



1240

United States Department of 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 *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an 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. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900A). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Reedsburg Post Office

other names/site number N/A

2. Location

street & number	215 North Walnut Street	N/A	not for publication
city or town	Reedsburg	N/A	vicinity
state Wisconsin	code WI	county Sauk	code 111
			zip code 53959

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  nationally statewide  locally. ( See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria.  
( See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

*Alvina L. Cochran*  
Signature of commenting official/Title

*July 26, 2000*  
Date

*Deputy SHPO - WI*  
State or Federal agency and bureau

Reedsburg Post Office

Sauk County

Wisconsin

Name of Property

County and State

**4. National Park Service Certification**

I hereby certify that the property is:

entered in the National Register.

See continuation sheet.

determined eligible for the National Register.

See continuation sheet.

determined not eligible for the National Register.

See continuation sheet.

removed from the National Register.

other, (explain:)

*Edson H. Beall*

10/24/00

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**  
(check as many boxes as  
as apply)

private

public-local

public-State

public-Federal

**Category of Property**  
(Check only one box)

building(s)

district

structure

site

object

**Number of Resources within Property**  
(Do not include previously listed resources  
in the count)

contributing      noncontributing

1                      0 buildings

   sites

   structures

   objects

1                      0 total

**Name of related multiple property listing:**  
(Enter "N/A" if property not part of a multiple property  
listing.)

United States Post Office Construction 1913-1943

State of Wisconsin - Milwaukee District

**Number of contributing resources  
is previously listed in the National Register**

0

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions)

Government / Post Office

**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions)

Government / Post Office

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**

(Enter categories from instructions)

Colonial Revival

**Materials**

(Enter categories from instructions)

Foundation Brick

walls Brick

roof

other Stone

**Narrative Description**

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

Reedsburg Post Office  
Name of Property

Sauk County  
County and State

Wisconsin

## 8. Statement of Significance

### Applicable National Register Criteria

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

Property is:

- 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 of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

### Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Art

### Period of Significance

1940

### Significant Dates

1940

### Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked)

N/A

### Cultural Affiliation

N/A

### Architect/Builder

Simon, Louis  
Melick, Neal A.

### Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

Reedsburg Post Office  
Name of Property

Sauk County  
County and State

Wisconsin

### 9. Major Bibliographic References

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

**Previous Documentation on File (National Park Service):**

- 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

Name of repository:

### 10. Geographical Data

**Acreeage of Property Less Than One Acre** \_\_\_\_\_

**UTM References** (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1    15    7/4/1/7/4/0    4/8/2/4/2/3/0  
    Zone    Easting    Northing

3    \_\_\_\_\_  
    Zone    Easting    Northing

2    \_\_\_\_\_  
    Zone    Easting    Northing

4    \_\_\_\_\_  
    Zone    Easting    Northing

See Continuation Sheet

**Verbal Boundary Description** (Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet)

**Boundary Justification** (Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet)

### 11. Form Prepared By

<b>name/title</b>	Charles W. Causier, AICP & Joseph G. Jurkiewicz, AIA		<b>date</b>	12-29-93
<b>organization</b>	HNTB		<b>telephone</b>	414-359-2300
<b>street &amp; number</b>	11270 West park Place		<b>zip code</b>	53224
<b>city or town</b>	Milwaukee	<b>state</b>	Wisconsin	

Reedsburg Post Office  
Name of Property

Sauk County  
County and State

Wisconsin

### Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

#### Continuation Sheets

**Maps** A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.  
A sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

**Photographs** Representative black and white photographs of the property.

**Additional Items** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

### Property Owner

Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

<b>name/title</b>	John Sorenson, Program Manager, Historic Preservation		
<b>organization</b>	US Postal Service, Customer Facilities		
<b>street&amp;number</b>	475 L'Enfant Plaza	<b>telephone</b>	202-268-3107
<b>city or town</b>	Washington	<b>state</b>	DC
		<b>zip code</b>	20260-6235

**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. 470 et seq.).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 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 Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects, (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

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Reedsburg, Sauk County, Wisconsin

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**Narrative Description:**

The Reedsburg Post Office is a small, one story, red brick building with limestone trim. It was built in 1937 in a simplified Colonial Revival style. The post office is located two blocks from the central business district of Reedsburg, Wisconsin. Below the far left window is a cornerstone. It reads: "Henry Morgenthau, Jr., Secretary of the treasury, James A. Farley, Postmaster General, Louis A. Simon, Supervising Architect, Neal A. Melick, Supervising Engineer, 1937."

As is typical of the small post offices of this period, the front façade is five bays wide, symmetrically organized about the entrance. A wide flight of steps with metal railings at the sides and center leads from the sidewalk to a landing before the entrance. The glass door with two sidelights is a modern replacement, circa 1967. An elaborate surround frames the entrance and the transom window above. Fluted pilasters support a frieze with a denticulated, wood cornice. Lantern type lamps are mounted to the wall on either side of the door. There are two 15-over-15, double hung windows on each side. The windows rest on a stone sill and have a limestone panel below. The lintels over the windows are of brick, set in soldier courses with limestone keystones. Two bands of limestone define the upper areas of the wall. A limestone course runs across the front elevation at the level of the cornice of the door surround. This course extends the width of the first bay of the side elevations. The building is capped by a limestone coping.

The brickwork gives the building a rich, textural quality. The brick is laid in American bond, with clearly visible courses of headers creating horizontal stripes across the building. At the level of the water table, the bricks are laid vertically, forming a band that wraps around the building.

The first bay of the side elevations is treated in the same manner as the front elevation. The window of this first side elevation bay is of the same dimensions as those of the front end bays and has the limestone panel below. As noted above, the limestone course above the windows extends the width of this bay. The façades then step back the width of one brick, giving the impression of a more formal front section and a more utilitarian back portion of the building. The south elevation features six double hung windows with 15-over-15 lights. On the north elevation, two of the larger windows are replaced by six-over-one double-hung windows. All of the larger windows have the soldier course and keystone lintels. The rear elevation features a flat-roofed loading dock.

The lobby is largely unaltered. The terrazzo floors and marble wainscot are original. The walls and ceiling are of plaster with a fretwork frieze and molding making the transition between planes. The wood trim and the entrance vestibule are also original. The lighting fixtures are modern replacements.

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Reedsburg, Sauk County, Wisconsin

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Over the door to the postmaster's office hangs an oil on canvas mural by Richard Jansen. Painted in 1940,<sup>1</sup> "Dairy Farm" depicts a typical Wisconsin farmyard scene. Four Holstein cows and a calf dominate the right foreground. On the left, a man loads milk jugs into his truck, while another harnesses horses. Chickens, ducks, and dogs complete the scene. The side of the barn, complete with a silo that rises out of the picture, dominates the background of the figures. A farmhouse is visible between the barn and an outbuilding. The painting is in vibrant colors. The barn, silo, and outbuilding are a rich red. The cows are the signature Holstein black and white. Other dominant colors include blue, white, and green.

The mural and the post office building are in good condition.

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<sup>1</sup> Leigh Yankey Woodson, Wisconsin's New Deal Art (Museum, 1980).

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**Continuation Sheet**

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Reedsburg, Sauk County, Wisconsin

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**Narrative Statement of Significance**

The Reedsburg Post Office is a good and largely unaltered example of a small post office built in Wisconsin by the federal Public Works Administration in the 1930s. It is evaluated in the context of the multiple property nomination "United States Post Office Construction from 1913 to 1943, State of Wisconsin – Milwaukee District." The post office is nominated under Criterion C for Art for the mural located in the post office lobby.

**Historic Context**

This building is the first federally owned post office in Reedsburg, and was one of a series constructed by the Public Works Administration in Wisconsin in the 1930s. Prior to its completion, postal services were at various locations selected by the local postmaster. Postal service in Reedsburg dates from 1849 and the first Postmaster was Horace Crosswell.<sup>2</sup> The history of post office construction in Wisconsin between 1913 and 1943 is discussed in the multiple property nomination.

The post office lobby contains a mural titled "Dairy Farm" by Richard Jansen. The painting is an example of the type of work commissioned by the federal government for its public buildings. The context for public art in the post offices of this era is also detailed in the multiple property nomination.

The first congressional recommendation for a post office in Reedsburg came in 1911. The current building was finally approved in 1936. Dean Construction of Minneapolis was given the contract for the \$75,000 building's construction. The new Reedsburg Post Office opened Monday, 14 March 1938, and was dedicated October of that year.

**Significance**

The Reedsburg Post Office is considered eligible for listing by meeting the registration requirements for a federally owned post office as specified in the multiple property nomination for post office construction in Wisconsin from 1913 to 1943.

The building is nominated Under Criterion C – Art for the mural in its lobby. Richard Jansen's 1940 mural "Dairy Farm" is a good example of the depression era art designed under the auspices of the federal arts programs. The Treasury Department promoted works that had local appeal or were based on local history. As a center of dairy farming, most Wisconsin residents would identify with the scene depicted by Jansen. The Holstein cows in the farmyard view are especially popular in the state. Butter was a major agricultural product in the Reedsburg area as early as 1870. Furthermore, at the time this work was created, Sauk County was primarily agricultural with an emphasis on dairy farming.

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<sup>2</sup> Merton Edwin Krug, History of Reedsburg and the Upper Baraboo Valley (Madison: 1929), 185.



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Reedsburg, Sauk County, Wisconsin

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Richard Jansen was an active painter during the days of the Federal Art Project from 1937 to 1942, working on easel paintings allocated to public buildings, primarily in Wisconsin. He also painted murals in the post offices at Sauk Centre, Minnesota, and Lincolnton, North Carolina. These two murals dealt with similar agricultural themes – “Threshing Wheat” in Minnesota and “Threshing Grain” in North Carolina.<sup>3</sup>

The mural in the post office lobby is contained within a building that retains a high degree of architectural integrity. The Colonial Revival was a favored style of government designers in the 1930s. As seen in this example, it could be simplified and minimized. Through a choice of materials, predominantly brick, and a limited number of details, such as door surrounds and multi-paned windows, the style remained familiar. Together, the building and mural present a view of the post office much as it looked at the time of the mural's completion in 1940.

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1. <sup>3</sup> Marlene Park and Gerald E. Markowitz, Democratic Vistas: Post Offices and Public Art in the New Deal (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1984): 216, 222, 232.

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Reedsburg, Sauk County, Wisconsin

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**9. Major Bibliographic References**

The following resources were consulted in addition to those included in the multiple property nomination:

Marling, Karal Ann. Wall-to-Wall America: A Cultural History of Post Office Murals in the Great Depression. Minneapolis: 1982.

Krug, Merton Edwin. History of Reedsburg and the Upper Baraboo Valley. Madison: 1929.

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

Reedsburg Post Office. Building cornerstone.

The Reedsburg Times. Various dates.

State Historical Society Reconnaissance Files.

Woodson, Leigh Yankey. Wisconsin's New Deal Art. Museum, 1980.

**10. Geographical Data**

**Verbal Boundary Description**

The boundary for this property corresponds to the following legal description. Tax #276-0885-00000. City of Reedsburg Original Plat. Lots 13 and 14, Block 12.

**Boundary Justification**

This boundary encompasses the Reedsburg Post Office, parking lot, and surrounding yard. This is the limit of the original property holding.

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**National Register of Historic Places  
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Section photos Page 6

Reedsburg Post Office  
Reedsburg, Sauk County, Wisconsin

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**Photographs**

The following information is the same for all photographs:

Reedsburg Post Office  
Reedsburg, Sauk County, Wisconsin  
Photographs by Joseph Jurkiewicz, 1993  
Negatives at the State Historical Society of Wisconsin

1. General street view, looking south.
2. Side elevation, looking south.
3. Interior view, lobby.
4. Interior view, postal boxes.
5. Mural "Dairy Farm."
6. Cornerstone.
7. Back elevation, looking east.
8. Side elevation, looking north.
9. Front elevation, looking west.