

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICENATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED  
DATE ENTERED  
JAN 7 1976  
JUN 22 1976SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*  
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS**1 NAME**~~HISTORIC~~ <sup>U.S.</sup>  
~~AND/OR COMMON~~ ~~United States Post Office and Customs House~~  
Federal Building**2 LOCATION**

STREET &amp; NUMBER

3006 Colby Avenue

\_\_\_NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Everett

\_\_\_ VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT  
#2 - Honorable Lloyd Meeds

STATE

Washington

CODE

53

COUNTY

Snohomish

CODE

061

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE <input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL <input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL <input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	<b>PUBLIC ACQUISITION</b>	<b>ACCESSIBLE</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT <input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT <input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL <input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

General Services Administration, Attention: James Cason, Chief  
Operational Planning

STREET &amp; NUMBER

Region 10 Office, 15th and C Streets S.W.

CITY, TOWN

Auburn

\_\_\_ VICINITY OF

STATE  
Washington 98002**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Snohomish County Administration Building

STREET &amp; NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Everett

STATE  
Washington 98201**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

Washington State Inventory of Historic Places

DATE

1974

\_\_\_ FEDERAL     STATE    \_\_\_ COUNTY    \_\_\_ LOCALDEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

Washington State Parks &amp; Recreation Commission

CITY, TOWN

Olympia

STATE  
Washington 98504

## 7 DESCRIPTION

### CONDITION

EXCELLENT  
 GOOD  
 FAIR

DETERIORATED  
 RUINS  
 UNEXPOSED

### CHECK ONE

UNALTERED  
 ALTERED

### CHECK ONE

ORIGINAL SITE  
 MOVED DATE \_\_\_\_\_

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#### DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Federal Building in Everett was constructed between 1915 and 1917 for primary use as a post office and customs house. A first-rate example of the Neo-Classical Revival Style on the local scene, it was designed under the direction of Oscar Wenderoth, Supervising Architect of the Treasury Department. The building was only moderately altered internally prior to 1964, at which time the postal facilities were transferred to a new plant on Hoyt Avenue. Subsequent to the transfer, the interior was comprehensively revised, and space reallocated among several federal agencies.

The Federal Building is located in the NE $\frac{1}{4}$  of Section 30, T.29N., R.5E. of the Willamette Meridian. It is situated on Lots 27 through 32 of Block 718 of the plat of Everett. It is oriented on its corner site to the east, its principal facade on Colby Avenue. The Federal Building defines the southwest corner of Colby Avenue and Wall Street, a heavily-travelled intersection in the downtown core. It is closely related to city and county government headquarters occupying the three blocks directly to the east along Wall Street. A new city administrative annex is scheduled for construction on a vacant parcel opposite the Federal Building on Colby Avenue. There is open space in the form of an off-street parking lot adjacent to the building on the south. The remainder of the immediate neighborhood is commercial in character.

Rectangular in plan, and measuring 132 by approximately 78 $\frac{1}{2}$  feet, the Federal Building is a reinforced concrete construction with Wilkeson "white" sandstone facing and Index granite base. It rests on a full basement of brick masonry with concrete footings. The main block of two stories is set off at either end by single-story wings with classical entablatures and linteled window openings set in recessed panels extending from keystones to watertable. The wings present only one bay on the Colby Avenue facade, and seven bays on the side elevations. They are slightly set back from the plane of the main facade.

The facade of the main block is a formal composition in which fenestration is interspaced with an engaged Greek Ionic colonnade. Notable exceptions to a treatment of elements which is otherwise essentially "correct" in archaeological terms are the round-arched openings of the ground story (which are Roman in spirit) and plain, rather than fluted column shafts. The seven bays are set off by eight columns which rest on a projecting section of the base and carry a projecting section of the entablature. The three fascias and enriched talon of the architrave; and the frieze, in which plain discs are centered over each engaged column, are in proper proportion. Superimposed over a cornice consisting of egg and dart molding, dentils, and cymatium, is an attic story in which posts are aligned with the columns and balustrade sections naturally correspond to the bays of the front and side elevations. Ground story windows and doors are set in elongated, recessed, round-arched openings. Originally, window openings at this level alternated with three doorways approached by granite steps spanning more than fifty feet. In the remodeling which followed the transfer of post office facilities, the central door was converted to a window, and a shrubbery planter was installed in place of steps between the southernmost and northernmost entries. Glazing in the form of fanlights originally filled the arch heads of these openings, whereas

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the tympanae of the arches are now filled with a kind of aggregate-surfaced composition material. The original bronze doors have been replaced. Below the ground story window sills are bas-relief panels. A string course between first and second stories is formed of wave molding. Second story openings consist of paired, double-hung sash windows with six lights over six. The three bays, or second story openings of the side elevations were originally fitted with double-hung sash windows. Those of the single story wings had eight lights over eight, and four-light transoms. The mechanical penthouse is visible atop the southwest corner of the roof. Ornamental iron globe-lamp standards on granite bulkheads at the outside of either entrance are original to the scheme.

The west, or rear elevation of the principal block was not faced with sandstone, but is, instead, a plain wall surface of buff-colored facing brick with raked white cement joints. A lozenge pattern is repeated in the brickwork across the face between cornice returns.

The building has received a high level of maintenance over the years, and it is in sound condition. Exterior painting, sandblasting, and repointing carried out around seven years ago no doubt accounts for the building's gleaming surface quality today. Its color is an exceptionally pleasing, and pale, grey-brown. Plant materials arrange along front and side elevations are the result of a recent landscaping project.

As originally laid out, the building's major public space was the Post Office lobby, a long, 98 by 18-foot barrel-vaulted corridor extending the length of the main block. It was finished with terrazzo floor and Vermont marble borders and baseboards, and oak wainscoting and paneling. Between each of the windows and doorways were small vestibules with writing desks. Across from the openings of the facade were seven corresponding round-arched bays containing service windows and as many as 720 private mail boxes. The upper two-thirds of the bays were windows which admitted light to the corridor from the large, open, sky-lighted work room behind the corridor wall. The Postmaster's office was located at the north end of the lobby, in the front section of the single story wing. On the west side of the building was an enclosed driveway which opened directly into the work room. From this service vestibule mail sacks were dumped from trucks to a spot near the sorting cases.

The Federal Building is considered to be functioning to capacity only on the ground story, which houses the Bureau of Indian Affairs. The space of the first floor has been entirely rearranged with new partitions, plasterboard wall cover, tile flooring, and ceilings of acoustical tile lowered to conceal additional mechanical services. No visible evidence of the old Post Office lobby remains except for window and door trim. The stairway in the north end of the building

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with its marble splash boards and iron railings with wooden hand rails is still intact. The second floor presently houses offices of U. S. Congressman Lloyd Meeds, U.S. Customs Service, and the Federal Bureau of Investigation. In the basement few changes have taken place. Still evident are the original trim, paneled doors with brass hardware and brick piers supporting first story floor joists. The U. S. Department of Labor and the General Services Administration building supervisor maintain offices on this level.

In recent weeks, an estimated \$10,000 worth of damage to the building resulted from an after-hours protest bombing. A suitcase bomb left on the steps in front of the southernmost entrance shattered first and second story windows, damaged the doors, railings, and the nearby lamp post. It also fractured masonry of one of the engaged columns and a portion of the ground course. Repair orders were processed immediately.

# 8 SIGNIFICANCE

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

SPECIFIC DATES 1915-1917

BUILDER/ARCHITECT Oscar Wenderoth, Supervising Architect, U.S. Treasury Dept.

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Plans and specifications for the Federal Building in Everett were prepared in 1914 under the direction of Oscar Wenderoth, Supervising Architect of the Treasury. Constructed as a United States Post Office and Customs House, the building was completed and opened for use in 1917. It was designed in the current Neo-Classical Revival Style -- a mode so suitable in its imposing solemnity for public buildings that its broad application by the Federal government over the years caused it to become a stereotype. Everett's Federal Building, however, is a comparatively early example of the Treasury Department's output in this style. Among buildings of similar type and scale it is a consummate rendering in which emphasis was placed upon materials and workmanship of the highest quality. The Federal Building is significant to Everett as an historic seat of Federal government in the locale. It is one of the half dozen monumental historic structures defining downtown space, and it is the only one of the city's prime landmarks not to have been designed by a local or regional firm. The building's postal facilities were superseded by a new plant in 1964, and its interior was subsequently remodeled to accommodate additional Federal offices.

The Federal Building was Everett's first specially designed postal facility. The town's first post office was opened in a store in 1891 and was followed by four successive office building locations. At about the time the post office was installed in the Union Trust Company's building at the corner of Hoty and California Avenues, in 1909, a move was afoot to provide Everett with more adequate facilities. Between 1908 and 1910 six lots at the corner of Colby Avenue and Wall Street, in what was a predominantly residential section at the time (the nearby County Courthouse was an exception), were acquired for future construction at a cost of \$12,000. A proposed Congressional appropriation of \$130,000 for the Federal project is reported to have been vigorously opposed by Everett Postmaster James M. Vernon, who thought the amount insufficient for the needs of the community. As a consequence, a bill increasing the appropriation to \$300,000 was introduced, passed, and signed into law in 1915. Upon the project's completion, in 1917, the total cost would be given at \$260,000. Final construction cost was recorded at \$111,519.

Plans and specifications for the Everett project were prepared by the U.S. Treasury Department and dated 1914. Oscar Wenderoth (1873-1938), whose name as Supervising Architect was automatically included on each sheet of drawings, had acceded to his position in 1912 as an appointee of President William Howard Taft. Following architectural training with various firms in his native Philadelphia, Wenderoth joined the office of the U. S. Supervising Architect at the age of about 24, in 1897. Ten years later, in 1907, he was promoted to the post of Chief Draftsman, a position he held for five years before becoming Supervising Architect (Owing to failing eyesight, he resigned his work in 1929.)

# 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Everett Daily Herald (August 23, 1917), p. 1; (August 25, 1917), p. 5. Accounts for building's completion and opening.

Progress photographs, building plans and Postmaster's Diary (June 15, 1915-December 10, 1916) held by the Construction Management Division, Public Building Service, Region 10 Office, General Services Administration, 15th & C Streets, Auburn, Washington 98002.

# 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY Less than one.

UTM REFERENCES

A	1,0	55,919,20	5,311,314,0	B			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C				D			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

# 11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Elisabeth Walton Potter, Historic Preservation Specialist

ORGANIZATION Office of Archaeology & Historic Preservation

DATE

Washington State Parks & Recreation Commission

September 1975

STREET & NUMBER

TELEPHONE

P. O. Box 1128

(206) 753-4116

CITY OR TOWN

STATE

Olympia

Washington 98504

# 12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL

STATE

LOCAL

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

*Arthur M. Shalick*

TITLE

State Historic Preservation Officer

DATE

December 19, 1975

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

DATE

6/22/76

ATTEST:

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

6-18-76

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In view of the lack of specific information about procedures in the office of the Supervising Architect in these years, the degree of Wenderoth's influence over the designs produced by his department is a matter of pure speculation. It seems safe to assume that, as in any sizeable architectural office, several persons contributed to the project, each according to his speciality. Each sheet was also drawn with space for the initials of approval of the superintendents of the drafting, structural, and mechanical divisions. Among those who signed individual drawings of floor plans, elevations, and facade details, the names Streeter, Lampster, and S. Charles appear most frequently. Though it is not known how directly the Treasury Department was involved in the inspection of building sites and on-going work, it is possible to conclude that, in this case, the plans and specifications were followed very precisely. It has been suggested that while projects at various locations may bear certain similarities, plans were not completely standardized. Perhaps it can be said that, especially in the period before the First World War, the Treasury Department aimed at suiting a building's specifications to its primary function and to its site.

The project's general contractor was Henrikson and Company, Inc., of Seattle. A diary kept during the course of construction, presumably by the Everett Postmaster, who was then Hugh Nolan, shows that the construction superintendent was on the site and preparations for excavation were commenced on June 15, 1915. On June 18, work started at 10 a.m. with a ground-breaking ceremony attended by the postmaster and city officials. The laying of the cornerstone was observed on November 17. Three days of work were lost because of snow at the first of January, 1916, and more than a week's work was lost to freezing weather early in February that year. The building was enclosed with its roof by March, and interior finish work proceeded throughout the summer. It was noted that J. W. Roberts made final inspection on November 15, 1916, but the unspecified work of carpenters and laborers continued to mid December. There the diary trailed off. It was not until late August the following year that the building was opened for use. The delay, apparently the result of painstaking furnishing and equipping of various offices, caused much comment locally, but when the exemplary modern public building was finally opened for public inspection on August 25, 1917, the press observed that while it had been a long wait, the new building offered "splendid facilities and fine accessibility." In addition to various postal facilities on the ground floor, the building housed a steam heating plant, employees' lounge, lavatories and shower bath, and civil service examination room in the basement; and, on the second floor, two Internal Revenue offices, the U.S. Customs and Immigration inspector's office, and offices of the Snohomish County Agricultural Agent. There were specially constructed concrete vaults for both customs officials and postal departments.

Regular operations with the entire force of thirty-four postal employees commenced in the new building on Monday, August 27, 1917, under the direction of Postmaster

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Charles A. Cole, who had supervised the transfer of equipment from the former location in the Union Trust Company building. "The old post office with its inadequate quarters," it was observed with pride, was now "a thing of the past." The Federal Building served as Everett's central post office for nearly fifty years. Its service in that capacity extended into the jet age from the years of transition when mail sacks were hauled from the railroad station in a motorized truck and parcel post deliveries were still made by horse-drawn wagon.



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Whitfield, William, ed. History of Snohomish County, Washington (Chicago-Seattle: Pioneer Historical Publishing Company, 1926), Vol. 1, pgs. 379, 408-409.

Whithey, Henry F., and Withey, Elsie Rathburn, eds. Biographical Dictionary of American Architects, Deceased (Los Angeles: New Age Publishing Co., 1956), p. 644.  
Oscar Wenderoth