UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR **NATIONAL PARK SERVICE**

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

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FOR FEDERAL PROPERTIES

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DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The United States Post Office in Columbus is located in the central business district approximately two blocks southeast of the Lowndes County Court-It is Colonial Revival in style. A brick foundation rises above grade The main floor is located one step above street to a limestone water table. level. The exterior walls consist of two full stories crowned by a limestone frieze and cornice. A hipped roof with slate shingles covers the two story section of the building, which is C-shaped with two prominent wings projecting back from the outermost bays. A two-stage, wooden cupola crowns the roof ridge over the central bay. It consists of a square base with four large lights in the second stage, which are wooden, double hung, six over six sash. Pilasters flank the lights and the peaked metal roof has a finial and also acroterions around the perimeter. A one story section with partial mezzanine level is located to the rear, within the cavity of the "C", and has a flat, built-up roof with a limestone parapet. The street facade is divided into five bays reading windowwindow-door-window-window. The three central bays are recessed so that a loggia is formed. Two fluted, limestone, Tuscan columns support the limestone architrave along with square limestone pilasters to either side. The central doorway is articulated by limestone pilasters, an architrave with a continuous guttae molding and a limestone pediment. A large transom with eight lights appears over the doorway under the architrave. Windows on the main facade are wooden, double hung, six over six sash with limestone sills and flat brickarched lintels. The east and west facades each contain five bays of windows. A loading platform and mailing vestibule project from the center rear (south) facade. A full basement level exists. Brick masonry laid in the common bond is used throughout.

The interior plan (see attached plan drawings) consists of a rectangular public lobby with the postmaster's office on the northeast corner. The remaining main floor space is allocated to a large work room with a partial mezzanine floor containing a swing room and lookout located over the rear vestibule. The second floor contains space for additional governmental offices. The lobby contains a polychrome terrazzo floor, marble wainscoting, a pilastered vestibule, and an altered screenline. Woodwork included deep ceiling moldings with dentils and fluted door trim with cornerblocks.

A mural by Beulah Bettersworth, created under the Department of the Treasury's Section of Fine Arts program, was completed and installed in 1940 at a cost of \$1,850. It presently is in a good state of preservation. (See attached Fine Arts Inventory).

See "Composite Biographical Sketches of Artists" for further discussion.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AR	REAS OF SIGNIFICANCE CH	IECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW	
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1700-1799	XART	ENGINEERING	MUSIC	THEATER
1800-1899	COMMERCE	EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	PHILOSOPHY	_TRANSPORTATION
<u>X</u> 1900-	COMMUNICATIONS	INDUSTRY	* POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	_OTHER (SPECIEV)
		INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES February, 1939-Mural completed ER/ARCHITECT R. Stanley Brown - Architect Murphy Pound - builder

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Politics/Government

The first Public Buildings Act of 1913 and the second Public Building Act of 1926 were supplemented in 1933 by Congress, on the urging of Franklin Delano Roosevelt, with the Federal Emergency Administration of Public Works. Between 1933 and 1941 a tremendous amount of construction resulted in the United States, including four post offices in Mississippi constructed under the 1926 Act and thirty-two post offices in Mississippi constructed under 1933 PWA legislation.

The U.S. Post Office in Columbus, Mississippi, built in 1939, is significant as being one of thirty-two post offices constructed in the state with Public Works Administration funds during the Great Depression. It was designed by R. Stanley Brown and built by Murphy Pound of Columbus, Georgia. The post office is built on sixteenth section land, which means by law that it belongs to the state of Mississippi and not the Federal government. The city of Columbus holds the title to this land. To get around this legal discrepancy, former Congressman John Rankin introduced a bill in Congress whereby the government would be authorized to purchase the lease to the land and the lease would be good for ninety-nine years and renewable forever. (See also "Federal Construction Projects, 1913-1941").

Architecture

The Courthouse, the City Hall, and this Post Office represent the three most significant governmental public buildings in the community. This structure is the largest and most elaborate of the Colonial Revival group represented in this thematic nomination. The hipped roof and great cupola suggest the Georgian Mode but the large Doric columns in antis with flanking pilasters represent the proportions and spatial qualities of the Greek Revival, a ubiquitous style in the Columbus area as a result of antebellum construction.

Art

The Department of the Treasury's Section of Fine Arts Program was begun by Franklin Delano Roosevelt, and in two phases, the Public Works of Art Project and the Section of Painting and Sculpture, several thousand artists produced multiple thousand pieces of art throughout the United States, including sculpture and mural paintings.

The U.S. Post Office in Columbus is significant because of the mural located in the lobby above the door of the postmaster's office. The mural, done by Beulah Bettersworth, was completed in 1940. The mural is entitled "Out of the Soil," which is appropriate because it reveals typical scenes of the fertile fields near Columbus and the bountiful forest that supplies the lumber industry and veneer mills in the area. Miss Bettersworth, a former student of George Bellows and native Missourian, is represented in several private collections and one of her paintings hangs in the White House.²

¹Columbus Commercial <u>Dispatch</u>, September 29, 1955.

 $^{^2}$ Clipping located in the vertical files of the Columbus, Mississippi Public Library.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

See bibliography attached to narrative entitled "The Treasury Department's Section of the Fine Arts Program" and "Federal Construction Work 1913-1941." Columbus Commercial Dispatch, September 29, 1955. Clipping located in the vertical files of the Columbus, Mississippi Public Library. 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA UTM NOT VERIFIED ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 1/4 acre **UTM REFERENCES** A[1,6] [3]6,7[4,3₁0 3,710,618,710 ZONE ZONE NORTHING EASTING D VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION The property nominated is indicated by the crossed ink lines on the accompanying U.S.G.S. map entitled Columbus Quadrangle. See Continuation Sheet for Verbal Boundary Description. LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES STATE CODE COUNTY CODE STATE CODE CODE COUNTY **III** FORM PREPARED BY NAME / TITLE Michael W. Fazio, William E. Parrish, DATE ORGANIZATION October 1, 1979 Tomas Blackwell. Curtis Franks STREET & NUMBER TELEPHONE (601) 323-3451 40 Eutaw Street CITY OR TOWN STATE Starkville Mississippi **CERTIFICATION OF NOMINATION** STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER RECOMMENDATION YES NO NONE____ STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE In compliance with Executive Order 11593, I hereby nominate this property to the National Register, certifying that the State Historic Preservation Officer has been allowed 90 days in which to present the nomination to the State Review Board and to evaluate its significance. The evaluated level of significance is _____National ____State ____Local. FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE DATE TITLE FOR NPS USE ONLY I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER DATE DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION ATTEST: DATE

Form No. 10-300a Hev. 10-74)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED OCT 1 4 1980

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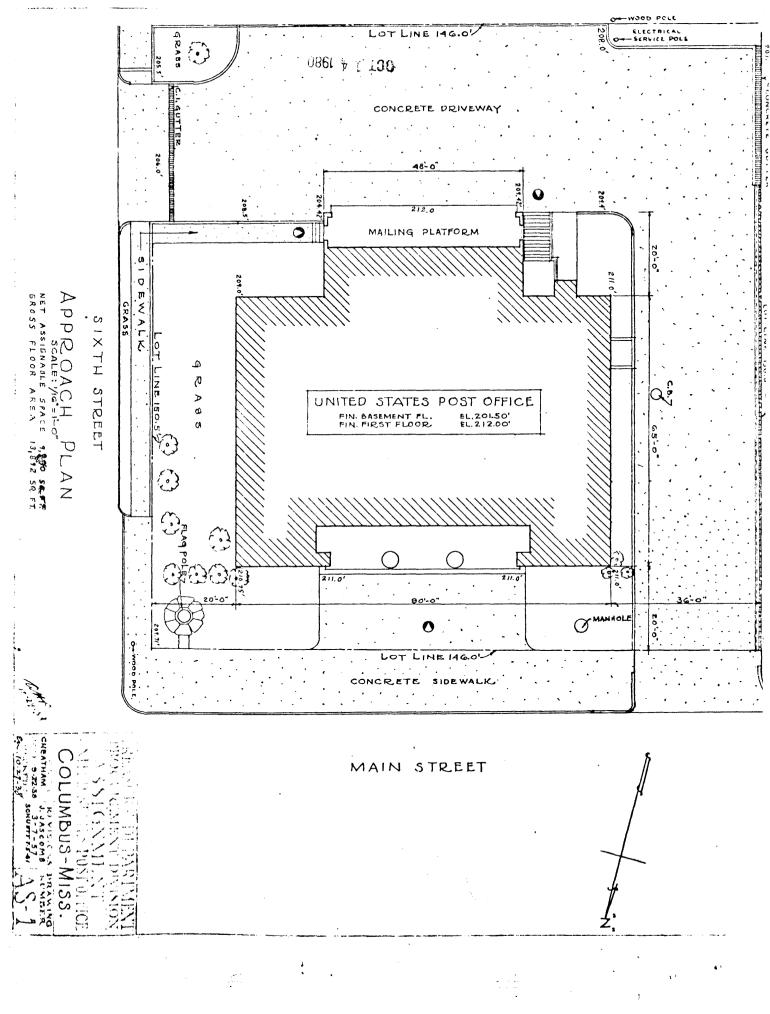
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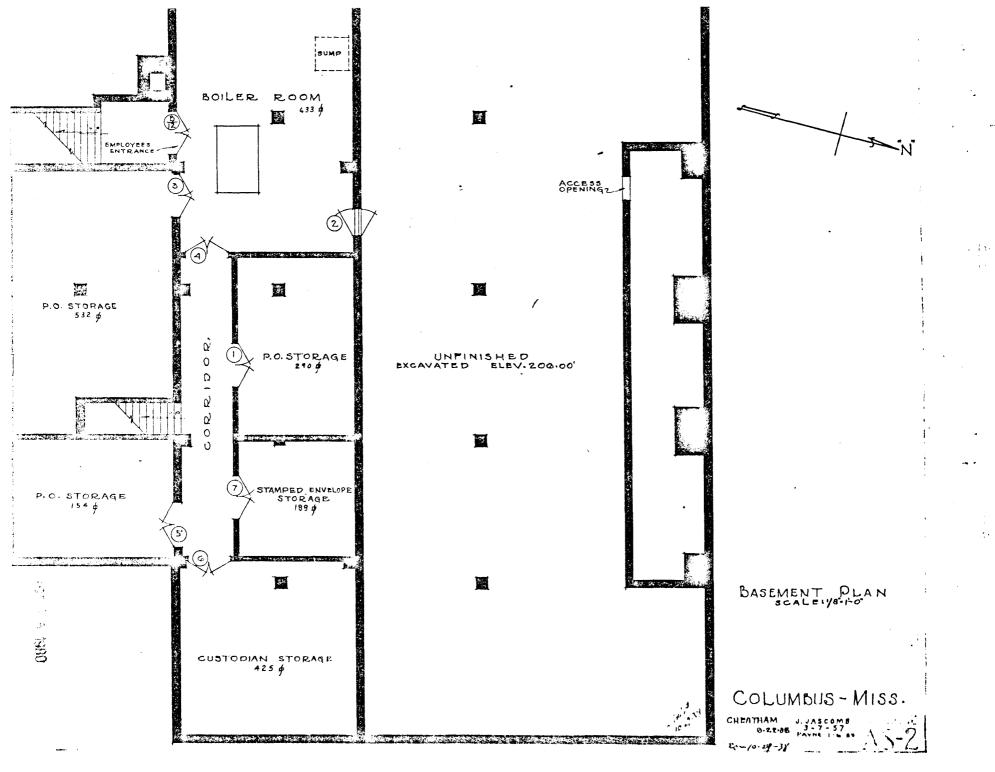
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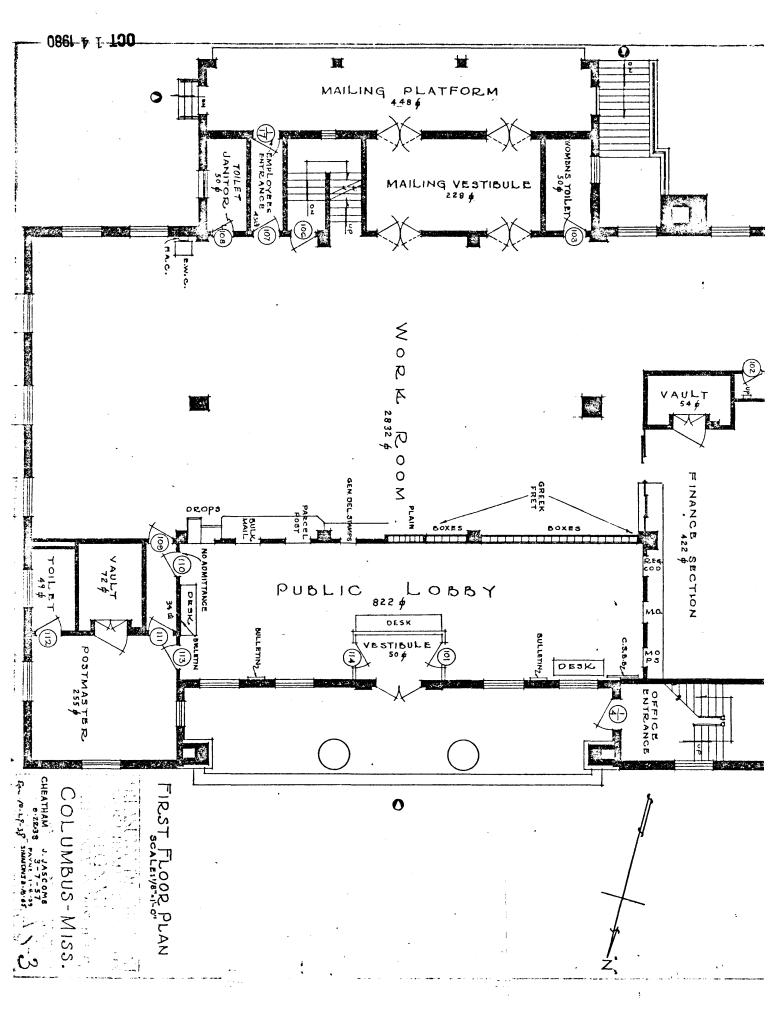
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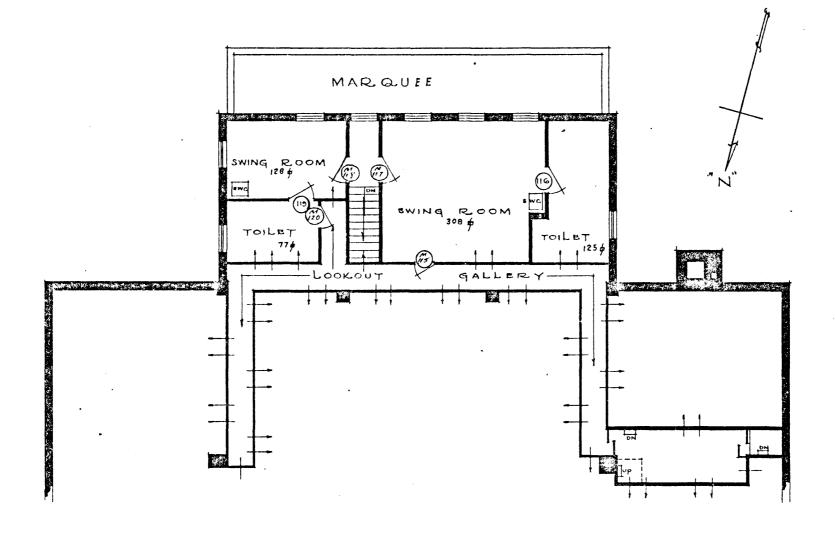
COLUMBUS, MS

Lots 4 and 5 and 14 feet off the east side of Lot 3, Square 4, South of Main Street, Columbus, Lowndes County, State of Mississippi. Recorded 25 February 1937, Deed Record No. 163, Page 62-64, Clerk of Chancery Court.









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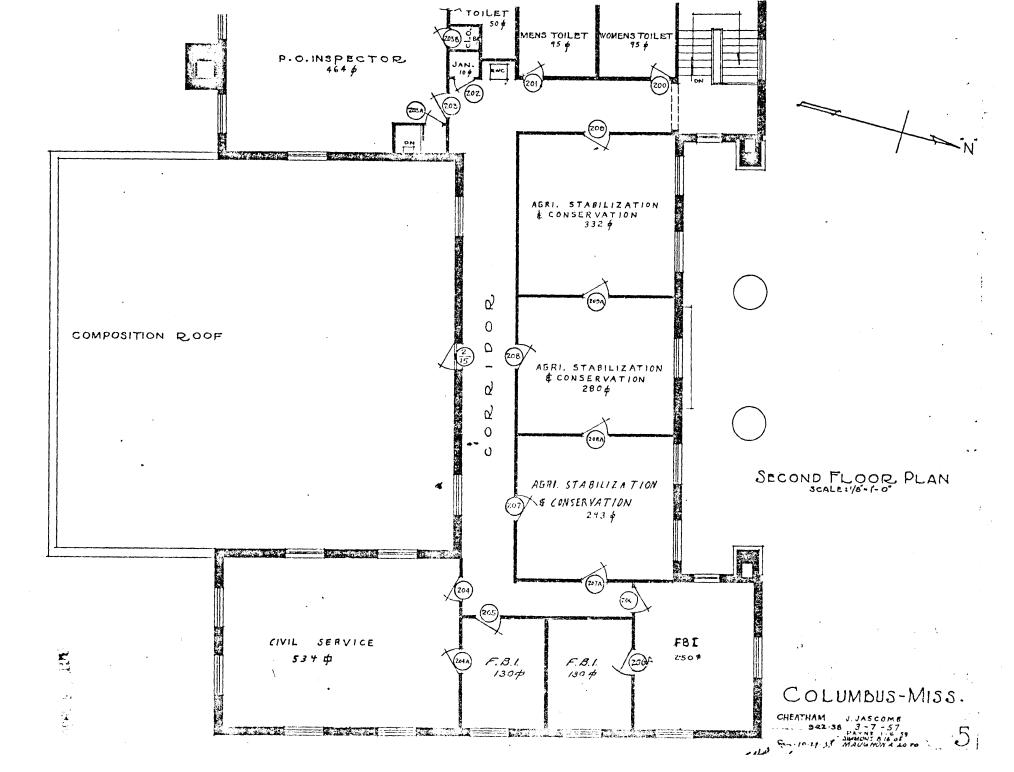
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5/19/1939	4/11/1940	\$ 1,850	Section of

SPECIAL MAINTENANCE INSTRUCTIONS

HISTORY OF MAINTENANCE TO ARREST TO GARRIED OFF. CATEGORIC MAS SPARTED FROM PAIR FING OF TARREST OFFICE ESWITH GOOD CORRESPOND.

ARCHIVES VISUAL REFERENCES

DISPOSITION OF ART WORK FROM INVENTORY

FINE ARTS INVENTORY PUBLIC BUILDINGS SERVICE GENERAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION

BUILDING

No.



ARTIST'S BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES:

INCLUDE ANY LOCAL "MEMORIES" OF ARTIST & HIS DIRECT RELATIONSHIP WITH THE COMMUNITY THROUGH RESIDENCE, VISITS OR RESEARCH

ARTIST TERMAR DESCRIPTION OR HIS RESIDUD OF SID. SOME CETY AT THE PINE OF PAINTING A CO. TSSTORAD. EC T II ST. LOUIS AUGUST 82, 1894

SCHOOL: 4 YEARS WASHINGTON UNIV. SCHOOL OF FIRE ARTS

2 KEARS ARE STUDENTS DEAGLE, HEN YORK CITY

BUNGPHAN STUDY

INSTRUCTORS: GRORGE BELLOIS

JOHN CARROLL

FRANK V. DUNOLD

JOHN SLOAN

ONE OF THE FAILTIES MARKS IN THE JUINT FOUSE

