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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

SEP 19 1989

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

NATIONAL
REGISTER

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 Valley City Post Office
other names/site number same

2. Location

street & number 149 N.E. Third Street N/A not for publication
city, town Valley City N/A vicinity
state North Dakota code ND county Barnes code 003 zip code 58072

3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property	
<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	Contributing	Noncontributing
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district	<u>1</u>	<u> </u> buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	<u> </u>	<u> </u> sites
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<u> </u>	<u> </u> structures
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	<u> </u>	<u> </u> objects
		<u> </u>	<u>1</u> Total

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.

Brafford W. Heador 8-22-89
Signature of certifying official Date
U.S. Postal Service
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.

James E. Sperry September 15, 1989
Signature of commenting or other official Date
State Historic Preservation Officer (North Dakota)
State or Federal agency and bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register. Patrick Andrews 11/1/89
 See continuation sheet.

determined eligible for the National Register. See continuation sheet.

determined not eligible for the National Register.

removed from the National Register.

other, (explain:)

[Signature] 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)

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

Classical Revival

foundation brick

walls brick

roof composition

other

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

See continuation sheets.

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

1916-1939

Significant Dates

1916

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

N/A

Architect/Builder

OSA/ James Wetmore, Acting Supervising

Architect

builder: Wm O'Neill & Son, Faribault, MN.

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

See continuation sheets.

9. Major Bibliographical References

See 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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5	7	6	0	3	5
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5	1	9	7	1	6	0
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Zone Easting Northing

C

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B

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Zone Easting Northing

D

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See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

Lots 7, 8, and 9, Block 11, Original Townsite, Valley City, 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
city or town Minneapolis state MN zip code 55445

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Section number 7 Page 1

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

VALLEY CITY POST OFFICE, DESCRIPTION:

The Valley City Post Office is located on the northwest corner of N.E. Third Street and Second Avenue N.E. The building faces south. It is a block east of the major north-south business artery, Central Avenue. To the west and south is commercial area. To the east and north is residential area. On the southeast corner of the same intersection as the Post Office is the fairly new city hall. Directly across the street from the post office is the office of the local newspaper, the Times-Record.

Valley City was intensively surveyed for the National Register in 1986-87 by Historical Research, Inc. The post office was recommended as contributing in a potential National Register commercial district. The post office has no direct or indirect impact on potentially eligible properties.

The Valley City Post Office is in generally good condition. The exterior brick is in good condition, and the building is well-maintained. Wooden exterior window and door trim is painted beige, and needs paint. The granite front steps have been tuckpointed and a three-step concrete plaza in front is chipped and in bad repair. The property takes up a quarter of the block, and the building is set back approximately 15 feet from Third Street on the front and 10 feet from Second Avenue on the east. The setback on the two major street facades (south and east) is planted in green lawn and the building is flanked by two large spruce trees at the front and a large flagpole. Parking is on the street in front or at the rear of the building.

The building is of fireproof construction with concrete and steel beams and hollow tile walls with brick sheathing. Only the beams in the roof are not fireproof. The building is faced in a dark red wire-faced brick laid in American bond and trimmed in limestone for the front portico, entablature, cornice, parapet coping, water table, and window sills. The front steps are polished granite. Interior walls and ceilings are plaster. The lobby is wainscotted up to a height of seven feet with oak painted a chocolate brown. The floor is terrazzo trimmed with a pink marble border and mopboard. The postmaster's office is trimmed in oak and the floor is carpeted. There are original skylights in the workroom, which still operate. They were covered with fiberglass batts in 1985. The workroom floor is asphalt tile. Two cast iron spiral staircases lead from the workroom to the basement on the west and to the mezzanine swing room on the east.

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The building is one story above a raised basement. The lobby runs across the front facade with the money order and registered mail section at the east and the postmaster's office to the west. The mezzanine floor contains the carrier swing room and postal inspector lookout over the workroom. The basement was built with three finished offices, fuel room, storage room, and boiler room. The original coal furnace was replaced with a new high-efficiency gas boiler in the 1970s. The loading dock and mail vestibule are at the rear (north) of the building. This area has been enlarged (date unknown).

Original blueprints are on file with the postmaster. They are not attached because they are large, old and brittle.

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

VALLEY CITY, SIGNIFICANCE:

The Valley City 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 Valley City Post Office is eligible on a state and local level for architectural significance. This design for a federal building is unique in North Dakota. Locally, it is the most imposing structure in Valley City, and an excellent example of the Classical Revival design in the spirit of James Knox Taylor, even though Taylor's tenure as supervising architect ended in 1912.

The Valley City Post Office building was designed in Classical Revival style with a symmetrical facade dominated by a slightly projecting portico and ten giant order Doric limestone columns supporting a classical entablature with dentilled molding. The windows are one over one double-hung, but the original blueprints indicate that the building was designed with small cross-muntin classical window panes. The original wood and glass entry doors have been replaced with anodized aluminum and glass ones. Each window or door bay between the front columns has a large (3' X 5') transom area, each of which has been blanked off with material on the inside. This alteration mars the appearance of the building, but not its over-all integrity of design. The dentilled limestone cornice runs around to the rear of the building and continues undentilled to the north facade. Large windows at the rear of the structure appear to be original with large 6 over 6 panes and transoms divided into three lights by vertical muntins. A small brick mailing dock and metal canopy are recent additions to the structure.

The interior of the building has been altered around the lock boxes in the lobby, with the replacement of the original lobby vestibule by a new aluminum and glass vestibule, and by the division of the lobby by an aluminum and glass partition into a secured portion on the east and lock boxes on the west. Fluorescent lights have replaced the original fixtures throughout. The lobby has been extensively changed, but enough of the original fabric remains to indicate its original appearance.

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Multiple Property: U.S. Post Offices in North Dakota, 1900-1940 Valley City P. O.

This facility was designed under James Wetmore in 1915, when post office design was starting to be standardized. An indication that this post office was built at the very beginning of standardization is hinted at in the local paper (The Evening Times-Record [subsequently ETR], 7/28/13, p. 1). The Valley City Post Office, completed in 1917, does not, however, appear to be built from the standardized plans which were instituted by Treasury Secretary William McAdoo in 1915. By contrast, the Dickinson facility, completed in 1918, does appear to reflect the practices of the period of standardization. The Valley City structure was one of the last designs of its kind, and harks back to an earlier era when federal buildings were monolithic, imposing, costly, and built according to Beaux Arts principles of massing. The Evening Times-Record noted, "This particular building is much more pretentious than most of the federal buildings that are being erected throughout the west when the size of the cities are taken into consideration (8/19/16, p. 1).

The Valley City Post Office is locally significant as the best example of the federal Classical Revival style in the city. The classically designed Barnes County Courthouse has been ruined with glass brick and window infill. The public library is a Carnegie-type structure with Greek elements, and a Classical Revival turn-of-the-century design. The new city hall is a plain brick, severe-looking, one-story functional building with no artistic merit.

According to the Post Office Real Estate Division records in Chicago, the Valley City post office is the oldest remaining post office building built specifically for that purpose in North Dakota which is still owned and operated by the Postal Service.

On March 3, 1913, Congress passed an act authorizing the construction of a federal building in Valley City whose cost could not exceed \$75,000. The 62nd Congress appropriated money for three federal buildings in North Dakota: Dickinson, Valley City, and Jamestown. Valley City and Jamestown got \$75,000; Dickinson got \$90,000 because it was to house a U.S. Land Office in addition to the postal operations (The Dickinson Press, 10/27/16, p. 1). Of the three buildings, Valley City's was the first to be completed. Dickinson's was completed a year later, and Jamestown's was not built until 1929. The actual cost of the Valley City building alone was \$69,000 - the low bid, submitted by William O'Neill and Son, Co. of Faribault, Minnesota (The Evening Times-Record, 4/4/16, p. 1).

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Multiple Property: U.S. Post Offices in North Dakota, 1900-1940 Valley City P. O.

Historically, there is no indication that the post office building occasioned unusual activity in Valley City. The local newspaper does not mention how many local workers were hired during construction, except to note that five drivers and teams were hired for the excavation (The Evening Times-Record, 5/5/16, p. 1). The post office site did not affect development of the commercial area of the city. The Valley City Commercial Club was active in lobbying for the post office and even more for carriers before the building was put up (The Evening Times-Record, 1/1/12, p. 1). Congressman George M. Young was active in following the progress of the acquisition and construction of the building as well as the appropriation for the facility. The local paper noted that the cornerstone was laid without ceremony (The Evening Times-Record, 8/8/16, p. 1). When the building was completed, the basement offices were used as recruiting offices for the Navy, and for the local Red Cross (The Evening Times-Record, 4/21/17, p. 1; 7/7/17, p. 1). The post office facility was built during the Second Dakota Boom.

The Valley City Post Office has statewide architectural significance as the oldest example of a post office facility still owned by the post office and the only example in North Dakota of a federal facility in the monolithic Classical Revival style. It is architecturally a transitional building, which reflects the period when the Treasury Department's architecture office was changing from individual designs to more standardized, cost-effective designs.

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Barnes County Historical Society. Barnes County History: Barnes County, North Dakota. Dallas, Texas: Taylor Publishing Company, 1976.

The Dickinson Press, October 10, 1916.

The Evening Times-Record, July 28, 1913.

The Evening Times-Record, April 4, 1916.

The Evening Times-Record, August 8, 1916.

The Evening Times-Record, August 19, 1916.

The Evening Times-Record, May 5, 1916.

The Evening Times-Record, January 1, 1912.

The Evening Times-Record, April 21, 1917; July 7, 1917.

Roberts, Norene. "Final Report on the 1986-1987 National Register Reconnaissance Survey of Valley City, North Dakota." Minneapolis, Minnesota: Historical Research, Inc. September, 1987. On file: State Historical Society of North Dakota, MS#004326.