

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR FEDERAL PROPERTIES

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
RECEIVED	NOV 27 1984
DATE ENTERED	

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

1 NAME

HISTORIC

U. S. Post Office
AND/OR COMMON

Burbank, Downtown Station

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

125 E. Olive Avenue

NA NOT FOR PUBLICATION
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT
22

CITY, TOWN

Burbank

NA VICINITY OF

STATE

California

CODE
06

COUNTY

Los Angeles

CODE

037

2 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 type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL	<input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	NA IN PROCESS	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Thematic Group	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input checked="" 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 AGENCY

REGIONAL HEADQUARTERS: (If applicable)

U.S. Postal Service, Western Regional Office

STREET & NUMBER

850 Cherry Ave.

CITY, TOWN

San Bruno

NA VICINITY OF

STATE

CA 94099

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Los Angeles County Recorder

STREET & NUMBER

227 N. Broadway

CITY, TOWN

Los Angeles

STATE

CA 90017

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE
NONE

DATE

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

7 DESCRIPTION

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

4/27/84

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Burbank Downtown Station is an eclectic Mediterranean-styled building containing elements of the Spanish Colonial Revival, the Mission Style, and the Pueblo Style. The front entrance is marked by an arcaded loggia, with an irregular, picturesque massing. The public lobby is decorated with two Treasury Department Section of Fine Arts murals, depicting elements of Burbank's economic base.

LOCAL CONTEXT

Burbank, named for Dr. David Burbank, a Los Angeles, dentist, was subdivided in 1887. The post office is at the southern end of the original commercial district. There are several new high rise structures in the area. The nearest cross street to the north, San Fernando Boulevard, has been converted to a pedestrian mall. There are no historic structures or districts located in the vicinity of the Downtown Station. In addition, no archaeological or paleontologic sites are known to exist within or adjacent to the subject property.

PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The building appears to be in excellent structural condition and it, as well as the site, are well maintained. There have been no significant interior or exterior modifications. The building retains its original doors and fixtures.

The structure is a steel frame, reinforced poured concrete building. It has a Spanish tile roof. The entry porch and lobby flooring, as well as the lobby walk, are of dark brown tile. Decorative glazed tiles with romantic Spanish motifs form a band around the walls of the public lobby. The original skylight and wooden workroom floor are intact.

The design is a simplified, though highly romantic, rendition of the Spanish Colonial Revival Style (1915-1940). In terms of basic mass, portions of the front elevation, especially the rectangular "tower" south of the arcade, are reminiscent of the Pueblo Revival Style (1905-1940). The proportions of the front arcade are similar to those found in Mission Revival Style buildings (1890-1920). This apparent combination of styles is typical of such structures. Pueblo Revival/Mission Revival/Spanish Colonial Revival Styles appear to represent different aspects of a common aesthetic which freely draw from the various "type" features of each.

The Downtown Station is an extremely well proportioned structure which presents a unified, pleasing form from nearly every angle and elevation. The overall feeling is more of a very large residential structure, rather than a commercial building.

Distinctive exterior features include:

- An arched entry arcade with a tile floor and exposed beam ceiling;
- Recessed windows, some of which have wrought iron grates, others with rustic wooden shutters, and several behind heavy cast concrete;

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 checked="" 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 **Begun, completed 1937.** BUILDER/ARCHITECT **Gilbert Stanley Underwood.**

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Though the Burbank Downtown Station is slightly less than 50 years old, the structure possesses exceptional significance which justifies its inclusion in the National Register. This exceptional significance is based on its high artistic values, its importance as a significant example of a major theme of Depression-era construction, as a product of one of the best known architects of the late thirties, and in its inclusion of a mural by Barse Miller, a noted "Project" artist.

ARCHITECTURE

The building is significant under National Register Criterion C as possessing high artistic values. Most smaller post offices relied on a standard, rigidly symmetrical plan, and simply applied pre-cast ornament to give the building its identity. This building, though conforming to the functional requirements of the Postal Service, exhibits the irregular volumes and asymmetrical plan typical of the Spanish Colonial and other Mediterranean Revival styles commonly employed in private projects. The side elevations, articulated with recessed windows and projecting volumes, are designed to present aesthetically pleasing views as one moves around the structure. The front elevation is also complex, and the arcaded entrance both relates to the street and screens the lobby from its heat and noise.

Many smaller post offices constructed in southern California in the mid-thirties were designed in some form of the Spanish Colonial/Mediterranean Revival. Most of these buildings have, however, been heavily modified, not uncommonly beyond recognition as Mediterranean buildings. The Burbank Downtown Station thus acquires significance beyond its own architecture as a rare example of a once-common building type. The small, utilitarian Spanish/Mediterranean post office is one of the central themes in this nomination, and the Burbank Office is a good example of this theme.

Gilbert Stanley Underwood was one of the most successful Los Angeles architects during the 1930s. He received numerous federal commissions for large projects, notably the Los Angeles Federal Building and Courthouse, and the Los Angeles Terminal Annex Post Office (also included in this nomination). Most of these projects are much larger than the Burbank building. The Burbank Post Office thus is an important example of this important architect's smaller buildings.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Building records at USPS Van Nuys Sectional Center: building blueprints.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 1.0

UTM REFERENCES

A	1, 1	3 7, 9	3, 2, 0	3, 7	8, 2	6 9 0	B						
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING							
C							D						

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

M.P. 16-85, Por. Lot 1, Tract 817, City of Burbank. The site is roughly square; 240' along the north and south borders and 235' along the front elevation facing Olive Avenue and along the western border.

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE NA	CODE NA	COUNTY NA	CODE NA
STATE NA	CODE NA	COUNTY NA	CODE NA

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Doug Robertson, Planner

ORGANIZATION

Beland/Assoicates, Inc.

DATE

April 27, 1984

STREET & NUMBER

16 S. Oakland Ave. #204

TELEPHONE

(818) 796-8093

CITY OR TOWN

Pasadena

STATE

CA 91101

12 CERTIFICATION OF NOMINATION

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

YES ___ NO ___ NONE ___

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

In compliance with Executive Order 11593, I hereby nominate this property to the National Register, certifying that the State Historic Preservation Officer has been allowed 90 days in which to present the nomination to the State Review Board and to evaluate its significance. The evaluated level of significance is ___ National ___ State ___ Local.

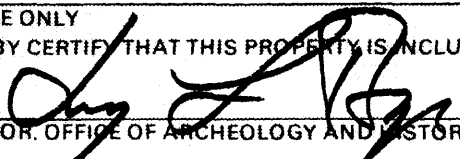
FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE

TITLE

DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER



DATE

4/11/85

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST:

DATE

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

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CONTINUATION SHEET Burbank Downtown ITEM NUMBER 7, 8 PAGE one

Item #7

- A wrought iron balcony projecting from a second floor window on the front elevation;
- Wrought iron hanging light fixtures inside the entry arcade and flanking the main entrance;
- Ornate Spanish Colonial wooden doors with painted highlights; and
- Canales.

Distinctive interior features include:

- Tile floors and walls with a band of decorative glazed tiles having romantic Spanish motifs;
- Original tin ceiling lights;
- Wrought iron brackets supporting tables attached to the walls;
- Exposed beam ceiling; and
- Ornate Spanish Colonial wooden doors.

ALTERATIONS

A new HVAC system has been installed, and a new bank of post office boxes has been added at the north end of the public lobby.

Item #8

ART

The building also contains a mural, painted in 1940 by Barse Miller. A noted painter and educator, Miller was born in New York City on January 24, 1904. He studied at the National Academy of Design in New York City, and at the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Art with Henry Snell and Hugh Breckenridge. He received several federal commissions for murals during the 1930s and early forties, and his work is included in the permanent collection of the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, the Museum of Modern Art in New York, and in the National Museum of Art in Glasgow, Scotland.

The murals depict two of the primary industries in Burbank, "Aviation" and "Motion Picture Filming". The Lockheed Aircraft Corporation and several film and television

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CONTINUATION SHEET Burbank Downtown ITEM NUMBER 8

PAGE two

studios are still located in Burbank. The iconology of the murals relates directly to their setting in Burbank, and derives most, if not all, of their meaning from that setting. Aesthetically, Miller dealt successfully with the problem of including a large number of figures in an easily readable space, and the two murals are among the more technically accomplished post office murals.

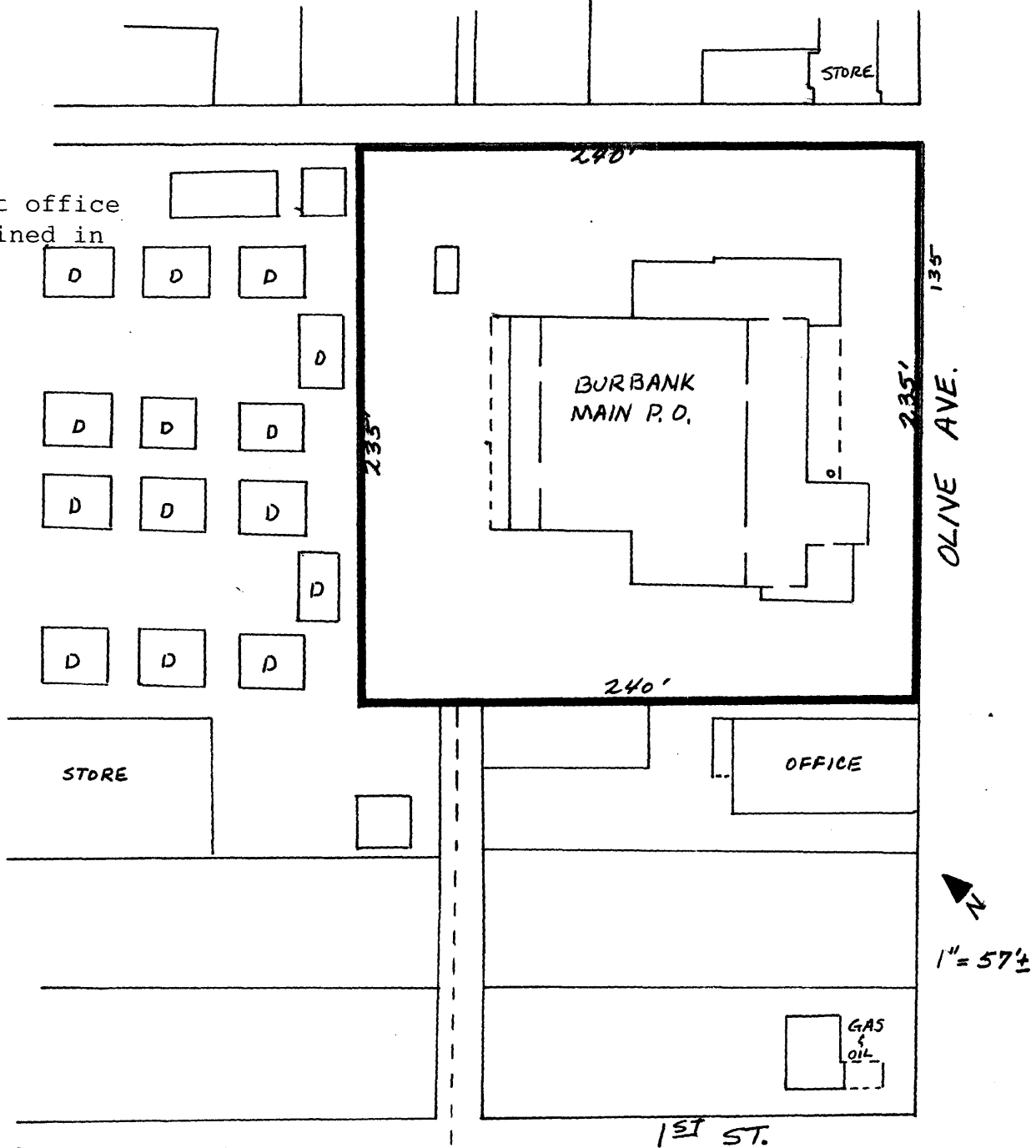
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CONTINUATION SHEET Burbank DwntSt ITEM NUMBER 10 PAGE three

Note: Post office site outlined in red.



Source: Sanborn Map, Burbank Book, page 12, 1923-49; Geography Dept.
California State University, Northridge, California