

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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

FOR FEDERAL PROPERTIES

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED APR 17 1986

DATE ENTERED MAY 30 1986

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

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC

United States Post Office

AND/OR COMMON

Waltham Main Post Office

**2 LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER

774 Main Street

N/A NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Waltham

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

N/A VICINITY OF

Eighth Congressional District

STATE

Massachusetts 02154

CODE

1340

COUNTY

Middlesex

CODE

017

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

**CATEGORY**

DISTRICT  
 BUILDING(S)  
 STRUCTURE  
 SITE  
 OBJECT

**OWNERSHIP**

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

**STATUS**

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

**PRESENT USE**

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

**4 AGENCY**

REGIONAL HEADQUARTERS: (If applicable)

New England Field Real Estate and Buildings Office

STREET & NUMBER

1050 Waltham Street

CITY, TOWN

Lexington

STATE

Massachusetts 02173

N/A VICINITY OF

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Middlesex County Registry, Cambridge Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

208 Cambridge Street

CITY, TOWN

East Cambridge

STATE

Massachusetts 02141

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

None

DATE

FEDERAL  STATE  COUNTY  LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

## 7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

### PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Waltham Post Office is located on one of the main thoroughways of the city, in an area of one-story, medium density retail stores. To the west of it is a stone vernacular Episcopal Church, a Colonial Revival wood Congregational Church, a four-story apartment building, and the Classical Revival Waltham Public Library. Further west is the center common and city hall. Main Street was previously the Old Boston Post Road which extended from Boston to New York.

Overall, the building and its corner property are in good condition. It is situated towards the northeastern end of the lot, with a vehicle maneuvering area to its west and south. The site is landscaped with lawn, overgrown bushes, and shrubs. Two large trees frame the building on Main Street. The building has a projecting granite base with red brick above laid in English bond, a projecting limestone architrave and cornice framing a brick entablature, and open limestone balustrade panels above each north window in the parapet wall. In plan, the building has an original vestibule and public lobby flanked by the Postmaster's office to the left and workroom space to the right. Beyond is the workroom, mail vestibule, and platform.

Seven granite steps with wrought-iron railings create the main approach. The front (north) elevation is divided into seven-bays with a five-bay entrance section and two recessed end bays. Wood-framed windows are contained within vertical elements which run from the base to the entablature and contain a coffered wood panel. The end bay windows add an additional panel at the second floor level to express the change of interior height between the lobby and the offices to its sides. The central entrance contains replacement aluminum and glass doors framed by a limestone

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**

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Continuation sheet

Waltham Post Office

Item number 7

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architrave and projecting pediment; this area is surmounted by an engaged limestone tablet containing the building's name at parapet height. Cast-iron and glass lanterns flank each side of the entry.

The east and west elevations are similar in detail to the front facade. They continue the limestone entablature ornament from the front to express the building's public spaces, then flatten to two belt courses to represent the workroom space within. The rear (south) elevation contains the covered mail platform; the limestone belt courses from the sides end abruptly once past the rear corners.

One enters the building through a painted wood and glass panel vestibule with brass railings on the inner doors to the east and west. The public lobby, two stories in height, includes a Westfield green marble wainscot with Vermont Pittsford Italian trim, white and black diagonal checkerboard terrazzo flooring, plaster walls, ceiling, and molding, and wood service areas with wired glass and pivoting wood sash windows above. On the west wall is a recessed entry with marble trim to the Postmaster's office. At each corner of the lobby are intersecting pilasters with marble bases; a pilaster marks the separation of each bay along the north and south walls. The walls at second floor level have simple, coffered rectangular patterns. The area is lighted by long, suspended fluorescent fixtures.

# 8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES	Cornerstone: Aug. 7, 1935 Dedication: March 14, 1936	BUILDER/ARCHITECT	Wadsworth, Hubbard & Smith, Boston Architects; Leighton & Mitchell Co. BOSTON - BUILDERS
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STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Waltham Main Post Office was built in 1935. Essentially T-shaped in form, this compact, red brick and white stone trimmed structure is the stone most architecturally significant building in an area of convenience stores, gas stations and fast food restaurants. Architecturally, this building is significant as a representative of Public Works Administration construction and design policies during the Depression. Its form, materials, elements and plan underline P.W.A. advocacy of economy, standardization and functionalism in Post Office architecture. Stylistically it blends a simplified classicism with a modern, streamlined approach to architecture, exemplifying what Lois Craig called "starved classicism". The buildings simple form, locally manufactured bricks, minimal ornament and logical 6-area plan facilitated an 8 month construction schedule.

The Waltham Main Post Office cornerstone was laid on August 7, 1935. The stone reads "Henry Morgenthau Jr., Secretary of the Treasury; James A. Farley, Postmaster General; Louis A. Simon, Supervising Architect; Neal A. Medmick, Supervising Engineer; Wadsworth, Hubbard and Smith, Architects, 1935."

This building is a product of U.S. Supervising Architect Louis A. Simon's office. Louis Adolf Simon was responsible for numerous post offices, custom houses and court houses. He was born in Boston c. 1870. Educated in M.I.T., he began a private practice in Washington D.C. in 1894. He entered the office of the U.S. Treasury Supervising Architect in 1896. He served as the Chief Architect in this office from 1905-1933. From 1933 until his death in 1933 he was the U.S. Supervisory Architect. He was responsible for the Federal Building at the New York World's Fair in 1939-40.

The local architects of the Waltham Main Post Office was the Boston based (11 Beacon Street, 1930's) firm of Wadsworth, Hubbard and Smith. Information on the firm's work is sketchy but it is documented that it was the successor firm to a long line of distinguished Boston Architectural practices included Nathaniel J. Bradles, Winslow and Wetherill and Winslow Wetherill and Bigelow. By the late 1920's the firm was known as Wadsworth and Smith (Phillip Wadsworth and Giles Smith). Their work is represented by several building on the Boston College campus, Newton, MA. From 1931-1938

## 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

"Waltham News Tribune - January 4, 1935; February 5, 1935; July 8, 1935

"Waltham News Tribune" Vol. 293, No. 63, March 14, 1936

History of Post Office Construction 1900-1940, July, 1982

Craig, Lois, ed. The Federal Presence: Architecture, Politics and Symbols in the United States Government Building, Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 1979.

## 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 0.827

UTM REFERENCES

A 

1	9	3	1	5	4	2	5	4	6	9	3	7	3	0
ZONE			EASTING				NORTHING							

B 

ZONE			EASTING				NORTHING							

C 

ZONE			EASTING				NORTHING							

D 

ZONE			EASTING				NORTHING							

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The Post Office property is located on the Southeast corner of Main and Grant Streets.  
 West to East - 214' along Main Street  
 North to South - 164.04' along Grant Street  
 East to West - 208.84' along rear lot line  
 South to North - 166.12' along side lot line

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

## 11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Steven M. Smith, Project Manager

ORGANIZATION

SULLIVAN DESIGN GROUP, INC.

DATE

September 24, 1985

STREET & NUMBER

44 Adams Street

TELEPHONE

(617) 848-1545

CITY OR TOWN

Braintree

STATE

Massachusetts 02184

## 12 CERTIFICATION OF NOMINATION

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

YES

NO

NONE

*Valerie Talmage*

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

In compliance with Executive Order 11593, I hereby nominate this property to the National Register, certifying that the State Historic Preservation Officer has been allowed 90 days in which to present the nomination to the State Review Board and to evaluate its significance. The evaluated level of significance is  National  State  Local.

FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE

*John B. ...*

TITLE Realty Specialist, Senior

DATE April 4, 1986

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

*Patrick W. Andrus*

DATE 5/30/86

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST *Beth S. Sarge*

DATE 5/29/86

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**

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received  
date entered

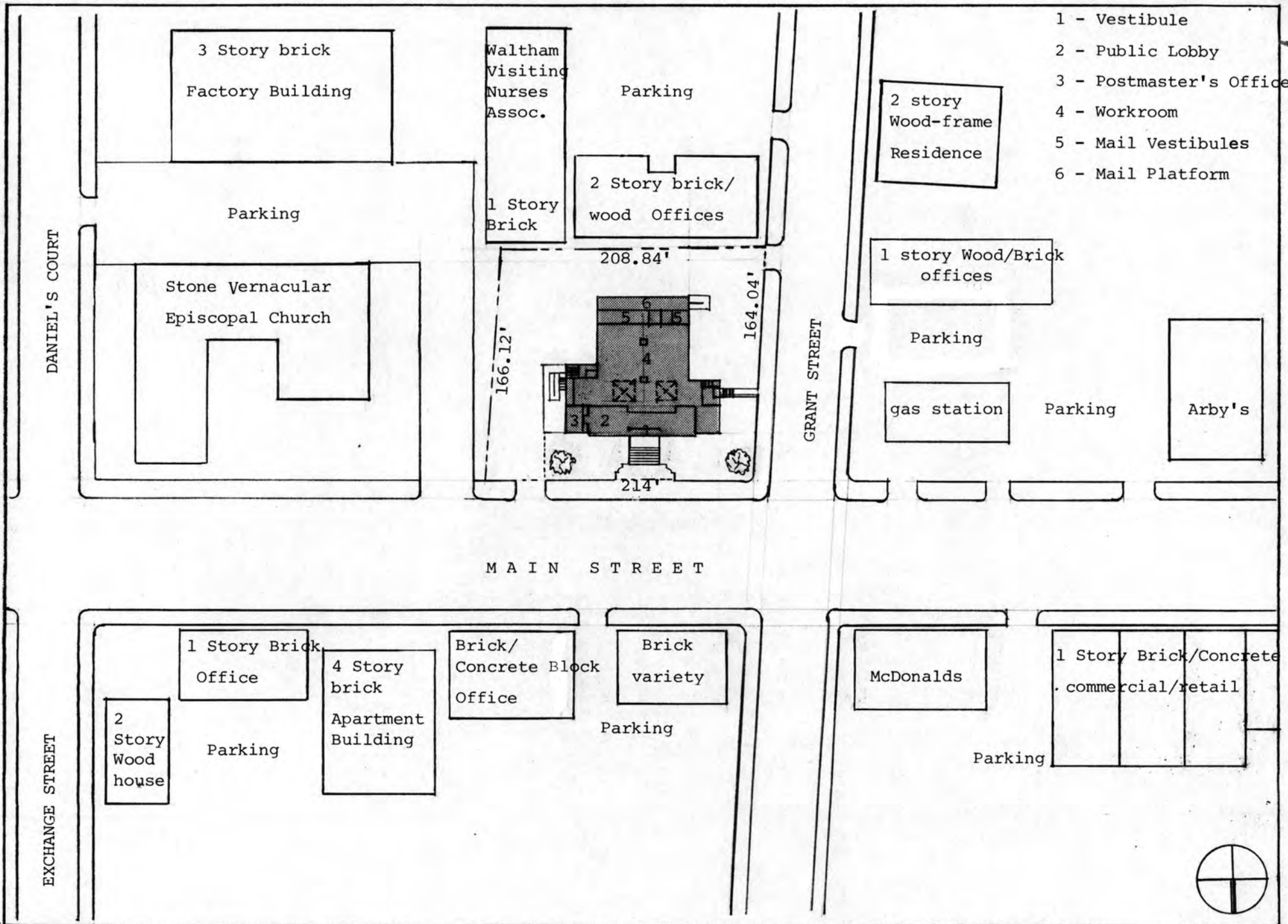
Continuation sheet Waltham Main Post Office Item number 8

Page 2

it was called Wadsworth, Hubbard, and Smith.

The Waltham Main Post Office was dedicated on March 14, 1936. The original appropriation was \$70,000 and was later raised to \$120,000. Earlier drawings show a building essentially the same but with much more costly materials and details and a more complicated roof configuration.

The construction of the building during the height of the Depression provided construction work and permanent jobs to Waltham's citizens. The city was spending a substantial amount of money on public welfare. The city budget was increased because of a decrease in valuation with no new building to offset the loss. Despite assistance provided by the Emergency Relief Administration, the city still had to expend non-relief to 400 families.



- 1 - Vestibule
- 2 - Public Lobby
- 3 - Postmaster's Office
- 4 - Workroom
- 5 - Mail Vestibules
- 6 - Mail Platform

M A I N S T R E E T

UNITED STATES POST OFFICE - WALTHAM, MASSACHUSETTS





(NATICK)  
6769 IV SE

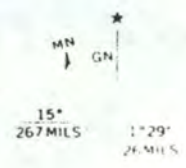
Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey

Control by USGS, USC&GS, and Massachusetts Geodetic Survey

Planimetry by photogrammetric methods from aerial photographs taken 1939. Topography by planetable surveys 1943  
Revised from aerial photographs taken 1969. Field checked 1971

Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum  
10,000-foot grid based on Massachusetts coordinate system, mainland zone  
1000 meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid, zone 19

Red tint indicates areas in which only landmark buildings are shown



UTM GRID AND 1971 MAGNETIC NORTH DECLINATION AT CENTER OF SHEET

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

*Substantive Review*

United States Post Office--Waltham Main  
Middlesex County  
MASSACHUSETTS

APR 17 1986

Working No. \_\_\_\_\_  
Fed. Reg. Date: 2/3/87  
Date Due: 5/15/86 - 6/1/86  
Action:  ACCEPT 5-30-86  
 RETURN \_\_\_\_\_  
 REJECT \_\_\_\_\_  
Federal Agency: USPS

- resubmission
- nomination by person or local government
- owner objection
- appeal

Substantive Review:  sample  request  appeal  NR decision

Reviewer's comments:

*Local adaptation of "Starved classicism" is relatively intact, significant as representative of style at local level. Also associated w/ WPA building program in Waltham.*

Recom./Criteria Accept C  
Reviewer Swasey  
Discipline Arch. History  
Date 5/29/86  
\_\_\_\_\_ see continuation sheet

Nomination returned for: \_\_\_\_\_ technical corrections cited below  
\_\_\_\_\_ substantive reasons discussed below

1. Name

2. Location

3. Classification

Category	Ownership Public Acquisition	Status Accessible	Present Use
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4. Owner of Property

5. Location of Legal Description

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

Has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

7. Description

Condition

<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	Check one	Check one
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> original site
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed	<input type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved date _____

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

- summary paragraph
- completeness
- clarity
- alterations/integrity
- dates
- boundary selection

---

**8. Significance**

Period      Areas of Significance—Check and justify below

Specific dates      Builder/Architect

Statement of Significance (*in one paragraph*)

- summary paragraph
- completeness
- clarity
- applicable criteria
- justification of areas checked
- relating significance to the resource
- context
- relationship of integrity to significance
- justification of exception
- other

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**9. Major Bibliographical References**

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**10. Geographical Data**

Acreage of nominated property \_\_\_\_\_

Quadrangle name \_\_\_\_\_

UTM References \_\_\_\_\_

---

Verbal boundary description and justification

---

**11. Form Prepared By**

---

**12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification**

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

\_\_\_\_ national      \_\_\_\_ state      \_\_\_\_ local

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

title      date

---

**13. Other**

- Maps
- Photographs
- Other

Questions concerning this nomination may be directed to \_\_\_\_\_

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_



WALTHAM MAIN POST OFFICE

Waltham, MA

David R. Hooker

Earl R. Flansburgh and Associates

May 1983

Front elevation

Waltham Post Office



Waltham Post Office

WALTHAM MAIN POST OFFICE  
Waltham, MA  
David R. Hooker  
Earl R. Flansburgh and Associates  
May 1983  
Front elevation. Left view



Waltham Post Office

WALTHAM MAIN POST OFFICE

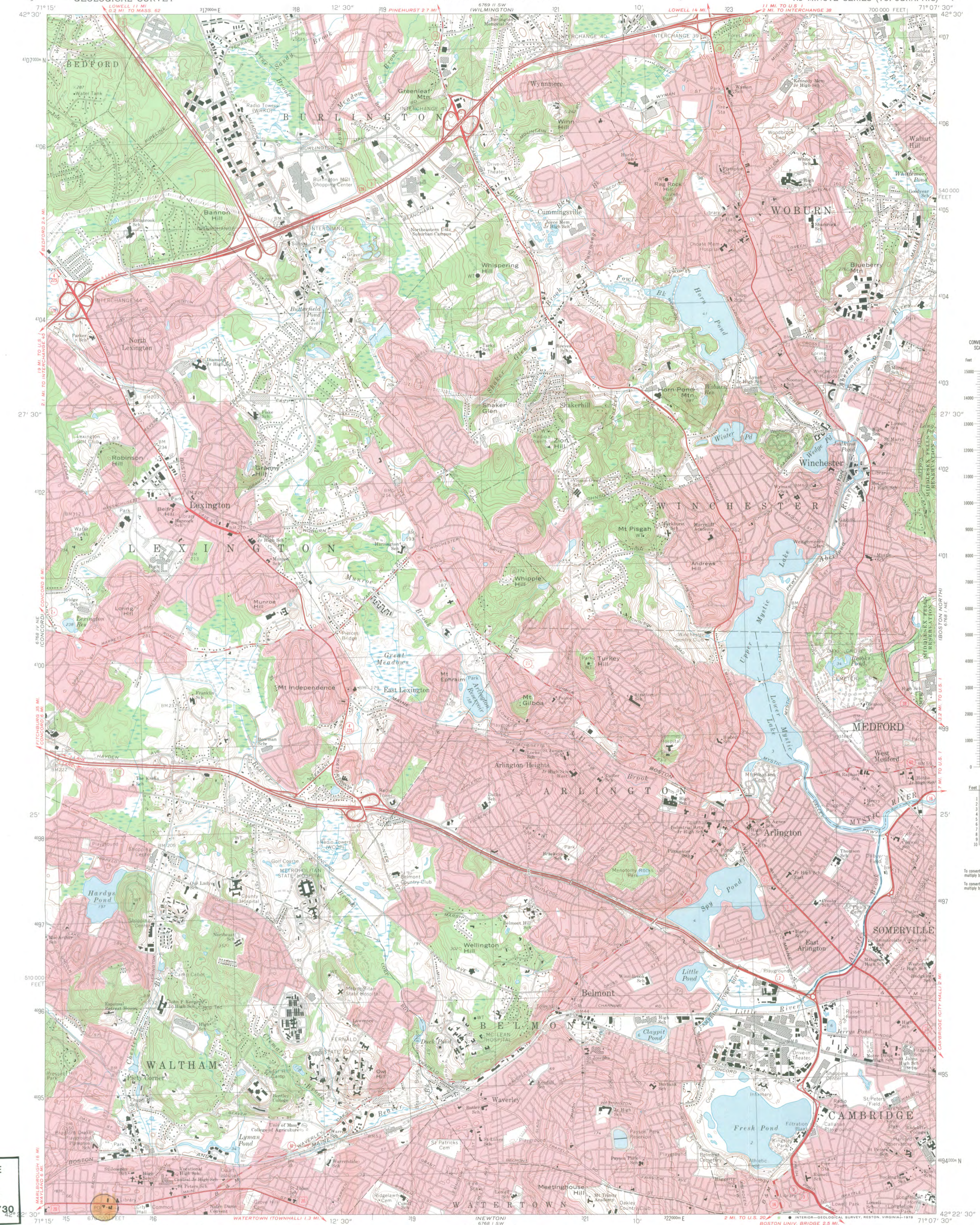
Waltham, MA

David R. Hooker

Earl R. Flansburgh and Associates

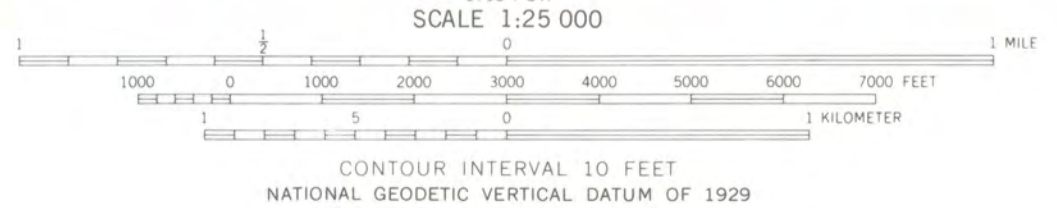
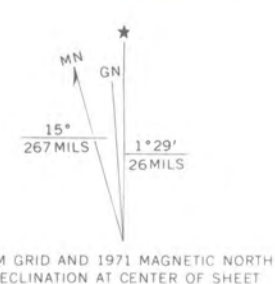
May 1983

Front elevation. Right view



U.S. POST OFFICE  
WALTHAM, MA  
UTM REFERENCE:  
19/315425/4693730

Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey  
Control by USGS, USC&GS, and Massachusetts  
Geodetic Survey  
Planimetry by photogrammetric methods from aerial  
photographs taken 1939. Topography by planetable surveys 1943  
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Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum  
10,000-foot grid based on Massachusetts coordinate system,  
mainland zone  
1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid,  
zone 19  
Red tint indicates areas in which only landmark  
buildings are shown



ROAD CLASSIFICATION  
Primary highway, hard surface  
Secondary highway, hard surface  
Unimproved road  
Interstate Route  
U. S. Route  
State Route



THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS  
FOR SALE BY U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, RESTON, VIRGINIA 22092  
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST

LEXINGTON, MASS.  
N4222.5—W7107.5/7.5  
1971  
AMS 6768 I NW—SERIES V814



FIELD REAL ESTATE AND BUILDINGS OFFICE  
P.O. Box 324  
Lexington, MA 02173-0324

August 20, 1985

AUG 23 1985

The Honorable Arthur J. Clark  
Mayor, City of Waltham  
Waltham City Hall  
610 Main Street  
Waltham, MA 02154

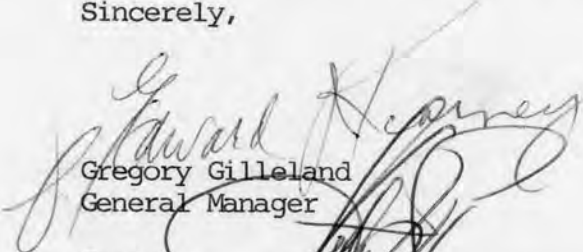
Dear Mayor Clark:

The U.S. Postal Service in conjunction with the Massachusetts State Historic Preservation Officer in Boston has evaluated the Main Post Office in Waltham and has determined it is significant from an historical viewpoint.

In view of the above evaluation, the U.S. Postal Service intends to nominate this building to the National Register of Historic Places. We would, prior to our taking formal action, appreciate receiving your concurrence.

If you concur with our proposed action, kindly return a signed copy of this letter in the enclosed envelope.

Sincerely,

  
Gregory Gilleland  
General Manager

Concur: \_\_\_\_\_

Enclosures

JPC/ljr

210117

Enclosure

Copy

Contact Number

Address

Enclosure

Letter in the enclosed envelope

is for court with our blocked action. Kindly return a signed copy of this

one facing court action. Address received regarding your court case. Please do not pay any money to the various parties of the public process. The court will

in view of the above explanation, the U.S. Postal Service and the determined it is advisable to suspend the mail to the various offices in the area of the U.S. Postal Service in conjunction with the suspension

Dear Mr. Clark:

Washington, DC 20540

C/O New York

Washington, DC 20540

With a copy of the letter

the appropriate amount of cash

Order No. 1002

Postmark: WASHINGTON, DC 20540

P.O. Box 335

FIELD REAL ESTATE AND BUILDINGS OFFICE



SEP 5 9 11 PM '85

NEW ENGLAND FIELD REAL ESTATE BUSINESS OFFICE LEXINGTON, MA 02173

RECEIVED U.S. POSTAL SERVICE

SEP 5 9 1985



UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE  
475 L'Enfant Plaza, SW  
Washington, DC 20260

April 8, 1986

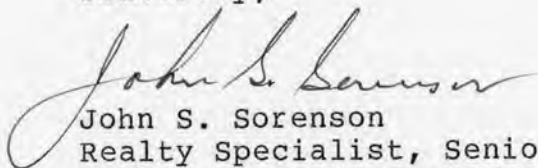
Ms. Carol D. Shull  
Chief of Registration  
National Register of Historic Places  
National Park Service  
Department of Interior  
Washington, D.C. 20240-1002

Dear Ms. Shull:

The Postal Service hereby submits a nomination for the post office located at 774 Main Street, Middlesex County, Waltham, Massachusetts.

If you have any questions concerning this nomination, please call me at 202/268-3107.

Sincerely,

  
John S. Sorenson  
Realty Specialist, Senior  
Office of Real Estate

Enclosure

Rec'd  
APR 17 1986