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OCT 13 1988

NATIONAL REGISTER

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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 United States Post Office at Ashland, Kentucky
other names/site number n/a Bo A 76

2. Location

street & number 1645 Winchester Avenue NA not for publication
city, town Ashland NA vicinity
state Kentucky code KY county Boyd code 019 zip code 41101

3. Classification

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

Name of related multiple property listing: Historic Resources of Ashland, Kentucky
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.
David L. Morgan
Signature of certifying official David L. Morgan, State Historic Preservation Officer Date 10-10-88
NA
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.
NA
Signature of commenting or other official _____ Date _____
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5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:
 entered in the National Register. Patricia Andrews 11/15/88
 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 of the Keeper Date of Action

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Government; post office

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Storage

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

20th Century Revivals: Colonial Revival

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation concretewalls limestone

roof built-up compositionother

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

The United States Post Office at Ashland, Kentucky is an imposing and well-preserved example of the Colonial Revival style, built in 1915-16. Additions made during the 1930's were respectful of its scale and character. The post office building is located at the northwest corner of Winchester Avenue and Seventeenth Street in downtown Ashland. The building's lot is rectangular in shape and includes a paved driveway and parking area to the north and west of the post office building, and a shallow lawn to the south. A row of young locust trees lines the street in front of the building, and its main entrance is flanked by a pair of cast-iron lamp standards.

The building's predominantly commercial surroundings reflect Ashland's architectural eclecticism. The post office building's lot is adjoined on the west by a series of late nineteenth century commercial buildings, ranging from two to four stories in height, the largest and most architecturally distinguished of which is partly obscured by a 1960's-vintage metal grille. On the south side of Winchester Avenue opposite the post office building, are a High Victorian Gothic church, a multi-story retail building of the early twentieth century with a one-story 1970's addition, and a five-story department store exhibiting an Art Moderne influence.

The city of Ashland, principal city of Boyd County, is located on the south bank of the Ohio River in northeast Kentucky. Ashland, the most populous city in the eastern part of the state, was estimated to contain 26,300 residents by the 1980 federal census. The city's main thoroughfare, U. S. 23, carries traffic parallel to the Ohio River while Interstate 64 connects the city with central Kentucky. The city of Ashland possesses a rich inventory of architecturally significant buildings dating from the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The Bath Avenue Historic District, centered between Thirteenth and Seventeenth Streets, includes a diverse group of high-style residences dating from the 1850's through the 1910's. It was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1979 along with fifteen individual properties.

The post office building is a dignified example of the Colonial Revival style that achieves monumentality despite its comparatively modest scale. Its main block, dating from 1916, stands two stories high and measures 96 feet wide by 76 feet deep. Adjoining it on the north is a one-story addition dating from 1933. Since the north half of the building's lot slopes downward, this rear section was built to accommodate this change in grade. A slightly recessed one-story west wing with adjacent loading dock was constructed in 1936. The building is constructed of smooth-dressed Indiana limestone laid in regular courses and is embellished with finely-executed, classically-inspired ornament. Although

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 n/a

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)
architecture

Period of Significance

1916 - 1937

Significant Dates

1916, 1932-33,
1936-37

Cultural Affiliation

n/a

Significant Person

n/a

Architect/Builder

James A. Wetmore, acting supervising
architect. R. P. Farmouth and Company,
builder

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

The United States Post Office at Ashland, Kentucky is significant under Criterion C and the theme of architecture as a notable example of the Colonial Revival style of architecture that exemplifies high quality materials and craftsmanship. It is also one of Ashland's most distinguished and best-preserved buildings of the early twentieth century. The main block of the post office building was completed in 1916 and sympathetic additions were made in 1932-33 and 1936-37. It has been remarkably well preserved inside and out and thus manifests a high degree of integrity of design, materials and workmanship in addition to integrity of site and the less tangible attributes of feeling and association. The building's period of significance begins in 1916, its original construction date, and extends through 1937, the date of completion of its most recent contributing addition.

The city of Ashland experienced tremendous growth and unprecedented prosperity during the 1910's and 1920's, and these "boom years" produced a legacy of stylish and architecturally significant commercial and institutional buildings. As a group, these buildings are stylistically diverse, exhibiting for the most part an eclectic Neo-Classicism but also displaying the influence of the Second Renaissance Revival and Beaux Arts modes. Others, including the post office building, typify the Colonial Revival style. Another noteworthy example of the mode is the former Chesapeake and Ohio railroad station on Carter Avenue, an elegant 1920's-vintage structure executed in brick with a monumental triple-arched facade. This Ashland landmark was restored in 1980 by a local bank and now serves as its headquarters. The building that may well have been the city's finest example of the style was demolished in the 1970's. The Ashland Public Library, built under WPA auspices in 1936, was built of cut sandstone and featured a pedimented portico and cupola.

Other significant buildings of the era include the Camayo Arcade on Winchester Avenue (c. 1920), the Ashland City Hall on Seventeenth and Greenup (1924), the Second National Bank (1922) at Winchester and Sixteenth, and the Henry Clay Hotel (c. 1920). Also noteworthy are the Boyd County Courthouse (1909; 1930 and later) and the Federal Building (c. 1915), both located in nearby Catlettsburg. Of particular interest is the Camayo building, built of pressed brick and limestone in a refined version of the Beaux Arts style, which is one

See continuation sheet

9. Major Bibliographical References

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- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

See continuation sheet

Primary location of additional data:

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

Specify repository:

Kentucky Heritage Council, Frankfort

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of property less than one acre

UTM References

A

1	7	3	5	7	0	8	0	4	2	5	9	9	6	0
Zone			Easting					Northing						

B

Zone			Easting					Northing						

C

Zone			Easting					Northing						

D

Zone			Easting					Northing						

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Margaret Warminski, Architectural Historian
organization _____ date August, 1988
street & number 340 East Second Street telephone (606) 581-2883
city or town Newport state Kentucky zip code 41071

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetSection number 7 Page 2 United States Post Office at Ashland, Kentucky

built on a foundation of poured concrete, its outer foundation walls utilize limestone ashlar for decorative effect. The building's flat roof, of built-up composition material, is hidden from view by a low parapet. Although the building's window treatments are varied, all utilize double-hung, multi-pane wooden sash and are set into shallow spandrels. The building's main entrance faces Winchester Avenue. A secondary doorway, with stoop encircled by a delicate wrought-iron railing, addresses Seventeenth Street.

The building's original, 1916 section is five bays wide and symmetrical in design. It is dominated by a slightly projecting central pavilion that is defined by a series of four two-story fluted pilasters with stylized acanthine capitals. This pavilion contains the main entrance and a pair of grandly-scaled windows that extend from floor to ceiling. Both the doorway and windows are set in arched spandrels surrounded by radiating voussoirs with scrolled keystones, and enriched by narrow egg-and-dart mouldings. They are surmounted by arched fanlights with delicate tracery. The windows and doorway are defined by slender engaged colonnettes that in turn are flanked by narrow multi-paned sidelights. The building's side elevations, and the outer corners of its facade, feature rectangular windows set above inset blind panels. Contained in the second story are windows that appropriately are smaller in scale than those of the first floor. Set between the first and second stories is a series of a square stone plaques bearing carved floral swags in low relief. An entablature displaying the legend "United States Post Office," a row of dentils, and a projecting cornice complete the composition.

The additions made to the post office building during the 1930's were designed to harmonize with the original structure's scale, materials, and decorative elements. The building's west wing echoes the window and cornice treatments of the main block, albeit on a more diminutive scale and in a less elaborate manner. Set above the outer bays are decorative plaques similar to those of the main block but executed in a stylized rather than naturalistic fashion. A concrete loading dock with projecting metal canopy and industrial-type double metal doors extends along the west elevation of this wing. The north end of the loading dock has been partially enclosed with a corrugated plastic partition. The building's rear block is characterized by large tripartite windows surmounted by operable square transoms and set above blind panels similar to those found below the windows of the main block. Paired, double-hung windows light its ground floor.

The interior of the post office building features a spacious, high-ceilinged lobby extending along its south elevation, and a large, open work area in rear. The lobby, the building's major public space, retains much of its original character. It features stout columns of gray marble, encircled by egg-and-dart moulding, and gray marble floors with an inset red border. Marble wainscoting, approximately six feet in height, dates from a 1932 renovation; it closely resembles that of the columns but displays less pronounced veining. A marble counters line the north wall of the lobby, and an ornate iron grille extends above them to the ceiling. Several original bronze light sconces

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National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 7 Page 3 United States Post Office at Ashland, Kentucky

still adorn the walls. Sections of the coffered ceiling have been concealed beneath acoustical panels added about six inches below the ceiling's original height, and flush-mounted fluorescent light fixtures and ventilator fans have been added. A wooden airlock vestibule, approximately eight feet high, was also added to the main entrance at an undetermined date, probably in the late 1930's. Since it was designed to resemble the woodwork found elsewhere in the building, it is not a discordant element, and contributes to the lobby's historic ambience.

A partly enclosed marble staircase with brass handrail leads from the lobby's west wall to the second floor, which is devoted to small offices. Like the first floor, the second floor of the post office building has been well preserved. Its hallway and most of its offices retain their original paneled wooden wainscoting as well as mitered and varnished door and window trim. Virtually all original doors, with panels of translucent glue-chip glass, are still in place. Employee restrooms retain their original fixtures including freestanding porcelain sinks, and lavatory stalls and wainscoting of gray marble.

The building's design offered supervisors opportunities to keep watch over their employees without being detected. A secret stairway in the center of the building provides access to an upper-level catwalk encircling the work area. From this vantage point supervisors could observe employees through a series of hinged slits concealed by decorative crown moulding. Holes in the catwalk floor, designed to resemble light sockets when viewed from the work room below, served the same purpose.

The building was carefully maintained during its years as a postal facility. Although it has been vacant for over a year, it remains in good condition despite minor plaster damage caused by water leaks. Moreover, its historic fabric remains largely intact. The double doors depicted in a c. 1975 photograph have been replaced by modern ones of aluminum and clear glass, and aluminum handrails have been added to the front steps. Although incongruous with the historic design, both these changes are relatively unobtrusive. A concrete ramp has been added to the southwest corner of the facade but is largely hidden by shrubbery and thus is not a visually discordant element. Alterations made to the interior of the building are largely of a cosmetic nature, such as the addition of partitions, imitation wood paneling, and acoustic ceilings, and could be removed without damaging the structure.

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of the few surviving retail arcades in Kentucky. However, all of these buildings have undergone numerous alterations ranging from the relatively unobtrusive installation of replacement windows in the City Hall building to the more severe impact of the removal of the Second National Bank's cornice. In like fashion the Boyd County Courthouse, a straightforward example of the Neo-Classical style, has endured numerous insensitive additions and loss of site integrity. So in this context the fine state of preservation of the post office building seems all the more remarkable.

The United States Post office at Ashland, Kentucky was built to supplant two earlier facilities, Station One in the nearby settlement of Pollard's Station, and Station Two in the Ventura Hotel in downtown Ashland. By the early 1910's, a site had been chosen for the new building; a three-lot parcel at the northwest corner of Winchester Avenue and Seventeenth Street, then occupied by several mid-to-late Nineteenth-Century dwellings.¹ The first of these lots was purchased by the United States Government in 1912, with subsequent purchases made soon afterward. By late 1915, construction of the new post office was underway, and its cornerstone was set in place in early 1916. A photograph taken in 1916 and reproduced in ASHLAND'S PAST: A PICTORIAL HISTORY shows blocks of stone being hoisted into place and floor joists installed. Construction of the new post office was supervised by contractor R. P. Farmouth of Cincinnati, with James Wetmore acting as supervising architect. Like many federal buildings of the early-to-mid Twentieth Century, the post office was constructed of limestone from the Bedford Steam Stone Works of Bedford, Indiana.

By late 1916, the new building was occupied. The first floor was devoted to lobby and workroom space as well as offices of the postmaster and superintendent of mails. The second floor housed the offices of the postal inspector as well as the local divisions of the Internal Revenue Service and Civil Service, and armed forces recruiters. The basement housed storage space and mechanical facilities as well as the local operations of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms. The new post office served the burgeoning city of Ashland and surrounding rural areas and acted as a distribution point for mail to nearby towns including Catlettsburg and Louisa.

¹ Winchester Ave., Ashland's "Main Street," was then in a process of transition from an area of mixed residential and commercial uses, including some of the city's grandest dwellings, to the commercial artery it remains to this day. It appears the construction of the post office building was part of this transition, which involved a gradual shift of the city's main business district from Front and Greenup Streets, along the riverfront, southward to Winchester and Carter Avenues. More research will have to be completed, however, to establish this context.

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Continuation Sheet**

Section number 8 Page 3 United States Post Office at Ashland, Kentucky

The post office building was remodeled and enlarged in 1932-33 and again in 1936-37. During the first renovation, an addition was built adjacent to the building's north elevation, and the marble in the lobby was replaced. While construction proceeded, postal operations were temporarily transferred to the nearby Kitchen Building. Local tradition maintains that the newly-completed addition was dedicated in 1933 by Eleanor Roosevelt. During the second renovation, the building was effectively doubled in size by a large addition surrounding its north and west elevations. Few other details have yet been garnered about these renovation projects, and it is not yet known whether they were funded by New Deal agencies such as the Public Works Administration or Works Progress Administration.

In January of 1937 the post office survived a devastating flood that inundated Ashland's low-lying riverfront area and left Winchester Avenue under several feet of water. A small bronze tablet on the post office's rear foundation wall was installed by the Army Corps of Engineers to indicate the high water mark.

Anecdotes about the post office's history offer revealing glimpses of the employment practices of a bygone era. When the present owner purchased the building, he was puzzled by the presence of stacks of pennies in various places. After inquiring about this he was told these were left in place by the postmaster to test employees' honesty.

The United States Post Office at Ashland was included in the survey of Ashland's historic resources funded by a local planning agency and conducted by architectural historian Edward Chappell in 1977. In 1982 the Kentucky Heritage Council, in conjunction with the United States Postal Service, determined the post office building eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

Ashland's post office continued to serve its designated purpose until 1987 when a new facility was completed. Since then, it has been largely vacant except for some storage facilities in the basement. The present owner purchased the building from the United States Postal Service in 1987 and plans a sensitive rehabilitation of the building.

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 9; 10 Page 1; 1 United States Post Office at Ashland, Kentucky

E. Miller Carbon, United States Postal Service Historic, Architectural and Archaeological Significance Survey. May, 14, 1982. Available at Kentucky Heritage Council, Frankfort, Kentucky.

Ashland Centennial Committee. A HISTORY OF ASHLAND, KENTUCKY, 1786-1954. Ashland, Kentucky: Ashland Committee for the Celebration of its Centennial, 1954.

Verbal Boundary Description.

The nominated area measures 201' by 143.25' and includes the following parcels:

All of lots 11, 12 and 14, Range Two East, plus the following parcel:
Beginning on the north side of Winchester Avenue 50 feet westerly of the northwest corner of Winchester Avenue and Seventeenth Street, thence with the line of Winchester Avenue westerly 50 feet; thence at right angles northerly 142 1/2 feet to an alley; thence southeasterly with the line of said alley 50 feet; thence at right angles southwesterly 142 1/2 to the beginning.

Boundary justification: The above described property is the entire legal parcel and includes all the area historically associated with the post office building. It is bounded on the north by an alley, on the east by Seventeenth Street, on the south by Winchester Avenue, and on the west by other properties. Areas adjacent to the post office building are described in Section 7.

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National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

United States Post Office at Ashland, Kentucky, Boyd County

Section number _____ **Page** _____

For all Photos:

Nomination:	U. S. Post Office at Ashland, Kentucky
Location:	1645 Winchester Avenue, Ashland, Kentucky
Photographer:	Margaret Warminski
Negative Location:	Route #2, Box 289, Catlettsburg, Kentucky
Date Taken:	July & August 1988

Photo No.

View or Elevation

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1 | Facade and west wing, looking northeast |
| 2 | Facade view, looking north |
| 3 | Facade, east elevation and rear block looking northwest |
| 4 | Rear (north) elevation of rear block, looking east |
| 5 | South elevation of west wing, and west elevation of main block, looking east |
| 6 | Plaque with swag, south elevation |
| 7 | Window, south elevation |
| 8 | Lobby interior, looking east |

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historic name United States Post Office at Ashland, Kentucky
other names/site number n/a Bo A 76

2. Location

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state Kentucky code KY county Boyd code 019 zip code 41101

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Name of related multiple property listing: Historic Resources of Ashland, Kentucky
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David L. Morgan
Signature of certifying official David L. Morgan, State Historic Preservation Officer Date 10-10-88
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Signature of commenting or other official _____ Date _____
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(enter categories from instructions)

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The building's predominantly commercial surroundings reflect Ashland's architectural eclecticism. The post office building's lot is adjoined on the west by a series of late nineteenth century commercial buildings, ranging from two to four stories in height, the largest and most architecturally distinguished of which is partly obscured by a 1960's-vintage metal grille. On the south side of Winchester Avenue opposite the post office building, are a High Victorian Gothic church, a multi-story retail building of the early twentieth century with a one-story 1970's addition, and a five-story department store exhibiting an Art Moderne influence.

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

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Significant Person
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- Other State agency
- Federal agency
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- University
- Other

Specify repository:

Kentucky Heritage Council, Frankfort

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UTM References

A

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Zone		Easting						Northing						

B

Zone		Easting						Northing						

C

Zone		Easting						Northing						

D

Zone		Easting						Northing						

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Margaret Warminski, Architectural Historian
organization _____ date August, 1988
street & number 340 East Second Street telephone (606) 581-2883
city or town Newport state Kentucky zip code 41071

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National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetSection number 7 Page 2 United States Post Office at Ashland, Kentucky

built on a foundation of poured concrete, its outer foundation walls utilize limestone ashlar for decorative effect. The building's flat roof, of built-up composition material, is hidden from view by a low parapet. Although the building's window treatments are varied, all utilize double-hung, multi-pane wooden sash and are set into shallow spandrels. The building's main entrance faces Winchester Avenue. A secondary doorway, with stoop encircled by a delicate wrought-iron railing, addresses Seventeenth Street.

The building's original, 1916 section is five bays wide and symmetrical in design. It is dominated by a slightly projecting central pavilion that is defined by a series of four two-story fluted pilasters with stylized acanthine capitals. This pavilion contains the main entrance and a pair of grandly-scaled windows that extend from floor to ceiling. Both the doorway and windows are set in arched spandrels surrounded by radiating voussoirs with scrolled keystones, and enriched by narrow egg-and-dart mouldings. They are surmounted by arched fanlights with delicate tracery. The windows and doorway are defined by slender engaged colonnettes that in turn are flanked by narrow multi-paned sidelights. The building's side elevations, and the outer corners of its facade, feature rectangular windows set above inset blind panels. Contained in the second story are windows that appropriately are smaller in scale than those of the first floor. Set between the first and second stories is a series of a square stone plaques bearing carved floral swags in low relief. An entablature displaying the legend "United States Post Office," a row of dentils, and a projecting cornice complete the composition.

The additions made to the post office building during the 1930's were designed to harmonize with the original structure's scale, materials, and decorative elements. The building's west wing echoes the window and cornice treatments of the main block, albeit on a more diminutive scale and in a less elaborate manner. Set above the outer bays are decorative plaques similar to those of the main block but executed in a stylized rather than naturalistic fashion. A concrete loading dock with projecting metal canopy and industrial-type double metal doors extends along the west elevation of this wing. The north end of the loading dock has been partially enclosed with a corrugated plastic partition. The building's rear block is characterized by large tripartite windows surmounted by operable square transoms and set above blind panels similar to those found below the windows of the main block. Paired, double-hung windows light its ground floor.

The interior of the post office building features a spacious, high-ceilinged lobby extending along its south elevation, and a large, open work area in rear. The lobby, the building's major public space, retains much of its original character. It features stout columns of gray marble, encircled by egg-and-dart moulding, and gray marble floors with an inset red border. Marble wainscoting, approximately six feet in height, dates from a 1932 renovation; it closely resembles that of the columns but displays less pronounced veining. A marble counters line the north wall of the lobby, and an ornate iron grille extends above them to the ceiling. Several original bronze light sconces

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still adorn the walls. Sections of the coffered ceiling have been concealed beneath acoustical panels added about six inches below the ceiling's original height, and flush-mounted fluorescent light fixtures and ventilator fans have been added. A wooden airlock vestibule, approximately eight feet high, was also added to the main entrance at an undetermined date, probably in the late 1930's. Since it was designed to resemble the woodwork found elsewhere in the building, it is not a discordant element, and contributes to the lobby's historic ambience.

A partly enclosed marble staircase with brass handrail leads from the lobby's west wall to the second floor, which is devoted to small offices. Like the first floor, the second floor of the post office building has been well preserved. Its hallway and most of its offices retain their original paneled wooden wainscoting as well as mitered and varnished door and window trim. Virtually all original doors, with panels of translucent glue-chip glass, are still in place. Employee restrooms retain their original fixtures including freestanding porcelain sinks, and lavatory stalls and wainscoting of gray marble.

The building's design offered supervisors opportunities to keep watch over their employees without being detected. A secret stairway in the center of the building provides access to an upper-level catwalk encircling the work area. From this vantage point supervisors could observe employees through a series of hinged slits concealed by decorative crown moulding. Holes in the catwalk floor, designed to resemble light sockets when viewed from the work room below, served the same purpose.

The building was carefully maintained during its years as a postal facility. Although it has been vacant for over a year, it remains in good condition despite minor plaster damage caused by water leaks. Moreover, its historic fabric remains largely intact. The double doors depicted in a c. 1975 photograph have been replaced by modern ones of aluminum and clear glass, and aluminum handrails have been added to the front steps. Although incongruous with the historic design, both these changes are relatively unobtrusive. A concrete ramp has been added to the southwest corner of the facade but is largely hidden by shrubbery and thus is not a visually discordant element. Alterations made to the interior of the building are largely of a cosmetic nature, such as the addition of partitions, imitation wood paneling, and acoustic ceilings, and could be removed without damaging the structure.

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of the few surviving retail arcades in Kentucky. However, all of these buildings have undergone numerous alterations ranging from the relatively unobtrusive installation of replacement windows in the City Hall building to the more severe impact of the removal of the Second National Bank's cornice. In like fashion the Boyd County Courthouse, a straightforward example of the Neo-Classical style, has endured numerous insensitive additions and loss of site integrity. So in this context the fine state of preservation of the post office building seems all the more remarkable.

The United States Post office at Ashland, Kentucky was built to supplant two earlier facilities, Station One in the nearby settlement of Pollard's Station, and Station Two in the Ventura Hotel in downtown Ashland. By the early 1910's, a site had been chosen for the new building; a three-lot parcel at the northwest corner of Winchester Avenue and Seventeenth Street, then occupied by several mid-to-late Nineteenth-Century dwellings.¹ The first of these lots was purchased by the United States Government in 1912, with subsequent purchases made soon afterward. By late 1915, construction of the new post office was underway, and its cornerstone was set in place in early 1916. A photograph taken in 1916 and reproduced in ASHLAND'S PAST: A PICTORIAL HISTORY shows blocks of stone being hoisted into place and floor joists installed. Construction of the new post office was supervised by contractor R. P. Farmouth of Cincinnati, with James Wetmore acting as supervising architect. Like many federal buildings of the early-to-mid Twentieth Century, the post office was constructed of limestone from the Bedford Steam Stone Works of Bedford, Indiana.

By late 1916, the new building was occupied. The first floor was devoted to lobby and workroom space as well as offices of the postmaster and superintendent of mails. The second floor housed the offices of the postal inspector as well as the local divisions of the Internal Revenue Service and Civil Service, and armed forces recruiters. The basement housed storage space and mechanical facilities as well as the local operations of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms. The new post office served the burgeoning city of Ashland and surrounding rural areas and acted as a distribution point for mail to nearby towns including Catlettsburg and Louisa.

¹ Winchester Ave., Ashland's "Main Street," was then in a process of transition from an area of mixed residential and commercial uses, including some of the city's grandest dwellings, to the commercial artery it remains to this day. It appears the construction of the post office building was part of this transition, which involved a gradual shift of the city's main business district from Front and Greenup Streets, along the riverfront, southward to Winchester and Carter Avenues. More research will have to be completed, however, to establish this context.

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The post office building was remodeled and enlarged in 1932-33 and again in 1936-37. During the first renovation, an addition was built adjacent to the building's north elevation, and the marble in the lobby was replaced. While construction proceeded, postal operations were temporarily transferred to the nearby Kitchen Building. Local tradition maintains that the newly-completed addition was dedicated in 1933 by Eleanor Roosevelt. During the second renovation, the building was effectively doubled in size by a large addition surrounding its north and west elevations. Few other details have yet been garnered about these renovation projects, and it is not yet known whether they were funded by New Deal agencies such as the Public Works Administration or Works Progress Administration.

In January of 1937 the post office survived a devastating flood that inundated Ashland's low-lying riverfront area and left Winchester Avenue under several feet of water. A small bronze tablet on the post office's rear foundation wall was installed by the Army Corps of Engineers to indicate the high water mark.

Anecdotes about the post office's history offer revealing glimpses of the employment practices of a bygone era. When the present owner purchased the building, he was puzzled by the presence of stacks of pennies in various places. After inquiring about this he was told these were left in place by the postmaster to test employees' honesty.

The United States Post Office at Ashland was included in the survey of Ashland's historic resources funded by a local planning agency and conducted by architectural historian Edward Chappell in 1977. In 1982 the Kentucky Heritage Council, in conjunction with the United States Postal Service, determined the post office building eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

Ashland's post office continued to serve its designated purpose until 1987 when a new facility was completed. Since then, it has been largely vacant except for some storage facilities in the basement. The present owner purchased the building from the United States Postal Service in 1987 and plans a sensitive rehabilitation of the building.

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E. Miller Carbon, United States Postal Service Historic, Architectural and Archaeological Significance Survey. May, 14, 1982. Available at Kentucky Heritage Council, Frankfort, Kentucky.

Ashland Centennial Committee. A HISTORY OF ASHLAND, KENTUCKY, 1786-1954. Ashland, Kentucky: Ashland Committee for the Celebration of its Centennial, 1954.

Verbal Boundary Description.

The nominated area measures 201' by 143.25' and includes the following parcels:

All of lots 11, 12 and 14, Range Two East, plus the following parcel:
Beginning on the north side of Winchester Avenue 50 feet westerly of the northwest corner of Winchester Avenue and Seventeenth Street, thence with the line of Winchester Avenue westerly 50 feet; thence at right angles northerly 142 1/2 feet to an alley; thence southeasterly with the line of said alley 50 feet; thence at right angles southwesterly 142 1/2 to the beginning.

Boundary justification: The above described property is the entire legal parcel and includes all the area historically associated with the post office building. It is bounded on the north by an alley, on the east by Seventeenth Street, on the south by Winchester Avenue, and on the west by other properties. Areas adjacent to the post office building are described in Section 7.

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For all Photos:

Nomination:	U. S. Post Office at Ashland, Kentucky
Location:	1645 Winchester Avenue, Ashland, Kentucky
Photographer:	Margaret Warminski
Negative Location:	Route #2, Box 289, Catlettsburg, Kentucky
Date Taken:	July & August 1988

Photo No.

View or Elevation

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1 | Facade and west wing, looking northeast |
| 2 | Facade view, looking north |
| 3 | Facade, east elevation and rear block looking northwest |
| 4 | Rear (north) elevation of rear block, looking east |
| 5 | South elevation of west wing, and west elevation of main block, looking east |
| 6 | Plaque with swag, south elevation |
| 7 | Window, south elevation |
| 8 | Lobby interior, looking east |

