

**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

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

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

For HCRS use only

received NOV 10 1981

date entered APR 15 1982

1. Name

historic United States Post Office and Court House

and/or common United States Court House

2. Location

street & number Ninth St. and Fifth Avenue not for publication

city, town Huntington N/A vicinity of congressional district Fourth

state West Virginia code 54 county Cabell code 011

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name General Services Administration

street & number Region 3, 7th and D Streets, S.W.

city, town Washington, D.C. N/A vicinity of state

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Cabell County Courthouse

street & number Fifth Avenue

city, town Huntington state West Virginia

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Determination of Eligibility Form has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date April 1979 federal state county local

depository for survey records General Services Administration, Region 3

city, town Washington state D.C.

7. Description

Condition

excellent
 good
 fair

deteriorated
 ruins
 unexposed

Check one

unaltered
 altered

Check one

original site
 moved date _____

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Located near the center of downtown Huntington, the federal building which long housed the United States Post Office, federal court room and federal offices, has been a focus of activity for the people of Huntington and surrounding West Virginia area for approximately 75 years.

Three stories high, topped by a stone balustrade completely around the rooftop, the substantial stone structure fronting on both Ninth Street and Fifth Avenue, is impressive in appearance, but with a subdued architectural ornamentation that is very attractive.

Because of the Post Office, the Internal Revenue Service offices, the federal court and other federal agencies, the building is probably familiar to more people than any other structure in the area.

The outside walls and trim are of light limestone, over a high, granite foundation. The ground floor facades on both Ninth Street and Fifth Avenue sides is made of many smaller horizontal blocks, projecting slightly and placed in complete uniformity.

Attracting the eye on the Ninth Street side are the three arched windows placed in the center of the building. They are two stories in height, admitting light to both the second and third floors, and are topped by slightly ornamented stone arches.

The Ninth Street structure is the original federal building, extending 94 feet north and south, and remains today as it was when first occupied in 1907. The two succeeding sections which now join it to constitute the whole building, were planned and constructed to be compatible with the original unit, and thus the three units appear today as one extensive building, the whole presenting an excellent example of high-quality civic architecture. It is, as stated above, three stories in height, rising 56 feet above the ground.

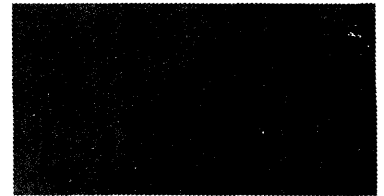
The second section extends westward 95 feet from the original building, which it joins at a right angle. This is the first section to parallel Fifth Avenue. It was occupied in 1919.

The next section to evolve was the third, completed in late 1937. This third and final section, extending one hundred feet westward from the second section, makes a total of 195 feet of building facing Fifth Avenue, easily constituting the dominant structure for that part of Fifth Avenue for many years. However, a higher federal building has since been constructed to the west, at the corner of Fifth Avenue and Eighth Street.

The four, wide doorways along the Fifth Avenue side are decorated by iron and glass marquees suspended on iron rods. Granite steps, bordered by iron railings, mark the outside approaches to these entrances. The Ninth Street entrance is flanked by ornamental, iron light standards topped by white globe lamps. The standards rest on granite blocks. These two light standards have been a memorable part of the Ninth Street scene ever since the original section was completed in 1907.

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INTERIOR

These entrances lead into spacious lobbies floored in terrazzo having inlaid, cross-strips of alternating dark and light marble and with white marble borders. Walls are covered with light gray or light, chocolate-colored marble wainscoting to a height of three feet, set off at regular intervals by marble-covered piers with plastered, laurel-leaf capitals. The ground-floor windows are bordered by flat marble with keystones at the top, while ceiling panels between the piers are decorated with laurel leaf mouldings and a series of small, uniform projections in rectangular shape.

The second floor is reached by a marble, triple-run stairway on the Fifth Avenue side near the east end. The treads, risers, stringers and wainscot are covered with light, veined marble. The balustrades are of ornamental cast iron and the railings are of cherry wood. The stairway between the second and third floors is comparable. An elevator lobby is at the west end of the Fifth Avenue side.

A walk through the second floor of the federal building shows the interior to be quite as impressive as the exterior. Both the second and third floors have various government offices, but the principal part of the building's upper area is that of the two-story U.S. Federal district court room and adjacent offices for the judiciary. The court room is entered on its east side through wooden, double doors. Inside the court room there are black marble baseboards and oak-panelled wainscot with plaster above. The center panel of the ceiling is trimmed with a heavy, moulded cornice, and artificial lighting is by a pair of suspended, 12-arm chandeliers.

Corridors on the second floor are wide, with high ceilings and high windows, for plentiful light and space. The second-floor corridors are floored with terrazzo, sectioned by cross-inlays of light marble. The terrazzo floors are bordered by white marble along the walls, and above these borders are baseboards, also of light marble.

The best possible natural lighting for the second floor is gained not only through the high windows, including a two-story window in the west wall of the court room, but also by means of three, large light-well spaces open to the sky. Such open spaces are inside and surrounded by the second and third floors.

There are many more detailed aspects to Huntington's United States Post Office and Court House building which make it a notable example of impressive and substantial federal architecture of its era---architecture that provides for pleasant and attractive surroundings for human beings, while still being fully utilitarian.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/ humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		

Specific dates 1905-10; 1916-19; 1935 **Builder/Architect** Parker and Thomas; James A. Wetmore;

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph) Robert I. Willett and Meanor & Handloser,
ARCHITECTS

The United States Post Office and Court House building in Huntington, Cabell County, West Virginia, is a representative example of the high quality of civic architecture which resulted from the application of the Tarsney Act of 1893. It also exemplifies the care which was exhibited prior to World War II in designing additions to federal buildings. Two additions quadrupled the size of the original building while maintaining its style, materials, and decorative features. Also, this federal building is an important part of a concentration of governmental and civic architecture in Huntington. Near it and also fronting on Fifth Avenue are three public buildings erected between 1899 and 1902. They are the Cabell County Courthouse (a Renaissance Revival style building), the Huntington City Hall (a representative of Neo-Classical Revival style architecture), and the Carnegie Public Library (a Beaux-Arts style building, entered on the National Register April 3, 1980). This assemblage of monumental public architecture produces an immediate impression of the wealth and rapid growth of Huntington at the turn of the century. *

Following the provisions of the Tarsney Act, which allowed architects of federal buildings to be chosen by competition among private architectural firms, Parker & Thomas of Boston and Baltimore was chosen as architect for the Huntington building in 1903. The building was erected to their design in 1905-1910, although basically completed by January 1907. While smaller and less ornate than some contemporary federal buildings, the Huntington building has the monumentality, urbanity, and solidity associated with public architecture of the early twentieth-century academic tradition. *

The exterior of the building is a restrained example of Beaux-Arts classicism. Parts are clearly articulated. Proportional systems and many decorative features are derived from Renaissance architecture. The light limestone walls and trim add to the dignified, solid character of the design. Principle facades are carefully proportioned, regularly divided into bays, and have a largeness of scale. Displaying traditional classical horizontality, the facades are divided into a number of horizontal zones. The high granite foundation and rusticated ground story form a substantial base for the two upper storeys. The full classical entablature and the balustrade are strong horizontal elements which clearly define the termination of the building. The more elaborately treated pavilions are compositional accents. *

In a very visible way this building, much appreciated by the people of its locality, reflects the development of the city of Huntington through principal phases of the city's

* Taken from T. Robin Brown's "Request for Determination of Eligibility..." (See bibliography.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Brown, T. Robins, Determination of Eligibility Form for the National Register of Historic Places for United States Post Office and Court House, Huntington, Cabell County, West Virginia. General Services Administration, Region 3, Washington, D.C. April, 1979, 20 pp.

10. Geographical Data

UTM NOT VERIFIED ACRES NOT VERIFIED

Acreeage of nominated property 1 1/2 acre

Quadrangle name Huntington, W.Va.

Quadrangle scale 1: 24,000

UMT References

A

1	7	3	7	3	9	6	10	4	12	5	13	0	18	10
Zone		Easting				Northing								

B

Zone		Easting				Northing							

C

Zone		Easting				Northing							

D

Zone		Easting				Northing							

E

Zone		Easting				Northing							

F

Zone		Easting				Northing							

G

Zone		Easting				Northing							

H

Zone		Easting				Northing							

Verbal boundary description and justification

The U.S. Post office and Court House is bounded to the north by Fifth Ave., to the east by 9th St., to the south by an alley, and to the west by an alley.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state N/A code county code

state code county code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title James A. Wallen

organization Historic Preservation Unit
Department of Culture and History date August 3, 1981

street & number Capitol Complex telephone (304) 348-0240

city or town Charleston state West Virginia

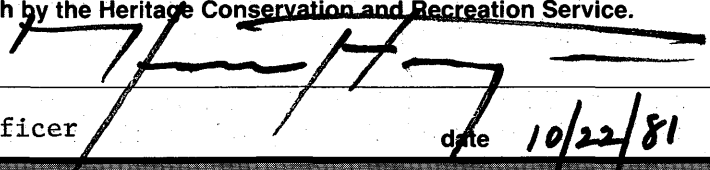
12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

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 Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

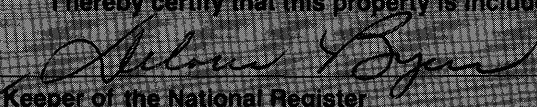


title State Historic Preservation Officer

date 10/22/81

For HCRS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

for 
Keeper of the National Register

Entered in the
National Register

date 4/15/82

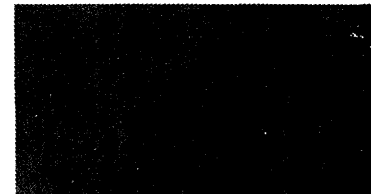
Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

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growth.

Discussion of plans for the construction of such a federal building began as far back as the late 1890's, a time when Huntington was growing steadily as a river-rail connection point, and some substantial industries were being established. Then, in 1902, a federal judicial district for southern West Virginia was created, adding greatly to the number of federal court cases here. There was more work for the Post Office too, as annual postal receipts doubled within a four-year period.

But it was not long until the original unit of this federal building proved inadequate. Between 1900 and 1910 Huntington's population grew from 12,000 to 33,000, and it had become one of the state's largest cities. So, on June 25, 1910, only three years after completion of the first unit, Congress authorized the purchase of land for an addition. It became another milestone in Huntington's growth.

It was in the 1920's that the marquees were placed over the entrances from Fifth Avenue, a slight indication of the building's growing importance. But in the spring of 1931 a move was made toward another addition. Plans progressed steadily as Huntington continued to grow. The work of the postal system and the judiciary grew right along with it. And so it was that late in 1937 the west section on Fifth Avenue was completed and occupied. That was the final unit.

There were some less spectacular changes after that, but they were changes of importance to many people. These included the 1962 remodeling of the postal lobby, with the placing of new entrance doors, vestibules, and light fixtures, and the 1964 remodeling of the court room.

The postal department has now been moved to a new building, and in October of 1977 the building that is the subject of this document was transferred from the Postal Service to the General Services Administration.

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Historic Structures Report: U.S. Post Office and Courthouse, Huntington, West Virginia. General Services Administration, National Capital Region, January 25, 1980, 224 pp.