

2363

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 for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions.



### 1. Name of Property

Historic name: United States Post Office and Court House

Other names/site number: U.S. Courthouse

Name of related multiple property listing:

N/A

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

### 2. Location

Street & number: 200 West Broad Street

City or town: Statesville State: NC County: Iredell

Not For Publication:  Vicinity:

### 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, 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. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

national  statewide  local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

A  B  C  D

	<u>3/1/2018</u>
<b>Signature of certifying official/Title:</b>	<b>Date</b>
<u>Federal Preservation Officer U.S. General Services Administration</u>	
<b>State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government</b>	

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

	<u>February 26, 2018</u>
<b>Signature of commenting official:</b>	<b>Date</b>
<u>SHPO</u>	
<b>State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government</b>	

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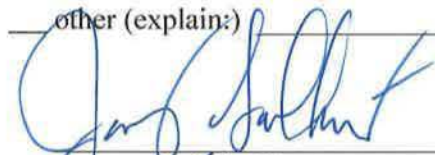
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**4. National Park Service Certification**

I hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register
- determined eligible for the National Register
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register

other (explain:)

  
Signature of the Keeper  
*For*

4-26-2018  
Date of Action

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

- Private:
- Public – Local
- Public – State
- Public – Federal

**Category of Property**

(Check only one box.)

- Building(s)
- District
- Site
- Structure
- Object

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**Number of Resources within Property**

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

<u>Contributing</u>	<u>Noncontributing</u>	
<u>                    </u>	<u>                    </u>	buildings
<u>                    </u>	<u>                    </u>	sites
<u>                    </u>	<u>                    </u>	structures
<u>                    </u>	<u>                    </u>	objects
<u>          0          </u>	<u>          0          </u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register   1  

Contributing resource in Statesville Commercial Historic District

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Government: Post Office

Government: Courthouse

Government: Government Office

**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Government: Courthouse

Government: Government Office

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## 7. Description

### Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

MODERN MOVEMENT: OTHER: Simplified Classical

**Materials:** (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: STONE: Granite, Limestone; CONCRETE;  
BRICK; SYNTHETIC; RUBBER/GRAVEL; METAL: Iron

### Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

### Summary Paragraph

The United States Post Office and Court House in Statesville, North Carolina, is located at the northwest corner of West Broad Street and Meeting Street at the western center of the downtown business district. The area is listed in the National Register of Historic Places as the Statesville Commercial Historic District, which includes the United States Post Office and Court House as a contributing resource.<sup>1</sup> The three-story brick veneer building was completed in 1939 to house the post office, federal courtroom, and additional federal government offices. The United States Post Office and Court House is a skillful example of the Simplified Classical architectural style (also known as “Stripped Classical”) characterized by classical decorative elements, such as bullet medallions, pilasters, and symmetry combined with a simple flat-roofed square-shaped form.<sup>2</sup> The Simplified Classical architectural style, common to many public and quasi-public buildings of the 1930s and 1940s, adopted traditional classical forms of architecture while abandoning excessive ornament in favor of more subtle stylized decorative components. The building is constructed of high-quality materials, predominantly brick and granite, and remains in excellent condition with relatively few alterations to its 1939 exterior appearance and configuration. On the interior, significant public spaces, including the original postal lobby and second floor courtroom, remain largely unaltered. Two wood sculptures, *Defend Freedom* and

<sup>1</sup> The Statesville Commercial Historic District (80002878) was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1980 and amended in 1995.

<sup>2</sup> Carole Rifkind, *A Field Guide to Contemporary American Architecture* (New York, New York, Plume, 1998), 107-110.



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*Freemen Prosper*, created for the building through a New Deal-era art program and installed in 1948, remain in the second floor courtroom lobby.

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## **Narrative Description**

### Exterior Description<sup>3</sup>

The United States Post Office and Court House is a three-story brick veneer building, supported by a steel structural system atop a full-height basement. The building sits on a poured concrete foundation wall with reinforced concrete columns and beams providing structural support for the upper levels and the roof. The exterior foundation wall is veneered in granite panels. The building walls are composed of brick veneer laid in a decorative English bond pattern. A simple limestone frieze and cornice crowns the juncture of the walls and the roofline and extends across all four elevations, with the exception of an inset portion of the rear elevation where the frieze is omitted. The flat roof is covered by built-up composition with gravel ballast. A wood and stucco penthouse with distinctive decorative detailing blending Greek Revival and Art Moderne styles sits atop the roof.

The building retains its original double-hung wood-sash windows. Windows in the first story are generally eight-over-twelve light, double-hung, wood-sash with limestone sills and lintels, unless otherwise noted. Windows in the second and third floors are typically eight-over-eight light, double-hung, wood-sash with limestone sills and lintels, unless otherwise noted. Limestone spandrel panels with carved ornament consisting of a vertically-oriented pair of anthemion flanked by fletching motifs are situated between the second and third story windows on the south, east, and west elevations.

The south (front) elevation measures seven-bays wide. The central (fourth) bay contains a splayed entry stair from the West Broad Street sidewalk. Three poured-concrete stairs lead to a poured concrete landing and then to a set of six granite stairs and granite landing. Iron railings with straight and twisted pickets are located on either side of the stairs. An additional simple railing without pickets has been added at the center of the stairway. Decorative cast-iron lamps, painted black, are situated at the base of the granite stairs. The main entry into the building consists of two-light double-leaf metal doors with brass door handles and kick plates. These replacement doors of unknown date are similar in configuration to the original doors, but lack the moldings and panels of the originals.<sup>4</sup> The entry is set into a simple Greek Revival-style limestone enframing, characterized by bulleted medallions along the sides, crossetted corners, and a dentiled stone cornice. The door is also distinguished by wooden jambs and door head with a dentiled wood cornice. Atop the door is an eight-light wood transom window covered with a cast-iron rosette- and palmette-ornamented grille.

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<sup>3</sup> Portions of this section have been excerpted from: J. Douglas Thrash, MAI, *Complete Appraisal Self-Contained Report*, prepared for the U.S. General Services Administration Portfolio Management Division, February 7, 2001.

<sup>4</sup> The original doors are visible in the March 1, 1939 construction completion photograph of the building (RG121-BS\_66\_A\_1).

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Between the first and second stories, centered over the main entry, are the words: UNITED STATES POST OFFICE AND COURT HOUSE in bronze lettering. At the far southeast corner of the first story is the cornerstone, which reads:

HENRY MORGENTHAU JR  
SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY

JAMES A FARLEY  
POSTMASTER GENERAL

LOUIS A SIMON  
SUPERVISING ARCHITECT

NEIL A MELICK  
SUPERVISING ENGINEER

R. STANLEY-BROWN  
ARCHITECT

1938

In the second and third stories, the seven bays are recessed from the main body of the wall, creating an appearance of six brick pilasters on either side of the window or door openings. The second story is characterized by seven eight-light wooden French doors that open onto concrete balconettes, framed by low, decorative, cast-iron rosette- and palmette-ornamented railings.

The penthouse is partially visible from both West Broad and Meeting Streets, as it is set back approximately two feet from the south elevation's roof-wall juncture. The penthouse is a small wooden and stucco structure intended to store mechanical systems. It consists of two main blocks linked by a long narrow connector. It has a Greek Revival-inspired form and stylized Greek Revival and Art Moderne design elements, such as the Greek fretwork on the pilasters and the spare classical entablature. Metal louvers are located in the fenestration openings on all sides of the structure.

The west elevation faces a small side yard and is seven-bays wide. The bays are evenly spaced, with the bays of the second and third stories slightly recessed from the face of the elevation, giving the impression of six brick pilasters separating each bay. The sole entry in this elevation is down a set of stairs that lead to an entrance into the former postal inspector's office in the basement level. This poured concrete stair with twelve steps is enclosed by an iron railing on its western side. The basement level on this elevation has four six-over-six light, double-hung, wood-sash windows, each covered by metal bars on the exterior.

Three windows in the west elevation have either louvered vents or a vent pipe replacing the top sash. A second-story window, toward the northwest corner (rear) of the structure, is covered with iron bars.

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The north elevation has eleven bays and fronts the building's parking area and a small alley. This elevation is characterized by a projecting central block that features a loading dock across the first story. Two wings, which flank the central block, project slightly from the main body of the building. The first story of the east wing contains two twelve-light windows with metal venting replacing the top sash; one eight-over-eight light window in the second story; and two eight-over-eight light windows in the third story. The west wing contains a large metal louvered panel replacing an original window and one opening that has been encased in brick to match the original in the first story; two four-over-four light windows covered with metal bars in the second story, and a metal door located within a former window opening. This portion of the elevation has a metal fire stair that provides access from the ground level through the third story.<sup>5</sup>

The central block is capped by a simple stone cornice at the first story, from which projects a flat pent roof, originally intended to shelter the postal loading dock area and adjacent truck parking area. Constructed as an open platform supported by concrete columns, the loading dock was partially enclosed in 2014 to create additional space for court offices. The enclosed eastern two-thirds of the former dock is faced in brick to match the brickwork elsewhere on the building and has two six-over-six light windows. The western section of the loading dock area has a double leaf metal door and a four-over-four light window facing onto the remaining loading dock platform, which has a concrete floor and is accessed by concrete steps flanked with metal pipe railings. These steps date to the 2014 project. Three sets of two closely spaced six-over-six light windows are situated in the second and third stories of the central block. The second story of this block corresponds with the mezzanine level on the building's interior. A narrow brick chimney rises from the top of the block at its northwestern corner. Mechanical HVAC conduit extends from the main roof to the roof of the central block to provide HVAC services.

The west elevation of the central block has a poured concrete ramp flanked with metal pipe railings accessing the loading dock platform, added in 2014; a six-over six light window in the second story; and a replacement metal entry door for access from the metal fire stair in the third story. The east elevation of the central block has a four-over-four light window in the original section and a six-over-six light window in the newly enclosed section of the first story, replacing what had been a doorway onto the loading dock; one six-over-six light window in the second story; and three four-over-four light windows in the third story.

The east elevation of the building is seven-bays wide, and is nearly identical to the west elevation. The east side faces Meeting Street and has a very narrow strip of grass between the building wall and the sidewalk. Unlike the west elevation, the east elevation has undergone some alteration. In the 1990s, a ramp and an exterior stair tower were added to the elevation. A long poured-concrete accessibility ramp with pipe metal railings begins at the southeast corner of the property and ends at a door at the southeast corner of the east elevation. In the 1990s, the original eight-over-twelve light window at the southeast corner of the east elevation (the first bay from the left [south]) was replaced with a modern steel and glass door with a glass transom, in

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<sup>5</sup> It is unclear when this stair was added, but it appears to be approximately forty to fifty years in age.

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order to permit wheelchair access. In 2014, this door was replaced with a new steel and glass door. The new door assembly includes a decorative metal grille over the transom, similar to, but differentiated from, that on the front entrance. A three-story metal stair tower was appended to the fourth (central) bay of the east elevation in the 1990s. All original windows in this central bay were infilled or replaced by metal doors. The east face of the stair tower is a brick wall with bands of stone at the cornice and foundation levels—to match the facing materials on the original building—that shields the eastern view of the metal stair. The red-painted metal stairway is open to view from the north and south.

### Exterior Landscape Features

The United States Post Office and Court House is located at the northwest corner of West Broad and Meeting streets, at the western edge of Statesville's downtown business district. The property is bound on the north by the First Presbyterian Church (1925), on the east by Meeting Street, on the south by West Broad Street, and on the west by an early-twentieth century commercial building. Early-to-mid twentieth century downtown commercial buildings extend along West Broad Street in the vicinity of the United States Post Office and Court House. The area is listed in the National Register of Historic Places as the Statesville Commercial Historic District, which includes the United States Post Office and Court House as a contributing resource.

The United States Post Office and Court House sits on a 0.7-acre lot, which is rectangular and measures 135-feet wide and 217-feet deep. The lot is nearly level and is elevated slightly above street grade. The building is placed toward the front of the lot facing West Broad Street and is situated with minimal setback from the city sidewalk. A small lawn area is located on either side of the central exterior entry stair; several low shrubs have been planted near the east and west corners of the facade. A tall metal flag pole is also situated to the west of the façade. Sidewalk plantings include two young deciduous trees at the west of the building's front (south) elevation, surrounded by low bushes. A low hedge is located at the rear of the east elevation. An approximately five-feet-high modern metal fence secures the east, north, and west sides of the lot. Public parking is available on West Broad Street in diagonal spaces; secured parking for the building's tenants is located at the rear (north) of the building and accessed from Meeting Street. This asphalt-paved lot is striped for 30 spaces.

### Interior Description

Originally, postal uses were located on the first floor, and U.S. District Court courtroom and offices on the second and third floors. The first floor (9,261 square feet) consisted of an L-shaped public postal lobby with a large postal workroom immediately to the rear (north). A mezzanine level (1,637 square feet) situated at the rear (northern) portion of the building, was originally used as break rooms for postal workers. However, in 2014, the postal work areas, behind the postal lobby were converted into a courtroom and offices for the U.S. Bankruptcy Court and, in 2017, the mezzanine level was converted to a shared office area. On the second (9,267 square feet) and third floors (8,113 square feet), the central space is a large, well-appointed courtroom that measures two stories in height. Office spaces are situated along the

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perimeter of the building, encircling the central courtroom. The basement level (9,282 square feet) is largely utilitarian in nature; it encompasses storage and mechanical spaces with the exception of the former postal inspector's office, which is accessible from the exterior basement stair on the west side of the building. There is one original interior public stair for access to the second and third floors, located at the southwest corner of the public lobby. An original elevator shares circulation space with the stair in this corner. A small original rear stair, which can be found in the former postal workroom, provides access to the mezzanine level and basement. As previously described, two sets of modern stairs have been appended on the exterior of the building on the east and north (rear) elevations to furnish access to the federal courtroom and holding cell spaces.

The interior floor plan of the United States Post Office and Court House reflects the multiple uses the building was intended to serve. The first floor and mezzanine historically were used as a postal facility, until the main branch was relocated in 2003 and the space was converted for use by the U.S. Bankruptcy Court in 2014. These floors include a public lobby, which remains a public lobby, and a large postal workroom, a postmaster's office, and other associated office and work spaces, which are now reconfigured as a courtroom for the U.S. Bankruptcy Court and associated court spaces and offices. The second and third floors have historically been utilized by the U.S. District Courts. These floors contain a large federal courtroom-- the ceiling of which extends to the third floor—holding cells, federal office spaces, and New Deal-era statuary, designed by artist Sahl Swarz.

The building's interior walls are covered in plaster with some areas containing marble wainscoting below the plaster walls. Plaster ceilings and walls are painted white unless otherwise noted. The floors are wood, terrazzo, concrete, asbestos tile, replacement vinyl tile, or replacement carpeting. The ceiling finishes are plaster, concrete, or acoustical tile with recessed fluorescent suspended ceiling grids. Original interior wood doors are generally in situ in the building. There are primarily three types of wood doors used in this building: double solid panel doors, solid panel with a frosted glass panel above, or a solid panel with a metal louvered panel below. Finishes in public spaces, which would include the former postal lobby, public restrooms, the main stair and elevator, and the federal courtroom, utilize higher quality materials and decorative treatments, such as marble wainscoting, terrazzo floors, ornamental cornice treatments, and custom-designed light fixtures.

### *First Floor*

The first and mezzanine floors of the United States Post Office and Court House contain the former post office spaces. In the 1990s, prior to the removal of the post office, a new corridor was created in the southeast corner of the first floor from space had been the postmaster's office to connect the lobby area with the accessible entrance added at the south end of the east elevation. This is the only public entrance to the first floor other than the main entry in the façade. While the lobby remains, as noted above, much of the first floor and mezzanine were reconfigured to create a new U.S. Bankruptcy Courtroom and offices in 2014, following the removal of the main branch of the Statesville United States Post Office in 2003.

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Entry from the central front doors leads to a small, five-sided, approximately twelve-feet-high enclosed vestibule. The vestibule is constructed of wood and has six-light fixed-sash windows and two single-leaf, eight-light wood doors in the east and west ends; each door has brass handles and kickplates. The vestibule provides access into the L-shaped public lobby. Floors in this public section of the first floor are white-, gray-, or black-colored terrazzo laid in a checkered pattern. Walls in the public first floor are clad with tall, head-height, gray-colored marble wainscoting with plaster above. The plaster ceiling has a segmental arch form with replacement globe-shaped inset light fixtures. All first floor lobby-area doors have a simple gray marble trim. Decorative iron vent grilles are situated throughout the upper walls of the lobby space and feature an anthemion ornamentation set into cast scrollwork.

Two sets of brass mailboxes are situated in the public lobby's rear north wall and are immediately visible upon entry. The north lobby wall is also distinguished by the decorative iron vent grilles, painted bronze and set high in the wall and the decorative three-panel wood doors, which lead to a corridor and to the U.S. Bankruptcy courtroom. These doors date to the 2014 alterations, but were based on the original drawings. The single-leaf door replaced a set of 1960s-era postal boxes and leads to accessible restrooms and court associated spaces beyond. The double-leaf doors lead to the new courtroom. The east wall of the lobby space features another single-leaf, three-panel wood door. This door originally provided entry into the Postmaster's office, but in the 1990s the office was converted to a corridor leading to the accessible entrance on the east side of the building. The vinyl-tile floored corridor also provides access to a nonpublic corridor to the south that contains an original steel vault. On either side of the corridor door are two original wood bulletin boards with gilt lettering stating: BULLETIN, and above the door is an original inset electric bronze clock.

To the east of the entry vestibule, the south wall of the lobby contains four built-in brass desks for postal customers, set into a wall alcove at each window. Brass lamps light either side of the desk and radiators are located against the wall below the desks. Wood bulletin boards are also found on this wall. A building dedication plaque located in the southeast corner of the south wall reads:

THIS BUILDING WAS ERECTED  
UNDER THE ACT OF CONGRESS  
DATED JUNE 22 1936  
AND WAS COMPLETED DURING  
THE ADMINISTRATION OF

FRANKLIN DELANO ROOSEVELT  
PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES  
OF AMERICA

HENRY MORGENTHAU JR  
OF NEW YORK  
SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY

JAMES A FARLEY  
OF NEW YORK



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POSTMASTER GENERAL

CHRISTIAN JOY PEOPLES  
OF CALIFORNIA  
DIRECTOR OF PROCUREMENT

W. ENGLEBERT REYNOLDS  
OF IOWA  
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR FOR PUBLIC BUILDINGS

SMITH W. PURDOM  
OF MARYLAND  
FOURTH ASSISTANT POSTMASTER GENERAL

1939

An impermanent glass-walled guard station for the U.S. Marshals Service is located to the west of the entry vestibule, along the south wall of the lobby. The far west wall of the lobby contains the elevator, stairs, and original corridor to the postal workroom. The only interior public stair is located at the building's southwest corner through a metal replacement door. This stair extends to all three floors and wraps the elevator shaft. The stair has marble wainscoting, treads, and risers. There are several original brass lights hanging from the plaster walls for additional light. Bronze handrails, fluted newel posts, and brackets complete the public stair. The building's only elevator is located directly adjacent to the stair on the west wall. It is trimmed in marble with metal doors and has steel walls with steel rails on the interior. The south portion of the west wall facing the elevator has a wooden board with the words *Building Directory* in gilt noted at its top. Along the western L-shaped corridor of the building is an additional set of post office windows, which are trimmed in light gray marble and feature the words *Self Service* on the plaster walls above. These windows were originally dedicated to the Postal Service Finance Section. Small brass mailboxes are located to the east of this western corridor.

As constructed, the large postal workroom was accessed from the west lobby corridor. This utilitarian open plan room, which featured quarter-sawn oak floors, wood wainscoting, plaster walls and ceilings and hanging fluorescent lights, was converted to a courtroom and associated offices, conference rooms, and support spaces for the U.S. Bankruptcy Court in 2014. The new spaces feature carpeted floors, new wall partitions clad in drywall, and lowered ceilings with inset lighting. The free-standing concrete columns that support the large span of the U.S. District Court courtroom above remain and are visible in the new courtroom, although now clad in wood wainscoting. The new courtroom, located on the east side of the former workroom space and accessed through the new double doors in the public lobby, features wood wainscoting topped with a Greek fretwork band, similar to that found in the second floor courtroom.

#### *Mezzanine Level*

The small mezzanine level originally housed "swing rooms," or breakrooms, for the postal workers, and consisted of two breakrooms and two sets of restrooms flanking the concrete rear stair from which it was accessed. This area was characterized by simple finishes and was devoid of ornamentation. In 2017 it was rehabilitated for use as shared office space. The mezzanine

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also had a lookout gallery, accessible to the postmaster or postal inspector, in order to offer a panoramic view of worker activity in the main workroom below. The gallery has largely been obstructed with heating and air conditioning conduit.

### *Second Floor*

The second floor was designed specifically for use as a U.S. District Court. The layout includes a central double-height courtroom, judge's chambers, jury rooms, holding cells, and offices. Materials on this floor are similar to treatments on the first level. Floors are either terrazzo, vinyl tile, or carpeted with wood or marble baseboards. Walls are plaster and contain marble or wooden wainscoting in some areas. Ceilings on this floor are typically dropped acoustical tile with inset fluorescent lighting, post-dating construction. Doors are wood with simple wood surrounds and brass hardware. The main public spaces retain a high level of decorative detailing from the date of construction.

Entry to the second floor can be obtained through use of the main public stair, the public elevator, or the exterior stairs on the east and north elevations. In general, the north elevation stair is used to transport prisoners to and from the courtroom and the east elevation stair is used by the judge and staff, attorneys, or members of the federal jury. Public entrance from the elevator or the main stair is into a lobby through which the courtroom lobby or west corridor can be accessed. Both the stair door and the elevator are similar in detailing to their appearance on the first floor.

Two wood French doors, finished with brass doorstoppers, latches, and hinges, are located in the south wall of the elevator lobby. These doors, like the three doors in the courtroom lobby and two more in the southeast office space, can be opened for additional airflow on humid days. A modern air conditioning vent is located in the lobby's south wall. A water fountain, added more recently, is situated in the lobby's northeast corner.

The courtroom lobby is entered through a set of double wood doors with brass handles. This lobby is among the more decorative spaces in the building. Other than the set of French doors, the room is defined by a series of wooden pilasters that surround the doors and provide alcoves for furniture or other objects. The floor is clad in vinyl tile, and a marble baseboard extends around the circumference of the room. A wood chair rail divides the plaster walls and a wood/plaster cornice crowns the wall/ceiling juncture and extends to frame the ceiling. The ceiling is plaster and has two inset fluorescent lights, specially designed for the space.

Also notable in the courtroom lobby space is the set of freestanding carved wood statuary located on either side of the main courtroom entry. Designed by artist Sahl Swarz in 1941 and installed in the building in 1948, the statues are entitled *Defend Freedom* and *Freemen Prosper*.<sup>6</sup> *Defend Freedom*, which measures fifty-three-inches wide, seventy-two-inches high, and twenty-three inches deep, is positioned to the east of the courtroom doors and depicts a man in soldier form, holding a rifle behind his shoulders. At his base, there are symbolic human forms of the basic

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<sup>6</sup> Anita Price Davis, *New Deal Art in North Carolina* (Jefferson, NC and London: McFarland and Company, Inc., 2009).

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freedoms: assembly, press, speech, and religion. To the west of the courtroom stands *Freemen Prosper*, which measures fifty-four-inches wide, sixty-nine-inches high, and twenty-three-inches deep. *Freemen Prosper* portrays the figure of a woman with her arms outstretched. At her base are four symbols of fertility and prosperity: corn, wheat, cotton, and tobacco. Each statue sits upon a wood base that elevates it approximately sixteen-inches above floor level.

Two single-leaf three-paneled, polished, wood doors are located in the lobby's north wall and provide entry into the courtroom space. The words UNITED STATES COURT are lettered in gilt on each door. A bronze seal for the U.S. District Court, Western District of North Carolina, is mounted on the wall between the two doors. Inset approximately one foot from these doors is another set of doors that lead directly into the courtroom. These inner doors are made of wood sheathed in leather secured with brass tacks and have a single small light. Above these doors is a fixed transom with diamond-shaped lights. The west and east walls that separate the two entries are defined by polished wood panels that match the panels on the front set of doors.

The federal courtroom is a large rectangular-shaped double-height room that retains much of its original furnishings, finishes, and detailing. The walls have either polished dark wood wainscoting topped with a Greek fretwork band or acoustical plaster tiles with an inset or coffered appearance. A series of pilasters positioned around the courtroom are topped with Tuscan capitals and have a gilt astragal band. An ornamental plaster cornice accentuates the wall/ceiling juncture and contains a series of six alternating gilt medallions in the crème-colored frieze featuring an eagle, the scales of justice, two swords crossed and tied, a book, a lamp, and a blank medallion. Three gilt reeding bands interrupt the series of medallions at regular intervals. A dentiled cornice tops the decorative frieze. Hanging from the acoustical plaster ceiling are four specially designed square-shaped bronze light fixtures with a floral motif on their face. The floor, which was originally covered in cork flooring, has been covered over with gray carpeting. The original marble baseboard remains in place.

The judge's bench and jury box are positioned at the north end of the courtroom. The judge's bench is raised from the main floor. The wall directly behind the bench is articulated by pilasters framing a grid of acoustical plaster tiles. A bronze seal for the United States District Court, Western District of North Carolina, hangs in the center of the wall, directly behind the bench. The bench is made of a light-colored wood and has a Greek fretwork band on its face. The jury box, which faces west, is similar in appearance to the judge's bench, composed of light-colored wood with inset panels. The court recorder's desk is situated in front of the judge's bench to the south, and the witness stand is located to the east of the judge's bench. Each is also composed of light-colored wood with inset panels. The public seating is located to the south of the judge's bench and is a series of light-colored neo-classical style wood benches.

There are five points of ingress and egress to the courtroom, other than the main entry. Two single-leaf doors in the courtroom's northwest corner are a dark colored wood with three-bulleted inset panels, reeding on the jambs and heads, and a Greek Revival-style surround with full entablature. Three additional doors, located in the north and east walls of the courtroom are single-leaf, wood with simple wood surrounds.

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West of the main courtroom space is a corridor that leads from the elevator lobby to public restrooms, conference rooms, and other functional spaces. This corridor consists of a vinyl-tiled floor, wood baseboard, acoustical-tile ceiling with inset fluorescent lighting, and a series of wood doors through which various offices and other spaces can be accessed. At the southwest corner of the corridor are men's and women's restrooms. These restroom spaces maintain a high level of original finish, including marble wainscoting, marble stalls, and terrazzo flooring. Directly next to the restrooms is a court conference room, which contains a two-panel wood door, replacement carpeting, a wood chair rail and baseboard, and a small sink on the southwest wall.

Past these spaces to the north is a single-light wood panel door through which another corridor can be found. This corridor, which is centrally located on the west side of the second floor, maintains materials and detailing similar to the previous space. The offices accessed by this corridor have replacement carpeting, wood chair rails and baseboards, and acoustical-tile ceilings. Original two-paneled wood doors remain in situ. An original steel vault with door removed is located in one of the offices, where it is currently used as a closet. A law library room and a Grand Jury Room are also located along this corridor.<sup>7</sup>

East of the main courtroom is an L-shaped corridor which can be accessed from an original wood door off the courtroom lobby with the words *United States District Judge, Entrance* lettered on the frosted glass panel. This corridor has been altered in recent years through the application of red plush carpeting, textured crème colored wallpaper, and a new wood crown molding. The ceiling is comprised of acoustical-coffered panels and inset canister lighting. At the end of the corridor is an original single-light paneled wood door with the word *Private* lettered in gilt. The judge's office and reception space have replacement wood floors and detailing similar to other spaces in this area. The original partition wall that separated the judge's office from anterooms to the east and west has been removed to create a large reception space. Further, the judge's office was enlarged through addition of a portion of the original reception space. Office space at the southeast corner of the building, which was originally used by the clerk of the court, is now used as a conference room and file room. Another original steel vault with door removed is located in this space and currently serves as a storage closet.

### *Third Floor*

The third floor of the federal building contains nine office spaces that surround the central double-height courtroom space. Floors on this level are largely replacement vinyl-tiled or carpeted with a slim original marble or original wooden baseboard at the juncture of the wall and the flooring. The original doors are largely in situ and have simple wood trim that is either painted or polished and brass hardware. Ceilings feature dropped acoustical tiles with inset fluorescent lighting.

Access to the third floor is gained through the public stair or by the elevator—both located at the building's southwest corner. The third-floor stair, located in the south corridor, has a wood one-light door with *Stairway* lettered on the glass in gilt. Arched entries are located at the head of the east and west corridor spaces that provide access to offices and public and private restrooms.

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<sup>7</sup> These two rooms were inaccessible during the site visit.

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Both of these corridors have replacement vinyl-tile floor cladding and wood chair rails. Two women's and one men's restrooms are situated adjacent to the stair along the west corridor. These restroom spaces maintain a high level of original finish, including marble wainscoting, marble stalls, and terrazzo flooring. An office suite on the west corridor is accessed through a wood one-light door with *Private* lettered on the glass in gilt. The space features replacement carpeting and new wood baseboards and chair rails. Access to the exterior rear stair can be found at the end of the L-shaped northwestern corridor.

The south corridor leads to an original wood door that is lettered in gilt with the words *US Probation and Pre trial Services*. A glass service window, added later, is located in the corridor's south wall. Entry through the door proceeds to an L-shaped east corridor that accesses a suite of offices.<sup>8</sup> The east corridor appears similar to the west corridor in materials and finishes and retains its original wood doors.

### *Basement Level*

The basement level was used by the U.S. Postal Service until its relocation in 2003. The basement also provided mechanical space. Currently, the basement level is used for mechanical space and storage. The basement floor plan has experienced no alterations to its original design. The basement has concrete floors and walls and little ornamentation. Original two-panel wooden doors with brass hardware are generally in place. Ceilings are concrete with small pendant lamps providing lighting. Access to the basement level is limited to the rear stair and the elevator. A series of concrete columns are visible upon entrance into the basement from the elevator. An L-shaped corridor leads to four storage rooms to the north. A fuel room and boiler room to the north and west furnish space for modern mechanicals.

The former postal inspector's office is located on the basement level, but is only accessible from the exterior entry on the west elevation. The west elevation of the basement has four windows, one of which lights the postal inspector's office. The postal inspector's office has asbestos-tile floors, a small porcelain sink in the northeast corner, plaster walls, a delicate wood chair rail and baseboard, plaster ceilings with hanging fluorescent light fixtures, overhead radiators, wood door surrounds, and a large nine-light wood entry door with wire glass. The postal inspector maintained access to the postal workspace through a ladder stair located in a small room at the office's north wall.

### Alterations and Integrity Evaluation

Exterior changes to the United States Post Office and Court House have been minimal. The facade (south elevation) and west elevation are intact, with few alterations to their original appearance. The east elevation has received minimal changes, some of which are reversible. A stair tower was added to the east elevation in the 1990s, as noted above. This addition required converting two original windows to doors and infilling a third window. The accessible ramp, added on the east elevation at the same time, also necessitated converting a window to an accessible door. The east elevation stair tower was designed to limit impacts to the original

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<sup>8</sup> These offices are currently not in use and were not accessible during the site visit.

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building: it has minimal connection points to the east wall, is constructed of brick, and employs detailing compatible with the original building. The most significant alterations to the exterior have been confined to the rear (north) elevation. These include the addition of a metal fire stair at the west end of the north elevation and concomitant conversion of adjacent windows to doors. The formerly open loading dock across the central projecting block at the rear was partially enclosed in 2014 with brick to match the original construction, in order to provide more office space. In addition, a number of windows in the rear elevation have been altered or infilled to accommodate updated mechanical systems. However, in 2004 the original wood windows throughout the building were restored.

The interior of the United States Post Office and Court House has undergone a series of alterations over the years to accommodate changing tenant needs. Despite this, most of the original historic fabric is intact and alterations have generally been made to the nonpublic office spaces, rather than the formal ceremonial spaces. The courtroom, the postal lobby, the public stair, the elevator, and the courtroom lobby have changed little from their initial date of completion. Most alterations have taken place in private office spaces and nonpublic corridors and in the former postal workroom and associated nonpublic postal areas and have consisted largely of reversible changes, such as carpeting over original floors, wallpaper, and installation of wallboard partitions and dropped acoustical-tile ceilings. For example, the judge's chambers on the second floor were enlarged and a new reception space was created. In 2014, the formerly open postal workroom on the first floor was converted into a U.S. Bankruptcy Court courtroom and support spaces. However, as part of this project, features of the public postal lobby which had been altered over the years, including the marble walls and decorative iron vent grills, were restored. In 2004, building's HVAC system was modernized.

### *Integrity Evaluation*

The United States Post Office and Court House in Statesville has undergone relatively few alterations to its historic character. In general, changes to the exterior and interior have been modest in nature and are largely reversible. Changes have been made in areas less visible to the general public, such as the rear elevation and the interior former postal workroom and private office areas. *Defend Freedom* and *Freemen Prosper*, artwork created for the building, remain unaltered and are situated in their original location. The south elevation (facade) and west elevation retain their original design, workmanship, and materials. The majority of changes to the east elevation utilized the original openings, materials and detailing. Changes at the rear of the structure have included the addition of a metal stair and the enclosure of a section of the loading dock; however, this secondary elevation is somewhat shielded from public view. The building retains its historic monumental form and the majority of its character-defining features. It remains readily recognizable as a 1939 federal building. Therefore, the building as a whole retains integrity of design, materials, workmanship, association, and feeling.

The United States Post Office and Court House also retains its integrity of location and setting, as it remains in its place of construction in the heart of the West Broad Street commercial area. The district is comprised of late nineteenth and early twentieth century commercial buildings. Very little demolition has occurred in this area, which was listed in the National Register as the Statesville Commercial Historic District in 1980 and subsequently amended in 1995. Further,



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the building retains a medium-to-high level integrity of design, materials, and workmanship, as analyzed above, that combine to create integrity of feeling and association to the date of completion in 1939 and date of the installation of the artwork in 1948.

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## 8. Statement of Significance

### Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A. Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B. Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C. Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D. Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

### Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

- A. Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes
- B. Removed from its original location
- C. A birthplace or grave
- D. A cemetery
- E. A reconstructed building, object, or structure
- F. A commemorative property
- G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

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**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Architecture

Politics/Government

Art

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Period of Significance**

1939

1948

\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Dates**

1939

1948

\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Person**

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Architect/Builder**

Simon, Louis A., Supervising Architect

Melick, Neil A., Supervising Engineer

Stanley-Brown, R., Architect

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**Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph** (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

The United States Post Office and Court House possesses significance as a notable example of a federal government building in Statesville, Iredell County, North Carolina, erected under the New Deal-era federal programs designed in the 1930s to relieve economic problems caused by the Great Depression. The 1939 erection of the building was perceived as a symbol of community pride and achievement and as a representation of the federal presence in Statesville. The building is also locally significant as a notable example of the Simplified Classical architectural style popularized through the federal building projects of the 1930s and 1940s. Two works of art located on the second floor of the building, directly adjacent to the federal courtroom, were designed and executed by artist Sahl Swarz specifically for the Statesville building in the 1940s and installed in 1948.

Thus, the United States Post Office and Court House is significant on the local level under Criterion A for the area of Politics/Government and Criterion C for the area Architecture for its association with New Deal-era federal building construction campaigns, as well as for its notable local representation of the Simplified Classical architectural style. In addition, the building is significant on the local level under Criterion C for the area of Art as it houses original artwork executed by a master artist and selected for this location through public competition under the guidance of the Section of Fine Arts of the Public Building Administration, Federal Works Agency. The Period of Significance under Criterion A for Politics/Government and Criterion C for Architecture is 1939, the date of the building's completion, and the Period of Significance under Criterion C for Art is 1948, the date of the installation of the artwork.

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**Narrative Statement of Significance** (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

Historical Narrative:

History of the Postal Service in the United States and Statesville, Iredell County, North Carolina

The establishment of the postal service began as a means to provide communication to the colonies during the Revolutionary War. On July 26, 1775, the Second Continental Congress developed the post office under its first Postmaster General, Benjamin Franklin. The post office was the only agency to remain intact through the Revolutionary War, the Confederacy period, and the years after the constitution was adopted. Subsequently, the newly established federal government viewed the post office as the means for conveying knowledge of its laws and proceedings to all parts of the country.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Rita L. Maroney, *History of the U.S. Postal Service: 1775-1982* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1982), 3.

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During the postal service's early growth period, the number of post offices expanded from seventy-five in 1789 to 16,749 in 1849.<sup>10</sup> Throughout the nineteenth century, the postal system served as the principal means of long distance communication. Postal service provided both a physical and intellectual link between great distances as the nation expanded.<sup>11</sup> By 1820, the number of post offices and miles of post roads approximately quadrupled that of 1800.<sup>12</sup> Local taverns, grocery stores, coffeehouses, and inns, all focal points of community life, housed the first post offices.<sup>13</sup>

The Post Office Department of the Confederate States of America was established on February 21, 1861, by an Act of the Provisional Congress of the Confederate States. On March 6, 1861, President of the Confederate States, Jefferson Davis, appointed John Henninger Reagan, a former U. S. Congressman, as Postmaster General of the Confederate States of America. On May 27, North Carolina seceded from the Union. In the Confederate period until October 22, 1861, North Carolina postmasters:

had to operate without postage stamps, so they generally reverted to the pre-stamp means of operation, i.e., handstamps or manuscript markings. Some of them obtained new handstamps; some had retained the old ones, which were pressed back into service, and some postmasters actually printed their own stamps. Other postmasters provided envelopes preprinted with postal markings, which represented stamps, or they preprinted blank envelopes, which the public had on hand. These envelopes with control marks are known as postmaster's provisionals.<sup>14</sup>

Throughout its operation, the Confederate postal service was continuously interrupted and underfunded. During the Civil War, the government of the Confederate States appointed two postmasters for Statesville: William Morrison (1861) and John A. Rosebro (dates unknown).<sup>15</sup> Through a combination of pay and personnel cuts, postage rate increases, and the streamlining of mail routes, Confederate Postmaster General Reagan eliminated the deficit that existed in the southern postal system.<sup>16</sup>

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10 Ellis L. Armstrong, *History of Public Works of the United States, 1776-1945* (Chicago: American Public Works Association, 1976), 327.

11 Beth Boland, National Register of Historic Places, Bulletin 13, "How to Apply National Register Criteria to Post Offices" (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 1984), Section II, 1.

12 Boland, Section II, 1.

13 Maroney, 1.

14 North Carolina Department of Archives Postal History Project. Online at <http://exhibits.archives.ncdcr.gov/postal/>.

15 North Carolina Postal History Society, *Post Offices and Postmasters of North Carolina: Colonial to USPS, Volume II Edgecombe through Northampton*. N.D. On file at the Iredell County Public Library Local History Room Vertical Files, *Post Offices*.

16 United States Postal Service Website, "History of the United States Postal Service," available from [https://about.usps.com/publications/pub100/pub100\\_001.htm](https://about.usps.com/publications/pub100/pub100_001.htm).

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The resumption of federal mail service in the southern states took place gradually as the war came to an end. By November 15, 1865, 241 mail routes had been restored; by November 1, 1866, 3,234 post offices out of 8,902 were returned to federal control in the South. Postmaster General Reagan was arrested at the end of the war but later was pardoned and eventually made it back to Congress, where he became chairman of the Committee on Post Offices and Post Roads.<sup>17</sup>

Throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, Congress established or improved postal services and facilities throughout the nation. Efforts to increase the speed and efficiency of mail delivery encouraged the growth of roads, railroads, shipping lines, and eventually airlines. The postal presence, through its sheer number, distribution, and types of services, provided tangible reminders to otherwise isolated communities of the role and ideals of the central government. Consequently, the buildings constructed for use as post offices have reflected current governmental and architectural philosophies to communities across the nation.<sup>18</sup>

The postal service built structures for receiving, processing, and distributing mail to provide services for the expanding population during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. For smaller communities, a special counter in a local store served as the post office. In larger villages or towns, a separate post office building was constructed with a public service counter, workroom for mail processing, and a loading dock. Urban post offices handling large volumes of mail required larger buildings with extensive workrooms, offices, employee facilities, loading platforms, and windows or counters to serve the public. Urban post offices often shared space in federal buildings with courts and branch offices of federal agencies. The Supervising Architect of the U.S. Treasury Department oversaw the design and development of these postal facilities.<sup>19</sup>

Criteria used to determine the placement of postal offices reflected where the facility was located and the manner in which they were designed to function. Post offices that included other federal offices or courts were often located near other government buildings in the community. Single-function post offices built prior to the 1930s were often located on or near main transportation corridors and commercial centers and near the railroad station to facilitate movement of mail to and from trains. Facilities constructed during the 1930s and later became truck and auto-focused and were located near the downtown, but perhaps a block or two from main street. This made the post office easy to find, but also allowed for better access for large postal vehicles.

*Historical Context of Statesville, Iredell County, North Carolina, including a History of the Postal System and Federal Buildings in Statesville, Iredell County*

Iredell County was founded November 18, 1788, on the eve of the creation of the United States Constitution and shortly before passage of the Bill of Rights.<sup>20</sup> The county was carved from Rowan County, North Carolina, and was positioned between the Catawba and Yadkin rivers.

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<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>18</sup> Boland, Section II, 2.

<sup>19</sup> Maroney, 5.

<sup>20</sup> Sandra Douglas Campbell, *Iredell County North Carolina: A Brief History* (Charleston and London: The History Press, 2008), 38.



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Judge James Iredell, who was one of the first North Carolina Supreme Court Justices, the North Carolina Attorney General in 1779, and appointed to the United States Supreme Court by George Washington in 1790, succeeded in making North Carolina the twelfth state in the Union in 1789. Judge Iredell was also responsible for the founding of Iredell County with Statesville as the county seat.<sup>21</sup>

In 1790, twenty-six lots were sold in the town and plans were made to develop a prison and stocks.<sup>22</sup> Major streets were also laid out during this period, which include Broad Street, Meeting Street, Center Street, Tradd Street, and Front Street. Meeting Street ended at the Fourth Creek Meeting House, now the First Presbyterian Church, at the town boundaries (directly behind the Statesville United States Post Office and Court House).<sup>23</sup> A log courthouse was constructed at the intersection of Center and Broad streets (the town square), and court was held there at least four times a year.<sup>24</sup> In 1800, Statesville was described as, “a tiny village with few houses, three stores, two taverns, seventy-six citizens and six slaves (another source lists sixty-eight whites and twenty-seven slaves).”<sup>25</sup>

The Statesville post office was founded April 1, 1801, to serve the new community. Small rural post offices proliferated in Iredell County beginning about 1804 and served as focal points for news and catching up with neighbors. According to the North Carolina Postal History Society, there were approximately 128 small post offices in Iredell County (not concurrently) which ranged in longevity from Adams, begun in 1892 and closed in 1901, to Houstonville, which lasted from 1804 to 1955.<sup>26</sup> Five post roads were traversed by stagecoaches across the county to distribute the mail to stores, taverns, or private residences, where locals could pick up their letters and packages.<sup>27</sup> There were no designated purpose-built post office buildings in the county at this time.

By 1834, Statesville was known as a small village including, “the Methodist Church, the school house, three shoe shops, two tailors, one carriage shop, one carpenter, three blacksmiths, one harness shop, one hatter, three doctors, three attorneys, two hotels, and ‘a few loafers!’”<sup>28</sup> Although small, Statesville had become a county hub, as intended, for residents in outlying areas. It was the center of rural trade in corn, wheat, oats, hay, potatoes, cotton, tobacco, and fruit.<sup>29</sup> Post offices active in this period included: Bethany Church, Bogles, Buffalo Shoals (nee Campbell’s Grove), Clover Bottom, Fallstown, Goshen, James Cross Roads, Liberty Hill, Mount Mourne, Mount Pisgah, Muddy Fork, New Hope, Poplar Grove, Robinsons, Rocky Creek, Smith’s Cross Roads, Snow Creek (nee Sullivan), Society Hill, Spring Grove, Statesville, Stony

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21 *Ibid.*

22 *Ibid.*

23 *Ibid.*

24 Laura Phillips, National Register of Historic Places Nomination. *Statesville Commercial Historic District*, listed November 24, 1980.

25 Campbell, 41.

26 North Carolina Postal History Society, n.d.

27 Campbell, 43.

28 *Ibid.*

29 *Ibid.*

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Point, Tabor Church, Thomas's Ferry, Turner's Store, Williamsburg[h], and Zion.<sup>30</sup> The free public school system was initiated in the county in 1839 to educate students who were unable to pay at subscription schools, indicating the need for and growth of public institutions in the county.<sup>31</sup>

In 1854, much of Statesville was destroyed in a fire that engulfed the second Iredell County courthouse and many commercial buildings.<sup>32</sup> The third courthouse was built in 1856 on South Center Street and new construction sprouted up throughout the town. Most significantly, Iredell County was traversed by two railroads, beginning in 1858—the Western North Carolina Railroad and the Atlantic, Tennessee and Ohio Railroad (ATO).<sup>33</sup> The latter connected Charlotte, North Carolina, to Statesville, and the former carried freight and passengers west to Asheville, North Carolina. With the coming of the railroad, Statesville was transformed from a small agricultural service-based town to a major trade hub in the state. The railroad permitted twice-daily mail service to the post offices in the county, which previously had only received mail once a week.<sup>34</sup>

After the turmoil created by the American Civil War and a brief time with the postal service of the Confederate States of America, Statesville and Iredell County entered a long, productive period of rebuilding. Statesville saw very little military action during the war, with the exception of a foray into town by Union General George Stoneman in 1865 that damaged many buildings.<sup>35</sup> More importantly, the railroads were either destroyed by Union troops or the tracks were removed by the Confederacy during the war. Either way, both railroad lines and thus mail service was greatly incapacitated until the lines were restored in the early 1870s.<sup>36</sup>

Reconstruction, the period of rebuilding following the Civil War, saw great changes in Statesville and Iredell County. The Western North Carolina Railroad was purchased by the Richmond and Danville (VA) line and reopened in 1872.<sup>37</sup> The ATO railroad was rebuilt in 1871, also by the Richmond and Danville investors, and sparked the development of a new town, just south of Statesville, called Mooresville.<sup>38</sup> Though a small village had existed there since the 1850s, the town did not flourish until the ATO line came through in 1873. Mooresville was a small local trading center focused on farm implements, fertilizer, and dry goods. The Mooresville Post Office opened in 1871. In sum, railroad proliferation spurred development of numerous small towns in the county—all of which established public institutions, such as post offices and schools.

Small post offices proliferated in communities across Iredell County until the early 1900s, when rural free delivery was inaugurated from Statesville and other small hubs, such as Mooresville.<sup>39</sup>

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30 North Carolina Postal History Society, n.d.

31 Campbell, 47.

32 *Ibid.*, 50.

33 *Ibid.*, 56-57.

34 *Ibid.*, 57.

35 *Ibid.*, 59.

36 *Ibid.*, 69.

37 *Ibid.*, 69.

38 *Ibid.*, 69.

39 *Ibid.*, 93.

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These post offices include: Abernathy, Adams, Armfield, Banton, Barium Springs, Bryantsville, Claud, Clio, Daltonia, Doolie, Eagle Mills, Eupeptic Springs, Flake, Friends, Granite Hill, Gratz, Guss, Hilo, Linker, Logford, Malans, Map, Mayhew, Mazepa, McCurdy, Net, New Sterling, Nicholson's Mill, Perth, Pressly, River Hill, Rock Cut, Rod, Settle, Shinsville, Sigma, Spring, Stophel, Sweet Home, Talmage, Trip, Vance, Watts, Waugh, and Welsner.<sup>40</sup> Most of these post offices were consolidated into Statesville's modernized system around 1903.

Statesville transformed from a regional agricultural center to a manufacturing hub from the 1870s to the early 1900s. "Tobacco, whiskey, cotton and furniture manufacture began to replace the devastated agricultural economy..."<sup>41</sup> Grain and corn liquor manufacture, cigar and cigarette production, lumbering, brickyards, and even a herbarium brought former farmers from the hinterlands to town to work in the growing industrial and commercial economy. As a result, public and private institutions and amenities were established in the burgeoning city. By 1900, the town possessed electricity, a public water and sewer system, graded public schools, several newspapers, two banks and a new courthouse and jail.<sup>42</sup>

In 1892, the first post office and federal courthouse was established at Center and Front streets in the downtown district. The three-story Romanesque Revival building was the first purpose-built post office and federal building in Iredell County. The 1992 *Statesville Record and Landmark* describes the establishment of the federal building:

As Statesville grew and became the site for federal court and the collector of internal revenue, the desire for a federal building increased. In 1888, Congressman John S Henderson, who represented Iredell County in the United States House of Representatives, introduced a bill into Congress to erect a federal building in Statesville. That bill was approved by Congress.<sup>43</sup>

This building cost \$75,000 and was built by a contractor from Asheville, North Carolina.<sup>44</sup> An appropriation was made in the 50<sup>th</sup> Congress under President Grover Cleveland. The 1892 building contained a federal post office, courthouse, and a few offices. A March 1939 *Statesville Landmark* article quotes an 1892 appraisal of the new building:

When the noon mail came in the sovereigns assembled in great force within the corridor of the New postoffice [sic], jostled and shoved each other as they examined the new lock boxes and found the numbers, squirted tobacco juice on the marble floor and walked around with a general air of proprietorship of the whole thing...<sup>45</sup>

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40 North Carolina Postal History Society, n.d.

41 Campbell, 83.

42 *Ibid.*, 89-91.

43 Bill Moose, "Centennial Year Observed: Structures Enhance Downtown," *Statesville Record and Landmark*, 3 May, 1992.

44 John M. Sharpe, "History of Statesville Postal Service," *The Statesville Record*, 9 April, 1940.

45 Author unknown, "Old Postoffice Was Occupied 47 Years Ago Mar. 11," *Landmark* (Statesville), 9 March 1939.

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The first post office and courthouse is extant and has served as city hall since its decommission in 1939 when the present United States Post Office and Court House was completed.<sup>46</sup>

With the establishment of the 1892 federal building and post office, Statesville's modern post office gradually replaced the small country post offices around the county. Free city delivery was inaugurated in 1902 and rural free delivery followed soon thereafter in the early 1900s in tandem with progress made by "good roads" advocates.<sup>47</sup>

The early twentieth century saw continued growth in Statesville. Although the city was declining as a regional agricultural market center, it was gaining more manufacturing enterprises. Liquor production was the exception, as North Carolina enacted prohibition in 1909.<sup>48</sup> In addition to furniture manufacture, textile mills were established throughout Iredell County including several in Mooresville.<sup>49</sup> Factory work was on the rise. In 1907-08, Statesville had three banks, fourteen manufacturing concerns, four grocers, two newspapers, thirteen offices and shops, three druggists, four dentists, one veterinarian, three hotels, four schools, fifteen attorneys, five nurses, and ten doctors.<sup>50</sup>

By the time of the Great Depression, Statesville's industrial and residential expansion had come to a halt. Many businesses closed, banks failed, and the social and economic climate appeared bleak. The local economy did not return to normal conditions until after World War II, when the manufacturing sector attracted sharecroppers and tenant farmers to wage-labor in the factories.

By the late 1930s, the mail system was further centralized in Statesville. There were sixteen post offices in the outlying rural areas. These post offices were: Barium Springs, Charles, Dunlap, Elmwood, Eufola, Harmony, Houstonville, Loray, Mooresville, Mount Mourne, New Hope, Olin, Scott's Cross Roads, Troutman, Turnersburg, and Union Grove. Many of these offices appear to have been discontinued with mail rerouted through Statesville in the late 1940s and early 1950s.

Against this backdrop of growth in Statesville and Iredell County, the federal government was developing institutionally as well. With the establishment of federal services to assist the shaky economy, such as the Works Progress Administration or the Farm Securities Administration, and the subsequent growth of government, more federal buildings were needed, especially outside of Washington, D.C. The Office of the Supervising Architect, first in the U.S. Department of Treasury and finally under the Public Works Branch of the Treasury Procurement Division, created by President Roosevelt, was key to the design and construction of federal buildings in large and small towns across America.

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46 The building was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1974 as U.S. Post Office and County Courthouse (74001355).

47 Campbell, 105.

48 *Ibid.*, 106.

49 *Ibid.*, 114.

50 *Ibid.*

United States Post Office and Court House

Iredell County, North Carolina

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United States Post Office and Court House—Statesville, North Carolina, 1935 to 1939

*When a man of thoughtful mind sees a national building going up from day to day, he sees not only the building, but the nation itself and whatever may be its type, he reads in the building chiefly, the government, the principles, the truth, the history which belongs to the nation that erects it.*

John M. Sharpe, *The Statesville (N.C.) Record*, 9 April 1940<sup>51</sup>

The 1939 United States Post Office and Court House is the culmination of many years of development of public institutions in the town of Statesville and of modernization of the postal system in Iredell County. It is also representative of the federal government's commitment to provide modern services and facilities to towns, such as Statesville, in need of efficient buildings to serve the local and regional citizenry.

Planning for the 1939 federal building began as early as 1935.<sup>52</sup> A committee of local officials, including Mayor T.G. Shelton and Postmaster John Mulholland, went to Washington in early 1935 to assess the potential for a new federal building and courthouse. The committee met with North Carolina Congressman Robert Doughton and Senator Robert Reynolds in the capital where they were assured that Statesville would be placed on the eligible list for a new building. Local newspapers reporting the estimated cost of a new building as \$250,000, carefully constructed the case for its construction. According to a July 1935 article, receipts for the Statesville Post Office for June 1935 were \$5,092.76, compared with \$4,022.56 for June 1934.<sup>53</sup> Further, during the first six months of 1934 receipts at the Statesville Post Office were \$23,589.69, as opposed to \$30,083.57 for the same time period in 1935.<sup>54</sup>

At some point in the discussions, the possibility of updating the 1892 building was seriously considered. Local officials were asked to develop a cost proposal for modernizing the older building. These estimates, according to local newspaper accounts, ran well over \$130,000. Sentiment in the town ran high toward the construction of a new building. The newspaper noted, "Since this figure is much more than the old building cost to construct, it is possible that the federal authorities will authorize the construction of a completely new building here instead of adding additions to the old building."<sup>55</sup>

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51 John M. Sharpe, "History of Statesville's Post Office," *The Statesville Record*, 9 April, 1940.

52 Several newspaper clippings dated 1935 were found in the Iredell County Library Local History room vertical file entitled, "Post Offices." Unfortunately, few clippings included the name of the newspaper from which the information came.

53 Author unknown, "Postoffice Receipts Showing Steady Gain of \$1,000 a Month," July 1935. On file at the Iredell County Public Library Local History Room Vertical File, *Post Offices*, item 39.

54 *Ibid.*

55 Author unknown, "Seek Renovation for Statesville Postal Building," 17 February 1935. On file at the Iredell County Public Library Local History Room Vertical File, *Post Offices*, item 39.

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On June 11, 1935, there was a mass meeting called at the courthouse to show support for a new federal building.<sup>56</sup> The newspaper article announcing the meeting noted the difficulties with the old building as follows:

the structure cannot be altered and enlarged to conveniently accommodate the patrons, except at a cost that is uneconomical if not prohibitive...The postoffice [sic] department for some time has been cramped for room and other facilities necessary for handling the mail; the heating and plumbing arrangement is antiquated and inefficient; office space is limited and Statesville is being deprived of governmental agencies that are being housed in other cities that have been more favored by Uncle Sam; the offices of soil erosion farm, the nursery, and the Re-employment Service is cramped for room; better accommodations for the federal court has the urgent endorsement of Judge Webb—more space in the court room, a library, a detention room for prisoners, a consultation room for attorneys, a vault for filing records, and various other facilities not now available are badly needed.<sup>57</sup>

Apparently, the matter was settled by 1936, as the construction of a new federal building in Statesville was authorized by the 74<sup>th</sup> Congress on June 22, 1936.<sup>58</sup> Construction began in 1938, after the demolition of the L. Berts Bristol house,<sup>59</sup> and the building was completed in March 8, 1939.<sup>60</sup> The building cost \$285,000 to build and was constructed by “a Louisiana firm.”<sup>61</sup> According to the local newspaper, the building lot cost \$25,000 and the contract bid for erection was \$168,000.<sup>62</sup> The remainder of the funds was to be used for attorney’s fees, inspection, lot survey, the federal building inspector, and finally the cost of the artwork to be installed at a later date. The building was designed by R. Stanley-Brown under the direction of Supervising Architect Louis A. Simon, and B.K. Jones was the federal government inspector for the project.<sup>63</sup>

The post office moved to the new location at 200 West Broad Street from the 1892 building on Monday, 13 March 1939.<sup>64</sup> Thirty-eight persons were employed by the postal service in Statesville at this time, which included the postmaster, two supervisors, seven city carriers, six

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56 Author unknown, “Mass Meeting of Citizens Called At Court House,” 11 June 1935. On file at the Iredell County Public Library Local History Room Vertical File, *Post Offices*, item 41.

57 *Ibid.*

58 Building dedication plaque on first floor, public lobby of building interior.

59 Mac Lackey, “Federal Building’s 1939 Opening Days Tinged with Sadness,” *Iredell Neighbors*, 19 October, 1988. On file at the Iredell County Public Library Local History Room Vertical File, *Post Offices*, item 1. The Bristol house was a large Victorian-era mansion.

60 Author unknown, “Keys Turned Over To The Postmaster,” *The Landmark* (Statesville), 8 March, 1939.

61 John M. Sharpe, “History of Statesville’s Post Office,” *The Statesville Record*, 9 April, 1940.

62 *Ibid.*

63 *Ibid.*

64 Author unknown, “Post Office Will Move Saturday To New Location,” *The Landmark* (Statesville), 9 March, 1939.



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rural carriers, two substitute carriers, nine regular clerks, two sub-clerks, one special delivery messenger, and eight janitors.<sup>65</sup>

Opening day of the post office, Statesville's *The Landmark* newspaper contained a front-page story paying homage to the new building.<sup>66</sup> The building was noted as a "thing of beauty" and a "structure of Greek Revival design."<sup>67</sup> The article detailed the building from basement to third floor. The building was described as being air-conditioned and artificially lighted with a modern elevator, drinking fountains, and wall clocks in the lobby, workroom, and all offices. According to the account, the first floor post office lobby contained seven service windows and 590 lock boxes; which included ninety drawers, two-hundred boxes renting for one dollar quarterly, and three-hundred boxes renting for seventy-five cents quarterly.<sup>68</sup> The second floor held the "handsome" federal courtroom and space for officers of the court. The third floor was intended for use by the Bureau of Internal Revenue, the Department of Justice, Civil Service Commission, the Office of Conservation Service, and the Farm Security Administration. The basement, according to the author, had "considerable additional room that could be converted to offices in the future."<sup>69</sup>

Federal court was convened in the new building on 24 April 1939.<sup>70</sup> Judge E.Y. Webb, of the Western District of North Carolina, presided over the first session. Webb "commented on the splendid building, congratulating the people of Statesville and surrounding counties upon completion of such a magnificent structure."<sup>71</sup> He continued to note that the building, "is now free of germs, and in the interest of cleanliness and sanitation, he urged that no one spit on the floors."<sup>72</sup> The U.S. District Attorney praised the new "temple of justice," but commented that the courtroom was too small.<sup>73</sup> The courtroom was opened to visitors earlier in the month, and according to a local newspaper account, "a traveling man, who recently viewed the new federal court room...was overwhelmed with its beauty. The visitor stated that he had inspected public buildings recently in four states and Statesville's building surpassed anything he had seen..."<sup>74</sup>

The United States Post Office and Court House was officially dedicated nearly a year after it opened, on April 10, 1940.<sup>75</sup> U.S. Postmaster General James Farley, Assistant Postmaster General Smith Purdue, U.S. Congressman Bob Doughton, Mayor T. Garland Shelton, Statesville

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65 Author unknown, "Patrons will Find New Post Office a Thing of Beauty," *The Landmark* (Statesville), 13 March, 1939.

66 *Ibid.*

67 *Ibid.*

68 *Ibid.* The author noted that the smaller lock boxes were disappointing, but could not be changed because of the average assigned to a post office of the size by the federal government.

69 *Ibid.*

70 Author unknown, "Federal Court Is Convened In The New Court Room," *The Landmark* (Statesville), 24 April, 1939.

71 *Ibid.*

72 *Ibid.*

73 *Ibid.*

74 *Ibid.*

75 Author unknown, "Mayor Shelton Dies Just After Making Address of Welcome," *The Landmark* (Statesville), 11 April, 1940. Mayor T. Garland Shelton passed away at age 55 shortly after making a welcome speech to the crowd. This event clouded what otherwise would have been a celebration.

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Postmaster John Mulholland, and other state and national officials were expected to attend.<sup>76</sup> A crowd of about three thousand persons stood for hours in front of the new building and heard from Postmaster Farley about the efficacy of the modern postal system. Congressman Doughton, who was partially responsible for getting the new building funded, noted that 3,100 postal buildings had been constructed nationwide during Roosevelt's administration, sixty-three of which were in North Carolina.<sup>77</sup>

*Supervising Architect Louis A. Simon, 1935-1941*

The United States Post Office and Court House was designed by R. Stanley-Brown, under the direction of Supervising Architect, Louis A. Simon. The building was designed in the Simplified Classical style, favored by Simon.

In 1935, Louis A. Simon, at the age of sixty-six, succeeded James A. Wetmore as Supervising Architect.<sup>78</sup> At the time of his appointment, Simon had worked for the Office of the Supervising Architect for almost four decades and was well known to the architectural community. The 1933 reorganization of the federal architecture program placed the Public Works Branch at a lower level within the U.S. Treasury Department than the old Office of the Supervising Architect had previously enjoyed; however, Simon retained control over the architecture of the federal buildings designed within his office. Simon served as Supervising Architect from 1935 until 1941, during which time the United States Post Office and Court House in Statesville was designed and constructed.

Louis A. Simon was born in Baltimore in 1867 and received his education from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. After an extended tour throughout Europe, he opened an architectural office in Baltimore in 1894. Two years later, Simon began work for the Office of the Supervising Architect, where he spent the rest of his working career.<sup>79</sup>

During his tenure as supervising architect from 1935-1941, Simon favored styles derived from classical and historical architecture, although many of the postal buildings were greatly influenced by the new interest in modernism. Simon predominately utilized what came to be called the Simplified Classical style, which blended modern and classical elements and was characterized by symmetrical massing and relatively plain surfaces.<sup>80</sup>

The influence of Louis Simon was initially noted during James Wetmore's tenure, as Simon was the principal architectural designer during Wetmore's term. A lawyer rather than an architect, Wetmore used the title acting supervising architect during his tenure. In addition to the Statesville building, Simon influenced the design of numerous federal buildings throughout the United States during the course of his tenure, ranging from departmental headquarters buildings in Washington, D.C. and courthouses, post offices, custom houses, and federal office buildings

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76 Author unknown, "Postoffice Here Is Dedicated By James A. Farley," *The Landmark* (Statesville), 11 April, 1940.

77 *Ibid.*

78 Lee, 258.

79 *Ibid.*

80 *Ibid.*, 260.

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throughout the country to border stations along the nation's northern and southern borders.<sup>81</sup>

Upon Simon's retirement in 1941, the *Federal Architect* praised Simon for his leadership and insistence on quality designs:

Louis A. Simon will have a thousand or more buildings throughout the land, some bearing his name, some not, which are tokens of his architectural ability. Words concerning that ability are relatively ineffectual. It is the buildings themselves which are the best commentary of his judgment and his service to the country.<sup>82</sup>

Simon died in 1958.

#### *Architect R. Stanley-Brown*

R. (Rudolph) Stanley-Brown was born in 1890 in Mendon, Ohio, into a family of prominent political status. His mother, Mary Garfield Stanley-Brown, was the daughter of President James A. Garfield, and his father, James Stanley-Brown, served as President Garfield's private secretary. Shortly after Rudolph's birth, James Stanley-Brown moved his family to New York, where Rudolph spent most of his childhood.

R. Stanley-Brown received his undergraduate education at Yale University, after which he studied at the Columbia University School of Architecture. He subsequently graduated from the Ecole des Beaux-Arts in Paris.<sup>83</sup> Two years later, Stanley-Brown set his career aside to enlist in the U.S. Army where he served with the American Expeditionary Force in World War I.<sup>84</sup> Upon his discharge, he joined the architectural firm of his uncle, Abram Garfield, a famed Cleveland architect. In 1936, Stanley-Brown left his uncle's firm and moved to Washington, D.C., where he lived and worked throughout the rest of his life.<sup>85</sup>

It was shortly after his move to Washington, D.C., that the Supervising Architect commissioned Stanley-Brown to design the United States Post Office and Court House in Statesville, North Carolina. The full list of federal commissions received by R. Stanley-Brown has not yet been compiled. Known commissions include the Federal Building and Courthouse (1937) in Erie, Pennsylvania, the Winston E. Arnow Federal Building (1939) in Pensacola, Florida, and the former U.S. Post Office (1938) in Rockville, Maryland, all designed in the Simplified Classical style.<sup>86</sup> Notably, R. Stanley-Brown was also selected to design four small post offices in

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81 U.S. General Services Administration, Historic Federal Buildings Database, U.S. General Services Administration (<https://www.gsa.gov/real-estate/historic-preservation/explore-historic-buildings/find-a-building-search>).

82 As quoted in Lee, 280.

83 Author unknown, "R. Stanley-Brown Obituary," *The New York Times*, 9 February 1944.

84 *Ibid.*

85 Henry Withey, *Biographical Dictionary of American Architects* (Detroit: Omnigraphics, Inc., 1996), 566-567.

86 The Erie building was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1993 as Erie Federal Courthouse and Post Office (92000468) and the Pensacola building was listed in 2014 as United States Post Office and Court House (14000389).

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Dutchess County, New York.<sup>87</sup> President Franklin D. Roosevelt, whose Hyde Park home was nearby, took great interest in the design of these buildings and directed that they be constructed of local fieldstone in the Colonial Revival and Dutch Colonial Revival styles to reflect the traditional architecture of the area.

Despite the federal commissions awarded to Stanley-Brown throughout his lifetime, he was perhaps best known as an illustrator and painter. His wife Katherine published several books for which Stanley-Brown prepared the illustrations.<sup>88</sup> Stanley-Brown died on February 7, 1944 while visiting Augusta, Georgia, where he was planning a long-range program of recreational facilities for the city.<sup>89</sup>

### Simplified Classical Architectural Style

The United States Post Office and Court House in Statesville exhibits features characteristic of the Simplified Classical architectural style. Under the tenure of Supervising Architect Louis Simon during which the Statesville Building was erected, the Simplified Classical style generally prevailed as the most common federal building style.

There has been no definitive study of the distribution of major federal office building styles in the United States, nor is it clear if, other than the Dutchess County post offices discussed above, there was a deliberate policy on the part of the Supervising Architect to choose designs to match regional tastes or construction types. Simplified Classical was the style common to many public and quasi-public buildings of the 1930s and 1940s.<sup>90</sup> The strong effect of mass achieved a sense of monumentality, presence, and permanence, while simplified detailing satisfied the burgeoning taste for sleekness and frugality, as witnessed by the subsequent growth of modern architecture. The Simplified Classical style contains a symmetrical composure, with a repetitive rhythm of columns or column-like elements and a reliance on carefully considered proportions. Very simplified cornices and pilasters or square piers are common elements found on Simplified Classical architecture.

The style was so named because the basic form and symmetry of classicism was retained, but the ornamentation and motifs were reduced or removed. Particularly during the Great Depression era, the Office of the Supervising Architect of the U.S. Treasury Department embraced the concept of the Simplified Classical style because the form was still classical and dignified, which conveyed the stability of the federal government during an uncertain time. Simultaneously, the lack of ornamentation characteristic to the Simplified Classical style appeared economical at a time when exuberant details would have been out of place.

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87 U.S. Post Office—Ellenville (1940), listed in 1988 (88002496); U.S. Post Office—Rhinebeck, listed in 1989 (88002419); U.S. Post Office—Wappingers Falls (1940), listed in 1989 (88002440); and U.S. Post Office—Hyde Park (1941), listed in 1988 (88002511).

88 These books include *Song Book to the American Spirit* (1927), *The Young Architects* (1929), and *The Story of Printed Pictures* (1931). Yale University Obituary Record, 1943-44, 264-265 ([http://mssa.library.yale.edu/obituary\\_record/1925\\_1952/1943-44.pdf](http://mssa.library.yale.edu/obituary_record/1925_1952/1943-44.pdf)), 21 December 2017.

89 "R. Stanley-Brown Obituary," *The New York Times*, 9 February 1944.

90 Rifkind, 107-110.

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The United States Post Office and Federal Building is the sole representative of the Simplified Classical style in Iredell County constructed by the federal government under the supervision of architects Louis Simon and R. Stanley-Brown. The building has pilasters, rather than columns, spare classical ornament, and a modern form. Aspects of the exterior and interior detailing, such as the main door surround, penthouse, and second floor courtroom reflect a blend of Greek Revival and Art Moderne design influences.

The well-executed Simplified Classical style design, attention to detail, use of high quality materials, presence of federally commissioned artwork, and monumentality combine to make the United States Post Office and Court House a notable federal building in the city of Statesville and in Iredell County. Other federally constructed buildings in the area tend to be smaller and more utilitarian. For example, also constructed in 1939 and located only a few blocks from the United States Post Office and Court House, is the Statesville Public Library, now a daycare center. The one-story building was constructed by the Work Projects Administration in the spare Neoclassical Revival style.<sup>91</sup> In Mooresville, approximately eighteen miles south, there are several small federally designed buildings, among them the one-story Mooresville U.S. Post Office designed by the U.S. Office of the Supervising Architect in 1937 in the Colonial Revival style. In conclusion, the 1939 United States Post Office and Court House is significant as the only representation of federal architecture of the New Deal era designed by R. Stanley-Brown in the Simplified Classical Style under the supervision of Louis Simon in Statesville, North Carolina.

#### *New Deal Era Artwork and Artist Sahl Swarz*

The United States Post Office and Court House in Statesville received artwork from the Federal Section of Fine Arts in 1948, created by artist Sahl Swarz. This artwork was selected for the building in 1941 and depicted themes related to American freedoms.

From 1934 to 1943, the President Franklin D. Roosevelt Administration supported public art with a series of programs designed both to support unemployed artists and artisans, and to improve the character of public buildings within which their work was placed. These programs employed over ten thousand artists, producing a total of one hundred thousand paintings, eighteen thousand sculptures, thirteen thousand prints, and over four thousand murals.<sup>92</sup>

The New Deal Arts Program was designed to bring art to the American people by placing the artwork in accessible locations. The New Deal sought to change the relationship between the artist and society by democratizing art and culture. The projects combined a belief in the value of high culture with the democratic ideal that everyone in the society could and should be the beneficiary of such efforts. Art project officials wrote that the mass of people were “underprivileged in art,” and they endeavored to make art accessible to all citizens, regardless of

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91 The Works Progress Administration was renamed the Work Projects Administration in 1939.

92 Marlene Park and Gerald E. Markowitz, *Democratic Vistas: Post Offices and Public Art in the New Deal* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1984), 5.

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class, race, age, or gender.<sup>93</sup> In addition to the democratic ideals of federal patronage, New Dealers expected that the art projects would assist in educating the public about the importance of a national culture in their daily lives.

George Biddle, an artist and former classmate of President Franklin D. Roosevelt, spearheaded the early movement to obtain funding for the program. A public mural experiment in Mexico inspired Biddle to attempt the same thing in the United States. Joining forces with Edward Bruce, a Treasury Department official, Biddle obtained funding for a public arts program from Public Works Administrator Harold Ickes. Subsequently, Edward Bruce emerged as the chief promoter of public funding for artists and named the Public Works of Art Project (PWAP).

After a shaky start and disagreements on the quality and style of the artists, Bruce insisted that the publicly-funded art interpret the “American scene” by focusing on American history and historical personages. By the spring of 1934, the PWAP employed 3,749 artists who produced 15,663 pieces of art, of which approximately four hundred were murals.<sup>94</sup>

In September 1934, Secretary of the Treasury Henry Morgenthau, Jr., and Bruce agreed to spend a portion of new federal building construction costs on decoration administered by the art unit, not the architect. Approximately one percent of the building cost was to be reserved for murals, sculpture, or both. In reality, not all buildings contained artwork. If actual costs for construction exceeded the estimate, the building did not receive art. Consequently, some architects were reluctant to create spaces for murals or sculpture that may not be included.<sup>95</sup> As a result of the interest in public art, a new Section of Painting and Sculpture became part of the Office of Supervising Architect in the Treasury Department. In 1938, the Section of Painting and Sculpture became the Section of Fine Arts. One year later, the entire building department with the art unit transferred from the Treasury Department to the New Federal Works Agency, Public Buildings Administration.

According to Edward Bruce, the Chief of the Section of Fine Arts in 1940, the aim of the Section of Fine Arts was to “secure the murals and sculpture of distinguished quality appropriate to the embellishment of federal buildings.”<sup>96</sup> During this period, as many federal buildings no longer emphasized regional architectural character, an emphasis was placed on including public art that presented local scenes or historical events. Upon the initiation of World War II, the Section of Fine Arts responded by urging artists to use war-related and defense-related activities as creative sources.<sup>97</sup>

There has been no definitive study on artwork executed under the Section of Fine Arts. Therefore, little contextual information exists through which to value these works on more than a local basis.

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93 Park and Markowitz, 5.

94 Richard D. McKinzie, *The New Deal for Artists* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1973), 23.

95 McKinzie, 38.

96 Exhibition of Mural Designs for Federal Buildings (Ottawa: The National Gallery of Canada, 1940), 4.

97 Anita Price Davis, *New Deal Art in North Carolina: The Murals, Sculptures, Reliefs, Paintings, Oils and Frescoes and Their Creators* (Jefferson, N.C. and London: McFarland and Company, Inc., 2008), 167.

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*Work of Sahl Swarz*<sup>98</sup>

Sahl Swarz was born in New York City on May 4, 1912. He pursued studies at Clay Club with Dorothea Denslow, who had founded the club in 1928. Swarz worked primarily as a sculptor, in various media including bronze, wood, iron, and concrete, although he did produce a few watercolors during his tenure with the army during the Second World War.<sup>99</sup> Throughout his ninety-two years, Swarz nurtured his artistic skills in locales as diverse as Verona, Italy, New York City, and Fujisawa, Japan. Swarz described his work as follows, "My sculpture is what I am: it is born of experience. The prepared road is not for me; I find my own way."<sup>100</sup>

In 1944, the Clay Club became the Sculpture Center; Swarz would serve as assistant director of the Sculpture Center for most of the years 1936-1948, except when he served in World War II. He promoted the development of a new Sculpture Center during his tenure as assistant director through a promotional brochure entitled, "Blueprint for the Future of American Sculpture."

Like many other federal artists---Margaret Casey Gates, Alicia Wienczek (Fiene), Dean Cornwell, John W. De Groot, Gordon Samstag, Edward Laning, Allan Gould---who prepared works for North Carolina, Sahl Swarz studied at the Art Students League in New York.

Sahl Swarz has works in the United States Post Office and Court House in Statesville, North Carolina; Brookgreen Gardens in South Carolina; the United States Post Office in Linden, New Jersey; and the Minneapolis Institute of Arts. He exhibited at the Syracuse Museum of Fine Arts (in both 1938 and 1940); the Connecticut Academy of Fine Arts (1938); the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts (1949-1958); the Clay Club (1934-1946); the Brooklyn Museum (1936); the Whitney Museum of American Art (1947-1962); Fairmont Park in Philadelphia (1949); the Berkshire Museum (1941); the Rochester Memorial Art Gallery (1940); the Springfield Museum of Art (1936); the Lyman Allyn Museum (1939); the Plainfield Art Association in New Jersey (1943); and the Newark Museum (1944). All of these works were sculptures, such as the 1940 terra cotta sculpture produced for the Linden, New Jersey Post Office, entitled, *Industry*, and the 1961 bronze sculpture in the Minneapolis Institute of Arts, entitled, *Tryst*.

Swarz received a sculpture fellowship from the Ford Foundation, a Guggenheim Fellowship as a sculptor in Kanagawa, Japan, and a grant from the American Academy of Arts and Letters. Swarz died on October 24, 2004 at the age of ninety-two, while living abroad.

*Defend Freedom and Freeman Prosper*

While serving as private first class in the 35<sup>th</sup> Field Artillery at Camp Blanding, Florida, in 1941, Swarz learned he had won a contract for two wood statues to be located in the United States Post Office and Court House in Statesville, North Carolina. This award earned him \$5,200. Installation of the work was completed after the war in 1948.

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98 This section derived from: Davis, 165-170.

99 Swarz, Sahl, *Fifty years of sculpture by Sahl Swarz, 1933-1983*. Selected excerpts forwarded by Audrey Entorf, Regional Historic Preservation and Fine Arts Officer via email to author, 15 May, 2009.

100 Ibid., 9.

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Upon extending a commission to Swarz, the Section of Fine Arts issued a press release:

Mr. Sahl Swarz of the 35<sup>th</sup> Field Artillery, Battery E, stationed at Camp Blanding, Florida, knows how to use his free time. While in camp he has executed two preliminary models for the sculpture decoration of the Statesville, North Carolina, Post Office and Court House. He entered these in an anonymous competition held under the Section of Fine Arts of the Public Building Administration, Federal Works Agency. The competition was open to all American sculptors resident of or attached to the States of Maryland, Delaware, West Virginia, Virginia, Kentucky, Tennessee, Florida, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, and the District of Columbia...

Statesville is a town of much historical background, but Mr. Swarz did not delve into the past, a fact which would seem only too natural under the circumstances of preparing to be one on Uncle Sam's artillery men. His mind has turned to the great problem of today, the defense of our freedoms. These he has symbolized without the slightest aggression, but on the contrary with a sensitive appreciation on their inner meaning.<sup>101</sup>

*Freemen Prosper* and *Defend Freedom* are in keeping with the 1940s Fine Arts Section's preference for patriotic artwork that used war-related subjects and themes. *Freemen Prosper*, as noted in Section 7, depicts a woman who is rooted in the four symbols of agriculture or fertility at her base: corn, wheat, cotton, and tobacco. Swarz explains, "the easy full stance and pose of this figure is intended to convey a feeling of liberty enjoyed by the citizens of this country and their opportunities in industry and agriculture."<sup>102</sup>

*Defend Freedom* represents an armed soldier, ready to protect his country from tyranny. At his base are symbolic representations of the four American freedoms: assembly, press, speech, and religion. Swarz suggested that this figure was based upon descriptions from a battery mate of the typical North Carolina mountaineer ready to protect his home and family.<sup>103</sup>

Noted New Deal art historians Marlene Park and Gerald Markowitz note that,

In Statesville, North Carolina, Sahl Swarz did two sculptures about freedom. In one the artist represented a young mountaineer from the hills about Statesville hovering protectively above symbolic figures of the Four Freedoms. The Section, though recognizing that some people thought money should be spent only for defense, believed that 'such a program is justified in view of possibilities of moral development which the best American painting possesses.'<sup>104</sup>

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101 *Ibid.*, 167.

102 "Sculptor, In Army, Wins Art Prizes," *The New York Times*, 12 October, 1941, 47.

103 *Ibid.*

104 *Ibid.*, 167; Park and Markowitz, 23.



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The two wooden statues, designed by Swarz for Statesville, are the only known free-standing sculptures installed in a federal building in the state of North Carolina as part of the New Deal era art program.<sup>105</sup> The majority of the Fine Arts Section works included in North Carolina federal buildings, usually post offices, was executed as oil-on-canvas murals and plaster relief.<sup>106</sup> Some of this artwork has been lost due to demolition of buildings.

*Defend Freedom and Freemen Prosper* are significant artworks associated with the Statesville United States Post Office and Court House. The sculptures were intended to raise Americans' awareness of the value of art and culture to a vibrant democracy. The sculptures also represent the work of Sahl Swarz, a master sculptor.

#### United States Post Office and Court House—Statesville, North Carolina, 1939-present

The 1939 building served as the main branch of the Statesville post office until May 1992, when a new state-of-the-art post office opened on the outskirts of town.<sup>107</sup> The 1939 post office continued to function as a post office; however, it became known as the West Broad Street Branch. In April 2002, the U.S. Postal Service, which had retained ownership, transferred the United States Post Office and Court House to the U.S. General Services Administration (GSA).<sup>108</sup> Needing additional space for the U.S. District Court system and the U.S. Marshals Service, GSA terminated the lease-agreement with the post office for a branch office. Consequently, the United States Post Office was officially closed on West Broad Street by August 2003.<sup>109</sup> The 1939 building continues to serve its original purpose to house the U.S. District Court and offices on the second floor. In 2014, the first floor was converted to house the U.S. Bankruptcy Court system, with the construction of a courtroom and associated court spaces and offices within the former postal workroom area. Other tenants in the building at present include the U.S. Marshals Service, U.S. Probation Office, and U.S. District Attorney.

#### The Office of the Supervising Architect of the U.S. Treasury Department and the Public Works Administration (PWA)

The Office of the Supervising Architect of the U.S. Treasury Department (Supervising Architect) was responsible for the construction of federal buildings throughout the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The Office was created within the U.S. Treasury Department in 1852 as a response to the enormous increase in federal construction and was given responsibility for all architectural design and construction supervision. One of the earliest innovations of the office was the development of standardized building types to house the customs houses, post offices, and courthouse functions. The architectural style selected for these buildings reflected prevailing

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105 Midwest Chapter of the National New Deal Preservation Association. Link to North Carolina New Deal Art. Online at: <http://www.wpamurals.com/ncarolin.htm>. New Deal Art Registry Online at: <http://www.newdealartregistry.org/map/NC/>.

106 *Ibid.*

107 Nancy Baker, "May 4 Opening Planned For New Postal Complex," *The Record and Landmark*, 26 April, 1992.

108 Neil Furr, "Downtown Anchor Closing," *The Iredell Citizen*, 30 January, 2003.

109 *Ibid.*

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national taste. The scope of the Supervising Architect's office is reflected in the increase of federal buildings, from twenty-three in 1853, to 297 by 1892.<sup>110</sup>

From 1895 to 1933, the office reported to the U.S. Treasury Department. In the 1920s, the Office of the Supervising Architect was divided into a Technical Branch and an Administrative Branch. The Technical Branch included a division responsible for project costs and accounting; a drafting division, including a superintendent who greatly influenced design practices; a structural division; a mechanical engineering division; and a repairs division. In 1933, the U.S. Treasury Department was reorganized and the Office of the Supervising Architect was shifted to the Procurement Branch of the Division of Public Works of the Treasury. In July 1939, the public buildings program was removed from the U.S. Treasury Department and merged into the Federal Works Agency, Public Buildings Administration. In 1949, Congress established the U.S. General Services Administration (GSA), and the new agency assumed responsibility for public buildings.<sup>111</sup>

#### *World War I and the Public Buildings Act of 1926*

World War I brought the work of the Supervising Architect's Office to a halt due to the financial, industrial, and transportation resources strain that it placed on the country. The only buildings completed during this period were those required for wartime use and those already under construction. New building construction commenced by 1922; however, the postponement of many projects authorized by the Public Buildings Act of 1913 and a backlog of new building requests necessitated the development of a major public building program. This resulted in the passage of a new Public Buildings Act on May 25, 1926.<sup>112</sup>

The Public Buildings Act of 1926 contained three principal provisions. First, the Secretary of the Treasury and the Postmaster General were directed to conduct a nationwide survey to determine the need for postal facilities with the intent that new facilities would be based upon need rather than political influence. Secondly, the supervising architect's office was permitted to consult private architects in "special cases." The staff of the supervising architect had previously handled all projects, since Supervising Architect James Knox Taylor decided in 1904 to effectively bar private architects from federal construction projects. Finally, the act provided for the continuation of building-design standardization.<sup>113</sup> The building-needs survey of 1926 resulted in the following:

- Doubling the \$100 million previously allocated through the act of 1926;
- The construction of at least two new buildings per state; and
- No buildings constructed in towns where postal receipts were less than \$10,000 per annum.<sup>114</sup>

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110 Lois A. Craig, et al., *The Federal Presence* (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1978), 202.

111 *Ibid.*, 327.

112 Antoinette Lee, *Architects to the Nation* (New York and London: Oxford University Press, 2000), 231-232, 239.

113 Louis Melius, *The American Postal Service: History of the Postal Service from the Earliest Times*, (Washington, D.C.: Louis Melius, 1917), 40-41.

114 *Ibid.*

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President Herbert Hoover worked with Congress to increase allocations for the building program in both 1930 and 1931 as the nation suffered the impacts of the Great Depression. However, the Administration of President Franklin D. Roosevelt substantially expanded the program.<sup>115</sup>

*The Great Depression and the Reorganization of the U.S. Treasury Department*

The building industry suffered from the stock market crash of 1929 and the onset of the Great Depression in the early 1930s. Using provisions of the Public Buildings Act of 1926, officials promoted employment within the building trades. Congress passed an amendment to the 1926 act, known as the Keyes-Elliott Bill, in 1930, to provide “increased authority to the secretary of the treasury to enter into contracts with private architects for full professional services.”

Despite this directive, the Office of the Supervising Architect, still under Wetmore’s direction, only considered hiring private architects for large projects due to concerns related to efficiency. The American Institute of Architects (AIA) objected to the Treasury Department’s implementation of the amendment to the 1926 act and petitioned for the reorganization of the Supervising Architect’s Office. The AIA hoped that the office would serve only a supervisory function, allowing wider employment of private architects and resulting in greater diversity, vitality, and regional appropriateness in federal architecture. The President’s Emergency Committee for Employment and members of Congress echoed the AIA’s concerns, particularly regarding the need to employ local private architects. H.R. 6197, known as the Green Bill, was introduced in Congress in 1932 in an attempt to place all federal building design in the hands of private architects; however, the legislation did not pass. The AIA continued its campaign following the election of Franklin D. Roosevelt and the appointment of new officials to the U.S. Treasury Department, including Treasury Secretary William H. Woodin.<sup>116</sup>

Roosevelt’s Executive Order 6166, which reorganized the federal building program and promised unemployment relief, was announced in June 1933. The order resulted in the creation of the Procurement Division within the U.S. Treasury Department, the transfer of the Supervising Architect’s Office to the Procurement Division, and the change in name of the Supervising Architect’s Office to the Public Works Branch. W.E. Reynolds, Assistant Director of the Procurement Division, was put in charge of five units headed by the supervising engineer, the supervising architect, the office manager, the chairman of the board of award, and the chief of the legal section.<sup>117</sup>

New relief funding programs were initiated to allocate and supplement funding for public works simultaneously with the U.S. Treasury Department reorganization. Harold L. Ickes, the federal emergency administrator of public works, allocated funds to the U.S. Treasury Department for the construction of federal buildings under the provisions of the National Industrial Recovery Act of 1933, including two allotments in August 1933 in the amounts of \$6,971,648 and

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115 Boland, Section II, 3.

116 Lee, 248-252.

117 *Ibid.*, 253.

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\$13,799,550, as well as additional funds for emergency construction projects throughout the country.<sup>118</sup>

*Public Works Administration, 1933-1939*

Although public works spending as a means to aid recovery began under the Hoover Administration, President Roosevelt's New Deal is credited with using the federal building program to achieve relief. These efforts were formalized in 1933, when the Public Works Administration (PWA) was organized to give structure to the recovery effort. The PWA oversaw the planning and construction of federal and non-federal public works projects, including post office construction. To stimulate the economic recovery, the government rapidly expanded its public works program. This provided work for the unemployed, many of whom were in the building trades. The Bureau of Labor Statistics maintained statistics on employment, wages, cost of materials, and other PWA project data. During the 1930s, the number of public buildings constructed increased dramatically.

Because of the planning already completed under the 1926 legislation, these projects were able to start quickly. Post office construction increased nearly threefold during this period compared to the previous fifty years; the PWA built 406 post offices in the years from 1933 to 1939, which represents more than one-eighth of the total 3,174 PWA construction projects built. The PWA was directly responsible for approximately a quarter of all post offices built in the 1930s. There is no direct evidence that the PWA oversaw the construction of Statesville's United States Post Office and Court House, however, PWA funding could have been utilized through the Department of Treasury for all or a portion of the project.<sup>119</sup>

Congress authorized a number of New Deal programs that were used to fund the construction of post offices. In addition, funds for post office construction came from the relief program authorized by the Emergency Relief and Construction Act of July 21, 1932; the Emergency Construction Program under the Appropriation Act of June 1934; and the Building Program for the District of Columbia, authorized by the Act of 1926. The U.S. Treasury Department retained responsibility for post office construction funding until 1939, utilizing a number of different programs and authorizations to fund construction of post offices and federal buildings.<sup>120</sup>

This era of post office construction provided the most familiar government buildings to the public. Despite the desire to complete projects rapidly, the PWA and the U.S. Treasury Department also stressed the importance of high quality in order to ensure "public works of an enduring character and lasting benefits."<sup>121</sup> The program's goals were to construct buildings as quickly as possible and to employ as many people as possible at efficient costs. The standardized design practice of 1915 was well-suited to this high-speed, efficient process. Any drawing that did not have to be prepared served to hasten the project to construction. Avoiding

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118 *Ibid.*, 254.

119 The Statesville project building plaque does not note PWA involvement, and the newspaper accounts do not mention it either. However, this does not discount the potential that PWA funds were used in the project through the Department of Treasury.

120 Armstrong, 327.

121 Boland, Section II, 3.

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construction problems caused by design changes or incorrect plans also helped. Simplified ornamentation meant less time drafting and drawing. While facade variations were allowed, standardized interior plans were well established and utilized. A publication entitled “Instructions to Private Architects Engaged on Public Building Work under the Jurisdiction of the Treasury Department” listed these standards. The most commonly used styles were the Colonial Revival, Neoclassical, and Simplified Classical—a simplified classical style mixing modern and classical elements. All of the styles can be characterized by symmetrical massing and plain surfaces.<sup>122</sup>

#### *From PWA to GSA, 1939-1954*

Federal building construction under PWA funding programs continued until 1942 when the American entry into World War II virtually halted all building activity. The few buildings finished in the years 1942-1943 were completions of old projects.

After World War II, federal architectural activities were well diffused throughout military and civilian agencies. In 1949, the United States General Services Administration (GSA) subsumed the Federal Works Agency, including its public building design function. With the Public Buildings Act of 1949, the Office of the Supervising Architect increasingly relied on private architectural firms to carry out public building designs.

In 1954, all exclusively post office buildings were removed from the GSA and transferred to the United States Post Office Department. Today, GSA retains control over non-military federal buildings, including those that house various federal agencies within one building, such as Statesville’s United States Post Office and Court House.<sup>123</sup>

#### Statement of Significance

The United States Post Office and Court House in Statesville, North Carolina, is locally significant under Criterion A in the area of Politics/Government as a notable example of a federal government building in Statesville, North Carolina. The building is also significant under Criterion C in the area of Architecture as a local exemplification of the Simplified Classical architectural style popular among federal buildings constructed by the U.S. Treasury Department during the late tenure of Supervising Architect Louis A. Simon. Further, the United States Post Office and Court House is significant under Criterion C in the area of Art for its artwork designed and sculpted by Sahl Swarz under the auspices of the Section of Fine Arts of the Public Building Administration, Federal Works Agency.

The building retains medium-to-high level integrity of design, materials, and workmanship, which combine to create integrity of feeling and association to the date of completion in 1939 and date of the installation of the artwork in 1948. As previously mentioned, the United States Post Office and Court House is a contributing resource within the Statesville Commercial

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<sup>122</sup> *Ibid.*, Section II, 4.

<sup>123</sup> Lee, 285-290.

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Historic District, which was listed in the National Register of Historic Places on November 24, 1980, and thus retains integrity of setting and location.

*Criterion A - Politics/Government*

The 1939 United States Post Office and Courthouse represents the efficacy of the New Deal-era federal building campaign of the late 1930s, undertaken by the Department of the Treasury. As Statesville developed into a modern city, the federal government recognized the need for an efficient building to serve local citizens. This building was constructed under the auspices of the New Deal-era Department of the Treasury, which was intended to create jobs in the construction industry on projects that would benefit local communities. The 1939 building also represents the importance of federal government services to the city of Statesville and Iredell County. It was identified as a source of civic pride and patriotism to county residents, symbolizing a permanent federal presence in Statesville and Iredell County. The Period of Significance under Criterion A for Politics/Government is 1939, representing the date of completion of construction.

*Criterion C - Architecture*

The United States Post Office and Courthouse is an excellent example of the Simplified Classical Style, designed by architect R. Stanley-Brown, under Supervising Architect Louis A. Simon. The monumental three-story building has pilasters, rather than columns, spare classical ornament, and a modern, dignified form. The form is classical and dignified, which conveyed the stability of the federal government during an uncertain time. It is the only building in Iredell County constructed by the Department of the Treasury in the Simplified Classical style, a style closely associated with Supervising Architect Louis Simon, and the only known design of R. Stanley-Brown in the county. The Period of Significance under Criterion C for Architecture is 1939, representing the date of completion of construction.

*Criterion C - Art*

The wooden sculptures, *Freemen Prosper* and *Defend Freedom*, were designed by artist Sahl Swarz in 1941 for a competition held by the Section of Fine Arts of the Public Building Administration, Federal Works Agency. Swarz subsequently sculpted the figures, which were installed in the building in 1948. As far as can be determined, these sculptures represent the only wooden New-Deal sponsored sculpture in the state of North Carolina, installed in a federal building. In addition, they are the only New Deal-era sculptures of any kind installed in Iredell County's federal buildings. They represent the work of a master, Sahl Swarz, during his second decade working in this medium. The Period of Significance under Criterion C for Art is 1948, representing the date of the installation of the artwork designed for the building.

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“Federal Court Is Convened In The New Court Room.” *The Landmark* (Statesville, NC), 29 April, 1939.

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(21 December, 2017).

### **Selected Research Repositories**

Iredell County Public Library, Statesville, North Carolina.

Vertical File, “Post Offices.”

Vertical File, “Courthouses”

Vertical File, “WPA”

North Carolina State Historic Preservation Office

Historic Site Survey and National Register Records.

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

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register (Contributing to Statesville Commercial Historic District)
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary location of additional data:**

- State Historic Preservation Office
  - Other State agency
  - Federal agency (Southeast Sunbelt Region, U.S. General Services Administration)
  - Local government
  - University
  - Other
- Name of repository: \_\_\_\_\_

**Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned):** \_\_\_\_\_

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**10. Geographical Data**

**Acreage of Property** 0.7 acres

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

**Latitude/Longitude Coordinates (decimal degrees)**

Datum if other than WGS84: \_\_\_\_\_

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

- |              |            |
|--------------|------------|
| 1. Latitude: | Longitude: |
| 2. Latitude: | Longitude: |
| 3. Latitude: | Longitude: |
| 4. Latitude: | Longitude: |

**Or**

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**UTM References**

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

NAD 1927 or  NAD 1983

- |             |                 |                   |
|-------------|-----------------|-------------------|
| 1. Zone: 17 | Easting: 509902 | Northing: 3960026 |
| 2. Zone:    | Easting:        | Northing:         |
| 3. Zone:    | Easting:        | Northing:         |
| 4. Zone:    | Easting :       | Northing:         |

**Verbal Boundary Description** (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The boundary for the United States Post Office and Court House is a rectangular lot containing approximately 0.7 acres located at the northwest corner of West Broad and Meeting Streets. Frontage on West Broad is 135 feet and frontage on Meeting Street is 217 feet. The property is identified for tax purposes as Iredell County Tax Parcel: 4734-95-3757.

**Boundary Justification** (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundary for the United States Post Office and Court House contains the entire parcel historically associated with the building during its period of significance (1939-1948). There have been no additions or subtractions to the parcel since its development in 1939.

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**11. Form Prepared By**

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date: December 2017

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### Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

### Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

### Photo Log

Name of Property:	United States Post Office and Court House
City or Vicinity:	Statesville
County:	Iredell County
State:	NC
Name of Photographer:	Carol M. Highsmith (photos indicated by * were taken by GSA on November 2017)
Date of Photographs:	March 2016; November 2017
Location of Original Digital Files:	U.S. General Services Administration, Center for Historic Buildings

Photo # 1 (NC\_Iredell County\_United States Post Office and Court House\_0001)  
South elevation, view to northwest

Photo # 2 (NC\_Iredell County\_United States Post Office and Court House \_0002)  
Main entry in south elevation, view to northwest

Photo # 3 (NC\_Iredell County\_United States Post Office and Court House\_0003)  
South and west elevations, view to northeast\*

Photo # 4 (NC\_Iredell County\_United States Post Office and Court House\_0004)

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North and west elevations, view to southeast\*

Photo # 5 (NC\_Iredell County\_United States Post Office and Court House\_0005)  
East and north elevations, view to southwest\*

Photo # 6 (NC\_Iredell County\_United States Post Office and Court House\_0006)  
East elevation, view to west

Photo # 7 (NC\_Iredell County\_United States Post Office and Court House\_0007)  
Entry vestibule, view to southeast\*

Photo # 8 (NC\_Iredell County\_United States Post Office and Court House\_0008)  
Post office lobby, first floor, view to east

Photo # 9 (NC\_Iredell County\_United States Post Office and Court House\_0009)  
Post office lobby, first floor, view to west

Photo # 10 (NC\_Iredell County\_United States Post Office and Court House\_0010)  
First floor courtroom, view to southeast\*

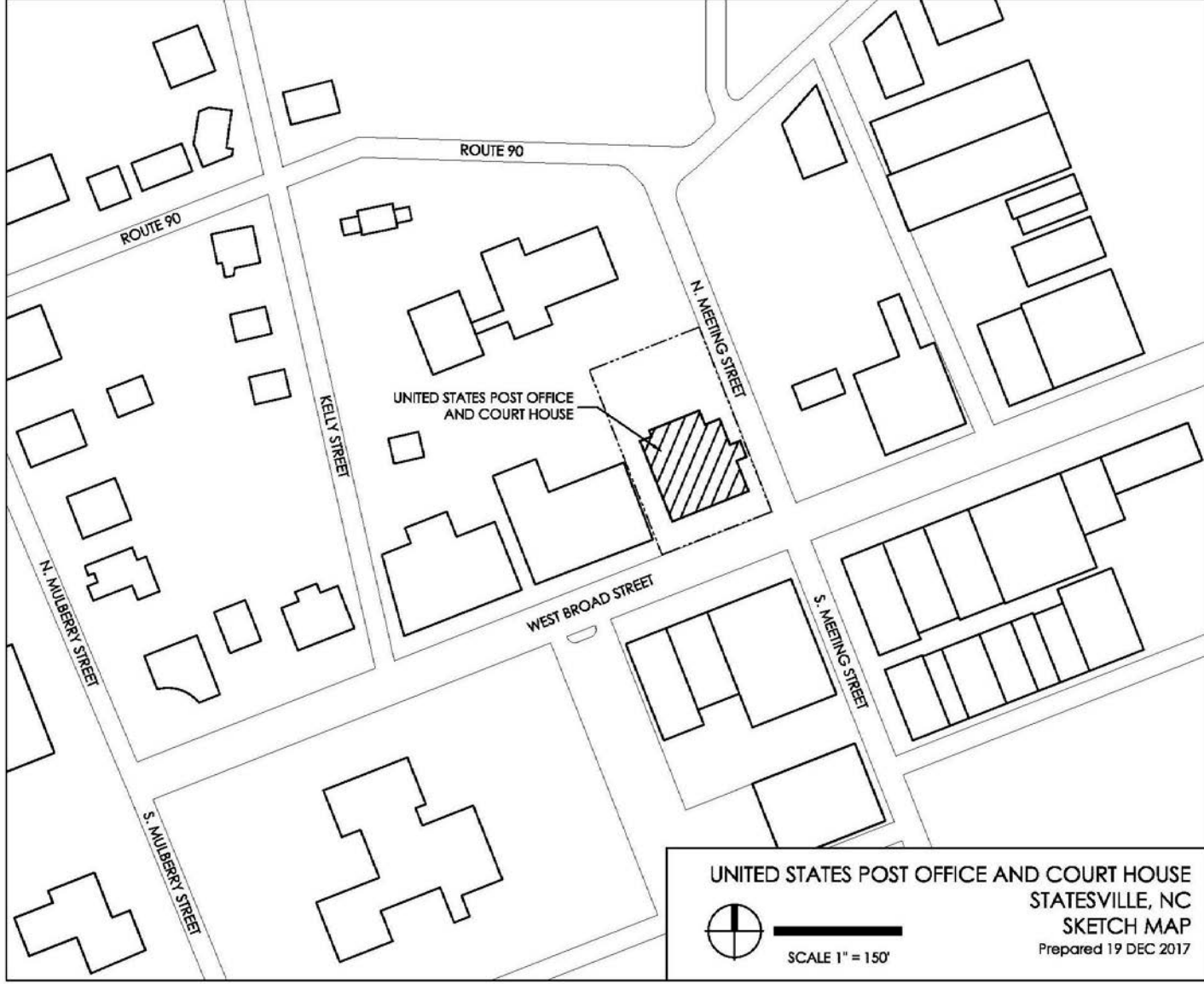
Photo # 11 (NC\_Iredell County\_United States Post Office and Court House\_0011)  
*Defend Freedom*, second floor courtroom lobby, view to north

Photo # 12 (NC\_Iredell County\_US Post Office and Court House\_0012)  
*Freemen Prosper*, second floor courtroom lobby, view to north

Photo # 13 (NC\_Iredell County\_US Post Office and Court House\_0013)  
Second floor courtroom, view to north

United States Post Office and Court House  
Name of Property

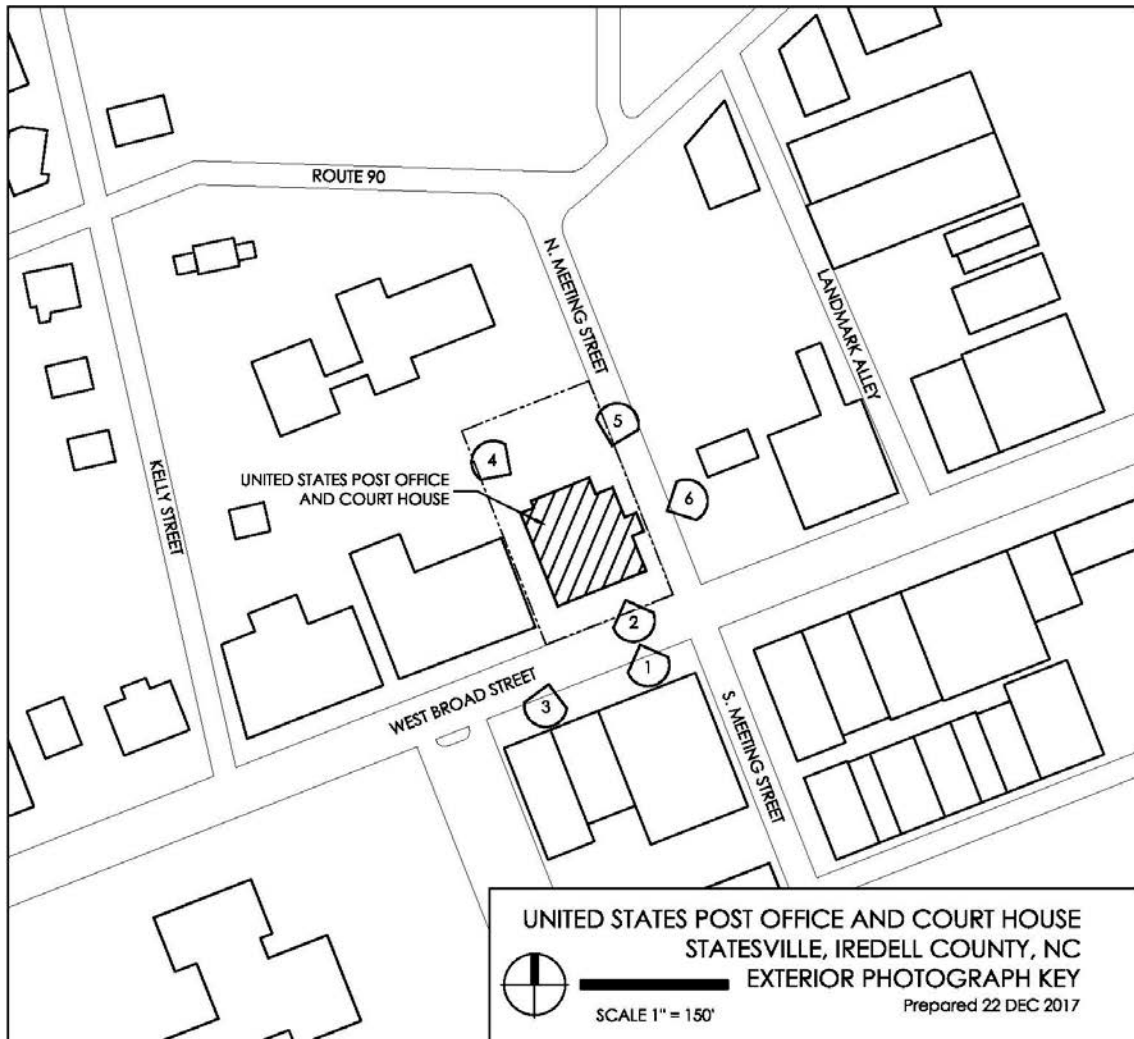
Iredell County, North Carolina  
County and State





United States Post Office and Court House  
Name of Property

Iredell County, North Carolina  
County and State



United States Post Office and Court House  
Name of Property

Iredell County, North Carolina  
County and State

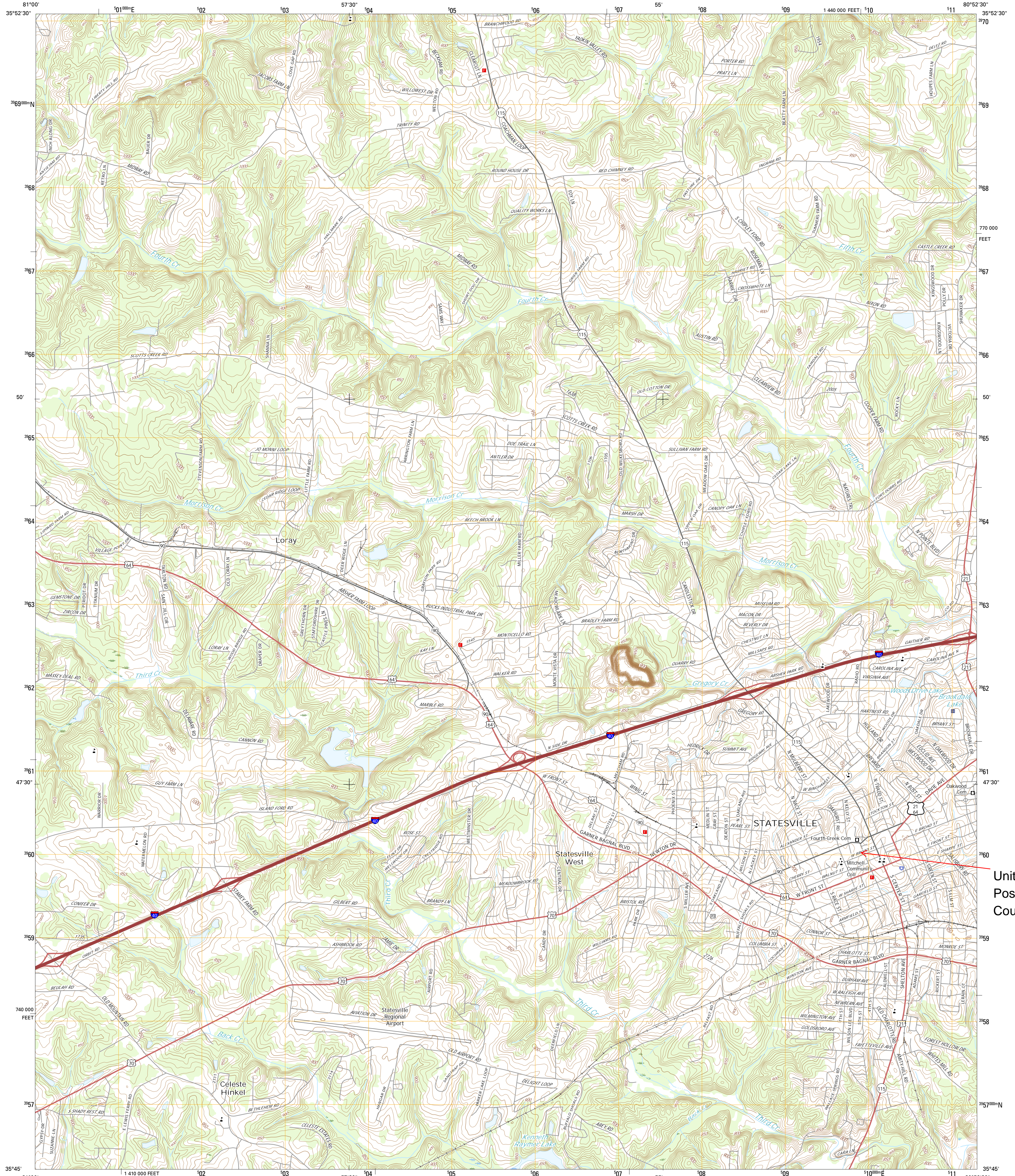
Figure 1 – Photograph of United States Post Office and Court House, Statesville, North Carolina, March 1, 1939 (National Archives and Records Administration RG121-BS\_66\_A\_1)



**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

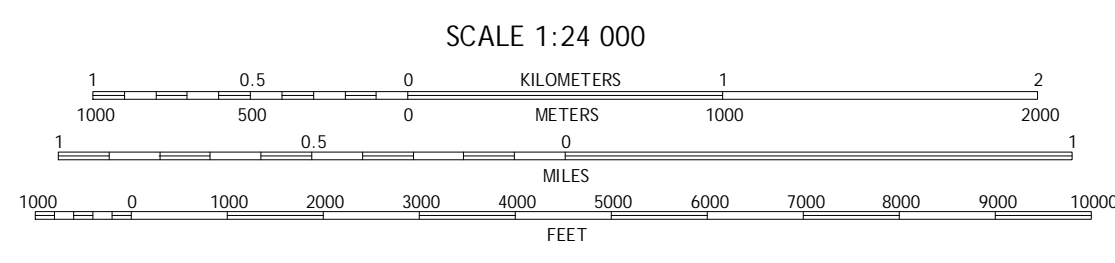
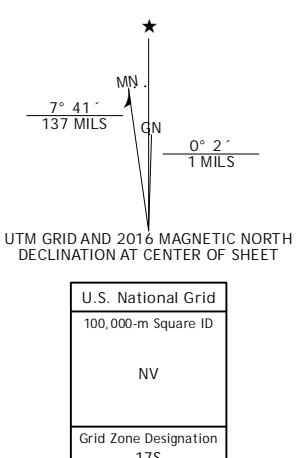
**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.





United States Post Office and Court House

Produced by the United States Geological Survey  
North American Datum of 1983 (NAD83)  
World Geodetic System of 1984 (WGS84) Projection and  
1000-foot ticks: North Carolina Coordinate System of 1983  
This map is not a legal document. Boundaries may be  
generalized for this map scale. Private lands within government  
reservations may not be shown. Obtain permission before  
entering private lands.  
Imagery: NAIP, June 2014  
Roads: U.S. Census Bureau, 2015 - 2016  
Names: GNIS, 2016  
Hydrography: National Hydrography Dataset, 2014  
Contours: National Elevation Dataset, 2008  
Boundaries: Multiple sources; see metadata file 1912 - 2016  
Wetlands: FWS National Wetlands Inventory 1977 - 2014



ROAD CLASSIFICATION

Expressway	Local Connector
Secondary Hwy	Local Road
Ramp	4WD
Interstate Route	US Route
	State Route

ADJOINING QUADRANGLES

1	2	3
4	5	6
7	8	

1 Hiddenite  
2 Central  
3 Harmony  
4 Statesville East  
5 Statesville West  
6 Catewa  
7 Troutman  
8 Shepherds

CONTOUR INTERVAL 10 FEET  
NORTH AMERICAN VERTICAL DATUM OF 1988  
This map was produced to conform with the  
National Geospatial Program US Topo Product Standard, 2011.  
A metadata file associated with this product is draft version 0.6.19









STATES POST OFFICE AND COURT







TATTOO

PIERCING  
TATTOO

POWELL









Statesville

harold

MER

STOP

100

STOP









UNITED STATES BANKRUPTCY COURT





















UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Requested Action:

Property Name:

Multiple Name:

State & County:

Date Received: 3/14/2018      Date of Pending List: 4/11/2018      Date of 16th Day: 4/26/2018      Date of 45th Day: 4/30/2018      Date of Weekly List:

Reference number:

Nominator:

Reason For Review:

- |   |  |   |
|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Appeal           | <input type="checkbox"/> PDIL            | <input type="checkbox"/> Text/Data Issue    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> SHPO Request     | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape       | <input type="checkbox"/> Photo              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Waiver           | <input type="checkbox"/> National        | <input type="checkbox"/> Map/Boundary       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Resubmission     | <input type="checkbox"/> Mobile Resource | <input type="checkbox"/> Period             |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other | <input type="checkbox"/> TCP             | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than 50 years |
|   | <input type="checkbox"/> CLG             |   |

Accept       Return       Reject      4/26/2018 Date

Abstract/Summary Comments:

Recommendation/ Criteria:

Reviewer Jim Gabbert      Discipline Historian

Telephone (202)354-2275      Date \_\_\_\_\_

DOCUMENTATION:    see attached comments : No    see attached SLR : No

If a nomination is returned to the nomination authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the National Park Service.

March 13, 2018

Mr. Paul Loether  
Chief, NRHP & NHL Program  
National Park Service  
1849 C Street, NW, Mail Stop 7228  
Washington, DC 20005



Dear Mr. Loether:

The U.S. General Services Administration (GSA) is pleased to nominate the United States Post Office and Court House (current name: U.S. Courthouse) located at 200 West Broad Street, Statesville, North Carolina, for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places. The building is located within and contributes to the previously listed Statesville Commercial Historic District (#80002878). The nomination is hereby submitted on disk in accordance with the May 6, 2013 guidance and includes the following:

- Signed original first page of the National Register of Historic Places nomination form;
- Disk 1 - The enclosed disk contains the true and correct copy of the nomination for the United States Post Office and Court House, located in Statesville, NC, to the National Register of Historic Places; and,
- Disk 2 - The enclosed disk contains the .tif image files for the above referenced nomination.

In accordance with 36 CFR Part 60.9(c), the appropriate local elected officials were notified of GSA's intent to nominate the above referenced property to the National Register of Historic Places by letters dated January 2, 2018. No response comments were received. GSA received review comments from the North Carolina State Historic Preservation Office by letter dated February 20, 2018. The enclosed nomination incorporates revisions responding to each of those comments.

If for any reason any nomination package that GSA submits needs to be returned, please do so by a delivery service as items returned to our offices via regular mail are irradiated and the materials severely damaged. Should you have any questions or concerns regarding this nomination package, please contact Elizabeth Hannold at (202) 501-2863 or [elizabeth.hannold@gsa.gov](mailto:elizabeth.hannold@gsa.gov).

Sincerely,

Beth L. Savage  
Federal Preservation Officer  
Director, Center for Historic Buildings

Enclosures

cc: Dr. Kevin Cherry, State Historic Preservation Officer  
Audrey Entorf, Regional Historic Preservation Officer