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NATIONAL REGISTER

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name Carrington Post Office
other names/site number same

2. Location

street & number 87 N. Ninth Avenue
city, town Carrington
state North Dakota code ND county Foster code 031 zip code 58421

3. Classification

Table with 3 columns: Ownership of Property, Category of Property, and Number of Resources within Property. Includes checkboxes for private/public-State/Federal and building(s)/district/site/structure/object.

Name of related multiple property listing: U. S. Post Offices in North Dakota, 1900-1940

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register none

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet. Signature of certifying official: Bradford W. Meador, U.S. Postal Service, Date: 8-22-89

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet. Signature of commenting or other official: James E. Sperry, State Historic Preservation Officer (North Dakota), Date: September 15, 1989

5. 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 Date of Action

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

post office

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

post office

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(enter categories from instructions)Colonial Revival

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation poured concretewalls brick

roof slateother

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

See Continuation Sheets.

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Multiple Property: U.S. Post Offices in North Dakota, 1900-1940

CARRINGTON POST OFFICE, DESCRIPTION:

Carrington is divided by the northwest-to-southeast tending Burlington Northern Railroad tracks, which cleave the city into approximately one-third west of the tracks and two-thirds east of the tracks. The Carrington Post Office is on the east side of town about one and a half blocks east of the tracks and one half block east of the main north-south artery, Central Avenue. It is located a half block north of Main Street facing east on Ninth Avenue North at the southwest corner of First Street North. The business section of town is south of the post office and the residential area is north. The post office has no direct or indirect impact on the commercial or historical buildings along Main Street one half block south of the post office.

The Carrington Post Office is in excellent condition. The condition of the building in terms of upkeep and maintenance is superior to most post offices in the state. Because AstroTurf once covered the front granite steps and was removed, there is adhesive on the front steps. It could be removed with some trouble, and the adhesive is unsightly. The post office site covers the northeast quarter of the block on which it sits. The building is set back from Ninth and First by a strip of green lawn 12 feet wide on Ninth Avenue and 15 feet wide on First Street. The parking lot and loading area is to the rear (west). The south side yard is 69 feet wide and is landscaped with lawn and mature oaks. Landscaping consists of mature, well-kept shrubs and several large spruce trees. The Carrington Post Office received the National Post Office Beautification Award in 1966 and was recognized for excellence in groundskeeping in 1970 (Carrington, North Dakota: Community Fact Survey, Sponsored by the Carrington Chamber of Commerce, 1971, p. 24).

According to the postmaster, part of the roof is in bad condition and is leaking. The Postal Service wishes to repair it. However, the front portion of the roof is still the original slate. All precautions should be taken to retain the slate hipped roof at the front of the building and repair it as necessary, because few post offices with integrity as good as that of Carrington's still have their original slate roofs.

The Carrington Post Office is of fireproof construction with common brick and structural tile walls. It still has its original slate roof on the hipped front portion. The rear flat portion of the roof was

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originally tar and gravel with copper flashing. The material in use today is unknown (See Foster County Independent, hereafter FCI - this paper provided unusually detailed coverage of the building of the post office], 10/6/32, pp. 1, 5; 12/1/32, p. 1). The building's exterior sheathing is light to dark red wire-faced matte finished brick from Springfield, Minnesota, laid in American bond in tapestry pattern, with Bloomington, Indiana limestone trim. The cut stone frieze on the front facade was from Chicago, and the polished granite steps were from Cold Spring Granite Company of Cold Spring, Minnesota. The roofing slate was from Pennsylvania (FCI, 9/1/32, p. 1). The front porch surround around the front doors is stucco which, although repainted, is original. There is granite coping around the raised basement window wells.

The interior walls and ceilings are plaster. The lobby has a red quarry tile floor with Cream Kasota marble base and wainscot. Steps, thresholds, and risers are white Alaska marble streaked with gray. The postmaster's office floor is quartered oak. Floors in the offices and postal inspector's office, and in the swing room and workroom are maple. The workroom wainscot is tongue and groove wood. The rear mail vestibule has a pine floor. The lobby has a leaded glass window transom over the front doors, steam radiators, and wood wainscot. All the woodwork in the lobby and workroom was originally painted white or cream color. The service window counters are black bakelite. There are wall grilles above the service windows made of wrought iron (see FCI, 3/23/33, p. 1 and original blueprints). The ceiling fixtures in the first floor lobby and other spaces are box-type fluorescents.

The building's blueprints are brittle and have not been reproduced here. However, original prints are on file with the Carrington postmaster.

The building is one floor above a raised basement. The lobby extends across the front the building. An ell to the south accommodates the marble stairs to the basement, the door to the postmaster's office, and the lock boxes on the interior side of the ell. The workroom is at the rear of the lobby, with a mailing vestibule and loading at the west (rear) of the building. At the north end of the workroom, fronting on service windows in the lobby, is the money order and registry division section, once used primarily for the postal savings program.

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The basement level has two storage rooms across the front of the building, with an interior hall behind and the postal inspector's office on the north side of the building. In the northwest corner of the building is the carriers' swing room. The remainder of the basement has the carriers' toilet, boiler room, fuel room, and a small storage room.

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally statewide locally

Applicable National Register Criteria A B C D

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

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Politics/Government
Architecture
Economics
Community Planning

Period of Significance

1932-1939

Significant Dates

1932-1933

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

N/A

Architect/Builder

OSA/ James A. Wetmore, Acting Supervising Architect
B: Redlinger & Hansen, Minneapolis

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

See attached continuation sheets.

9. Major Bibliographical References

See attached continuation sheet.

See continuation sheet

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary location of additional data:

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

Specify repository:

State Historical Society of N.D., Bismarck

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property less than one acre

UTM References

A

1	4
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4	9	0	5	9	5
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5	2	5	5	0	0	0
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Zone Easting Northing

B

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Zone Easting Northing

C

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D

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N/A See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

Lots 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, & 12, Block 29, Original Townsite, City of Carrington, ND.

N/A See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The boundary includes all city lots which have been historically associated with the property.

N/A See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Dr. Norene Roberts, President
organization Historical Research, Inc. date July, 1989
street & number 7800 Tessman Drive telephone (612) 560-4348
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CARRINGTON, SIGNIFICANCE

The Carrington Post Office is significant under Criteria A and C on a state and local level as one of a small group of 20 extant federally-built post offices in North Dakota constructed between 1900-1940. Under Criterion A, this post office is associated with various federal policies in post office funding, design, and method of construction in the early 20th century. Under Criterion C, this facility shares the distinctive characteristics of federally-funded post offices as a property type built in North Dakota before the Second World War. The major areas of significance are Politics/Government, Architecture, Economics, and Community Planning. The Carrington Post Office is significant locally as the best example of public architecture in the city and the only federal building in town. It is also an excellent example on a statewide basis of a Class C post office in a second class North Dakota city. It has exceptionally good integrity in the statewide context of all North Dakota federally-built post offices. It stands today virtually as built. Under Politics/ Government, his building occasioned particularly active interest in the local community, and under Economics, it provided significant numbers of jobs for local people during its construction, thus fulfilling one of the goals of the federal building program during the 1930s. It is one of nine post offices constructed by the federal government in North Dakota between 1932-40, and one of only three examples of the Colonial Revival style of architecture in North Dakota post office design.

The Carrington Post Office has exceptionally fine integrity. It is from the same standardized plans as the post office in Vermillion, South Dakota, which has, unlike the Carrington facility, been extensively altered. The building is of Colonial Revival style, with a classical projecting portico of limestone with four free-standing Corinthian columns under a full pediment. The raking cornice of the pediment is dentilled. Limestone is used for rounded window sills, flat arched window heads with keystones, and limestone panels above the windows. The front entry is surrounded with wood trim including fluted pilasters, tall entablature, and molding. The center bay around the front door is stucco and has been painted white. The brick exterior walls are quoined at the corners, and the walls have a limestone running course forming a water table which delineates the raised basement from the first story. The basement window wells and stairwells are surrounded with decorative wrought iron railings.

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The Carrington Post Office is an excellent example of a Class C post office in a second class city, and it is in virtually original condition. Guidelines for standardized post office designs were instituted in 1913 by the Public Buildings Commission. Class C buildings were built for post offices having yearly receipts of \$15,000 to \$60,000. This classification system for federal buildings began under McAdoo in 1915. The brick facing and stone trim authorized by these guidelines can be seen in the Carrington facility as marble mopboards, floor borders, and basement stairs. The red tile in the lobby was considered an improvement over the terrazzo floors when the Carrington Post Office was built (FCI, 7/7/32, pp. 1, 5). Carrington became a second class city on July 1, 1901 (FCI, 10/6/32, pp. 1, 5). In 1926, annual postal receipts for the facility reached \$15,000. Receipts grew to \$18,054.91 in 1930 (FCI, 1/1/31, p. 1). Under McAdoo's classification system, the rise in receipts entitled the city to a facility with better interior finishing materials.

Architecturally, the Carrington post office is an excellent example of a standardized national style. It has unusually good integrity as well. Major alterations have been few: fluorescent ceiling fixtures, a larger metal canopy over the rear mailing vestibule, and new anodized aluminum and glass doors at the front entry. These minimal changes are typical for a post office from this era. Most postal facilities have had alterations to the lobby vestibule, ornamental grilles, service windows and counters, flooring, and (often) windows. All these features are intact in the Carrington facility. This facility is an outstanding example of a Class C facility in North Dakota.

The post office also compares well with other public buildings in Carrington. The Armory and Library is a modern building of functional design in brick with glass block window infill. The City Hall is an older, probably 19th century, building of one story that was completely sheathed in stucco years ago. It appears to have been originally built as a double storefront. It has arched window openings with news anodized metal windows and infill. Its style and architectural integrity are gone.

In the main, the history of the Carrington Post Office follows the general historical outlines of post offices built in the 1930s. Application for the post office was made around 1928 by a group of local businessmen and Congressman Tom Hall. Between 1920 and 1930, postal receipts increased 50 percent and the population increased by 400, reaching 1,719 at the 1930

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federal census. The old post office, leased by the government, had been a half block south of Main Street since 1918, but had been moved more than a dozen times since the post office was established in Carrington in 1883 (FCI, 7/7/30, p. 1).

That Carrington received authorization for a new post office could have been the result of several factors: the increase of 50 percent in postal receipts over the period 1920-1930; the expiration of the post office's lease in October 1, 1931 (FCI, 1/1/31, p. 1); or the fact that, as the local paper reported, Carrington did a big volume of business out of its local post office (FCI, 7/14/32, pp. 1, 5). Carrington ranked 16th in size in North Dakota in 1930, but ranked 6th in the state in the amount deposited in postal savings accounts (FCI, 1/8/31, p. 1). At a time when people had lost faith in banks, the postal savings system allowed citizens to have an account at the local post office in which they could deposit up to \$100 at a time for a maximum \$500 per person. Most of these deposits were made in amounts of 1, 5, and 10 dollars, however.

When Carrington received its \$90,000 appropriation for the site and new post office, it was part of a 68 million dollar public building fund passed by Congress as a national relief measure to relieve unemployment and business depression (FCI, 2/2/31, pp. 1, 6). Eight new federal buildings were constructed or authorized in North Dakota between 1929 and 1931 at a cost of over a million dollars. The Fargo and Jamestown post offices, completed between 1929 and 1931, were included, as well as federal buildings in St. John, Pembina, Ambrose, Grafton, Portal and Carrington (FCI, 5/28/31, p. 1). (The St. John, Ambrose, and Portal facilities were border inspection stations; the remainder were post offices except for Pembina, which was a combination facility housing both functions.)

The construction of the Carrington Post Office appears to have achieved the federal purpose of providing jobs during the Depression. The contractor with the low bid was Redlinger and Hansen Company of Minneapolis. The firm's bid was \$47,000 for the building alone. The firm was described as one of North Dakota's well-known construction companies, originating in Wahpeton with offices in Minneapolis and Williston. This construction company built Minot's 1931 courthouse and a schoolhouse in Arthur, North Dakota. Alex Nelson and Sons, of Carrington and Perham, Minnesota submitted the fourth lowest bid, but postal policy was to go strictly with the low bidder (FCI, 7/14/32, pp. 1, 5). In these

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depression times, construction contractors were "hungry". Besides the winning bid and that of Nelson and Sons, there were nine bids from Minnesota, 3 from Illinois, and one each from Missouri, South Dakota, and Indiana (FCI, 10/15/31, p. 1; 10/10/32, pp. 1, 5). The winning firm promised to use as much local labor as possible. Local people who were used on the project included the Olson Brothers for all the plumbing and 20 local laborers (FCI, 7/21/32, p. 1), an excavating subcontract to Chris Hanson (FCI, 7/21/32, p. 1), and a crew of 12 men, 3 trucks, and 5 times to do excavating work (FCI, 7/28/32, p. 1). The nearby Olson pit was used to supply sand and gravel (FCI, 9/1/32, p. 1). When the post office authorities advertised for a post office caretaker and janitor for the new building, they received over 50 applications for the two jobs (FCI, 3/23/33, pp. 1, 5).

Local interest was keen as the post office site was acquired and the building constructed. The Foster County Independent covered events in minute detail. When ground was broken, Mayor Guy Cook turned the first shovelful (FCI, 7/21/32, p. 1). The Kiwanis Club sponsored a cornerstone laying (FCI, 9/29/32, p. 1). A dedication ceremony was held on completion of the building (FCI, 10/6/32, pp. 1, 5). Before the new post office opened in May 1933, the building was thrown open to the public, and over 2,000 people (more than lived in the town in 1930) came to visit (FCI, 5/5 and 25/33, p. 1). These activities went beyond the usual interest occasioned by a new postal facility.

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CARRINGTON, BIBLIOGRAPHY:

Carrington, North Dakota: Community Fact Survey, Carrington: Carrington Chamber of Commerce, 1971.

The Foster County Independent, July 7, 1930.

The Foster County Independent, January 1, 1931.

The Foster County Independent, February 2, 1931.

The Foster County Independent, May 5, 1931.

The Foster County Independent, October 15, 1931.

The Foster County Independent, January 8, 1932.

The Foster County Independent, July 7, 14, 21, 28, 1932.

The Foster County Independent, September 1, 29, 1932.

The Foster County Independent, October 6, 1932.

The Foster County Independent, October 6, 10, 1932.

The Foster County Independent, December 12, 1932.

The Foster County Independent, May 5, 25, 1933.

The Foster County Independent, March 23, 1933.