

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

PH0686310

FOR NPS USE ONLY
RECEIVED OCT 19 1978
DATE ENTERED DEC 8 1978

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC United States Post Office
AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER Maple Street NOT FOR PUBLICATION
CITY, TOWN Creston CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT Fifth
STATE Iowa VICINITY OF COUNTY Union CODE 175

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE <input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL <input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL <input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC ACQUISITION	<input type="checkbox"/> ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT <input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT <input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL <input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME Paul and Arhild McGill Edward & Virginia Van Surksun
STREET & NUMBER 5120 Mayberry Ave. 204 S. Stone St.
CITY, TOWN Omana Neb. 68106 VICINITY OF Creston, IA 50041 STATE

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Union County Courthouse
STREET & NUMBER
CITY, TOWN Creston STATE Iowa

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE
DATE
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS
CITY, TOWN STATE
FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Creston Post Office is a rectangular, three-story building finished with a hipped roof with deck. The front is of five bays (as are the sides, although the bays are shorter), the middle three of which compose a central pavilion advanced slightly from the main wall. This pavilion features a tetrastyle Ionic portico set in antis. The portico is two stories in height. It supports a full entablature, into the frieze of which the name of the building is incised, and screens a recessed porch.

The main door and two flanking windows are set in elaborate surrounds: keystone jackarches below a sculptured panel of circular medallions and swags, all within a segmental architrave. Windows of the main and second floors (12/12 main floor, 6/6 second floor) are finished with gauged brick jack arches with compound keystones. Windows of the second floor within the portico are treated as mezzanine windows, with cossetted architraves. Windows of the third or attic floor rest in a continuous stone stringcourse and are finished with architraves.

The main entablature consists of a shallow frieze, an enriched talon, unmolded modillions, a corona and an elaborate and striking band of antefixae. The sculptural panels above the main door and flanking windows are repeated in the two decorative panels in the attic story, which are set between the windows of the two outer bays. Three circular lucarnes, finished with semicircular, labelled hoods, are visible above the cornice.

The interior plan featured a post office on the main level, a courtroom on the second. The main entrance (originally a revolving door) gave into a narrow public lobby, placed parallel to the principal facade of the building. The bulk of the floor space was occupied by an all-purpose workroom around which were grouped subsidiary rooms (postmaster's office, mail order and registry office, loading platform, etc.) in an irregular but functional fashion, each with direct access to the main workroom and/or public lobby, as needed. The second floor was more rigidly symmetrical in arrangement of the principal space (courtroom) and minor rooms. The latter are confined to the zone of the outer bays on each side of the front facade, while the width of the courtroom is defined by the portico. A staircase to the second floor was off to one of the front corners, and was separated from the main floor lobby by a columnar screen of three columns.

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

1901

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

James Knox Taylor

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Creston Post Office is a somewhat curious, although successful, mixture of the Beaux-Arts classical and the Georgian or Federal Revival styles. From the Beaux-Arts style has been taken the cornice, lucarnes, portico, and the door and window enframements of the central three bays (main floor). Georgian or Federal Revival features include the general mass and elevation, window detail, use of brick, the hipped roof, and the division of the main elevation into a central pavilion which projects slightly with one-bay wings.

This fusion of motifs derived from two different sources is both formalistically highly adept and directed to meeting the complex requirements for symbolic content subconsciously desired in public architecture at the time of its construction. It draws upon indigenous (although Eastern) tradition for purposes of nationalistic sentiment, while at the same time hinting at the Old-World sophistication that reassured a society conscious of cultural inferiority, although here it expresses only a very mild and healthy complex. In the suggestions of domestic scale and appeal, the architect has successfully selected and moulded architectural precedent to meet the psychological needs of small-town public architecture. As it was published at a fairly early date (see bibliography) its status as a model for small-town public design is highly probable, although the extent of its influence can only be guessed.

