistress from December 21, 1887, to her death in 1915.

Mr. McTier was one of the substantial citizens Cassville had at that time. Bessie Bishop, McTier's niece recalls: "Uncle John was a very good businessman and taught others the value of a dollar through education and employment. He was a very private person who did not want notoriety but helped countless young boys by financing their education or providing jobs for those who were fatherless or down on their luck. He always was seen with a hat and tie on with shoes shined. He was what you would call a Chesterfield man and Christian gentleman."

John McTier owned both sites that were donated for the colleges before the Civil War. He was instrumental as county school superintendent in getting schools in Cassville. Mr. McTier helped rebuild Cassville after the Civil War by financing construction in the area.

Mrs. Bishop concluded, "As a philanthropist and citizen, the life Uncle John led meant so much to Cassville."

In 1903, B. O. Crawford died and John C. McTier and his wife Sallie Crawford McTier inherited the property. They owned it until 1941 when he died. At that point, in 1942 the property was inherited by his widow and their only child, Mrs. Fannie Sue McTier Chunn.

Mr. McTier died at the age of 88 years old and is buried at the Cassville-Confederate Cemetery. His contributions to the community as a farmer, blacksmith, postmaster and deacon in the Baptist Church have left their mark in Cassville through those he helped and through the post office building as it stands today.

Mrs. Sallie Louise (McTier) Bruce was a sister to John C. McTier who built the post office. As was common in the late 19th century,

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she lived in the rear of the building and served the public from the front, seven days/week and at odd hours if the situation warranted.

Mrs. Ruby Green Stewart recalled that she often came to the post office and smelled the aroma of Mrs. Bruce's lunch or dinner, which she had cooking in the fireplace then located in the middle/center of the building.

Mrs. Bruce had married young, moved to nearby Cedartown and had one son. H. E. Bruce, her husband, died one year after their marriage and she returned to Cassville. There, on December 21, 1887, she became Postmistress living and working for twenty-six years in the home/office her brother built for her until her death July 14, 1915. After returning, at first she lived with her mother, small son, and two unmarried sisters at their home 1-2 miles outside of Cassville. For a while, Mrs. Bruce was bookkeeper and a substitute for postmaster Robert Smith. Her obituary reads "For twenty-six (sic) years she was the Postmistress of Cassville and that capacity came to be known as one of the most accommodating, obliging and faithful servants of the government, prompt in all her reports to the government and diligent in the distribution of mail for the patrons of her office." Mrs. Bruce is also buried in the Cassville-Confederate Cemetery.

Mrs. Bruce did live, at least periodically, in the building, since she had living quarters in the rear. At other times she lived at her family's home. Subsequent postmasters did not live in the building.

Mrs. Bruce's descendants say that her brother, John McTier, built the present building for Mrs. Bruce, to be used as a post office, so that she would have a livelihood and be convenient to her work. She lived and cooked, at least for a period of time, in the rear of the building. Her son lived with and was raised by Mrs. Bruce's two unmarried sisters. Perhaps at the time of her death Mrs. Bruce was commuting to her sister's home or perhaps the obituary was edited. But whatever the situation at Mrs. Bruce's death, the building was built by Mr. McTier as a post office/residence for his sister and she did live there.

It is reasonable to assume that the building was constructed between late 1887, when she was appointed postmaster, and 1889, when her obituary suggests that she assumed the position. The construction of the building and Mrs. Bruce's length of tenure as postmaster may have coincided in the community's eyes.

The front room was the public post office area and the rear provided living quarters for Mrs. Bruce.

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The post office was operated at this site until 1989, with the exception of two brief periods. From 1915 to 1925, it was located across the street in the general store and one block south in Layton's store. Mr. McTier moved it back to its present site in 1925. With the exception of 1934-1935 when a new postmaster, Nellie Sloan, was appointed, when it moved briefly to a two-story store building down the street, it has remained in this building until the site closed in 1989.

At the time the building ceased to be used as a post office, it was still serving 300 households.

In 1963 Mr. and Mrs. Albert Allen purchase the property at auction from the heirs of Mrs. Fannie Sue McTier Chunn. They remain the owners today. When Mrs. Allen purchased the building, it was the first time the site had been out of the family since the building was built.

Today, the building serves as a antiques/gift shop.

9. Major Bibliographic References

Meek, S. Vanessa, former postmaster. "Cassville Post Office." Historic Property Information Form, January 3, 1989. On file at the Office of Historic Preservation, Department of Natural Resources, Atlanta, Georgia along with additional updates.

Previous documentation on file (NPS): (X) 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:

- (X) State historic preservation office
- () Other State Agency
- () Federal agency
- () Local government
- () University
- () Other, Specify Repository:

Georgia Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): BR-194

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property less than one acre

UTM References

A) Zone 16 Easting 697720 Northing 3791720

Verbal Boundary Description

The nominated property is marked on an enclosed plat map.

Boundary Justification

The nominated property is just the small 40' by 50' lot upon which the former post office rests. It is approximately all the land which has ever been associated with this property.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Kenneth H. Thomas, Jr., Historian
organization Office of Historic Preservation, Georgia Department of
Natural Resources
street & number 205 Butler Street, S.E., Suite 1462
city or town Atlanta **state** Georgia **zip code** 30334
telephone (404) 656-2840 **date** July 16, 1992

(HPS form version 10-29-91)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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Photographs

Name of Property: Cassville Post Office
City or Vicinity: Cassville
County: Bartow
State: Georgia
Photographer: James R. Lockhart
Negative Filed: Georgia Department of Natural Resources
Date Photographed: December, 1991

Description of Photograph(s):

- 1 of 6: Front facade, photographer facing west.
- 2 of 6: Front and south facades, photographer facing northwest.
- 3 of 6: Front and north facades, photographer facing southwest.
- 4 of 6: South and west facades, photographer facing northeast.
- 5 of 6: Interior, front room; photographer facing west.
- 6 of 6: Interior, back room; photographer facing south.

Floor Plan

IV F

Cassville Post Office
Cassville, Bartow County, Georgia
Scale: Not to scale
Source: Drawn by John A. Allen, Jr.
Date: c. 1989
Key: as marked on the plan

