

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 DEC 28 1979

DATE ENTERED JAN 25 1980

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

1 NAME *U.S. Post Office, Courthouse, and Federal Building*

HISTORIC

United States Post Office, Courthouse, and Federal Building

AND/OR COMMON

Federal Building

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

801 I Street

__NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Sacramento

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

__ VICINITY OF

3

STATE

California

CODE

06

COUNTY

Sacramento

CODE

067

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

- DISTRICT
- BUILDING(S)
- STRUCTURE
- SITE
- OBJECT

OWNERSHIP

- PUBLIC
- PRIVATE
- BOTH
- PUBLIC ACQUISITION**
- IN PROCESS
- BEING CONSIDERED

STATUS

- OCCUPIED
- UNOCCUPIED
- WORK IN PROGRESS
- ACCESSIBLE**
- YES: RESTRICTED
- YES: UNRESTRICTED
- NO

PRESENT USE

- AGRICULTURE
- COMMERCIAL
- EDUCATIONAL
- ENTERTAINMENT
- GOVERNMENT
- INDUSTRIAL
- MILITARY
- MUSEUM
- PARK
- PRIVATE RESIDENCE
- RELIGIOUS
- SCIENTIFIC
- TRANSPORTATION
- OTHER:

4 AGENCY

REGIONAL HEADQUARTERS: *(If applicable)*

General Services Administration, Region IX

STREET & NUMBER

525 Market Street

CITY, TOWN

San Francisco

__ VICINITY OF

STATE

California

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

County Recorders Office

STREET & NUMBER

901 G Street

CITY, TOWN

Sacramento

STATE

California

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

DATE

__FEDERAL __STATE __COUNTY __LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

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 Federal Building is generally an E-shaped building, measuring 88 feet wide by 267 feet long, with the major axis lying east to west along I Street. There are four principal stories with a basement and a small penthouse area contained in the mansard roof. California granite covers the building from the basement to the first floor, and the upper floors are faced with terra cotta (on the three main facades) and buff brick (on the alley facade).

The shallow depth of the upper stories in the original building created a very unbalanced elevation along the north (Eighth Street) and south (Ninth Street) sides of the building. The 1938 addition of two 33' x 56' three story wings filled the voids in these facades, giving them a more classically proportional look.

The foundation is composed of 1518 concrete piles arranged in clusters under the columns and walls. The floors are composed of reinforced concrete overlaid with terrazzo in the corridors and wood in the offices (now mostly covered with carpeting). Steel beams carry exterior brick curtain walls independently on each floor. All interior partitions are masonry faced with either marble, plaster, or glazed tile.

The building's classical stylings are most fully realized on the I Street facade. The first floor is marked by two main entrances at the ends of the building, each entry being deeply recessed and introduced by six granite steps. Each entrance is framed in relief with terra cotta ornamentation and surmounted with the words "United States of America". There are fifteen windows set into the rusticated pattern of the first story. Each window is recessed and surmounted by a flat arch with a decorative keystone. The upper levels are marked by a grand display of fourteen freestanding fluted Doric columns. Each column extends from a broken balustrade at second story sill height to an entablature slightly above the fourth story windows. There are three levels of windows vertically arranged between the columns. On either side of the colonnade two sets of double pilasters frame three windows, with the lower window being framed and the middle window surmounted with a flat arch and decorative keystone. All columns and pilasters rest on a string course that visually separates the rusticated first story from the upper stories on all four elevations. A generally Doric entablature also encircles the building under the hipped clay tile roof.

Each of the mirror-image shorter elevations on Eighth and Ninth Streets have a secondary entrance situated near I Street. One-third of each facade is slightly recessed, causing a slight disruption in the otherwise regular fenestration. There are eight windows on the first story, and nine windows on each upper story.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
RECEIVED	DEC 28 1979
DATE ENTERED	JAN 25 1980

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 7

PAGE 2

Second story windows are pedimented, and third story windows are surmounted by flat arches and decorative keystones.

Unlike the three main facades, the north facade is not rectangular. This alley facade takes the shape of two five story towers connected by a two story platform that supports a recessed three story tower. The top three stories of the larger towers constitute the addition that was built in 1938. The five story tower near Ninth Street has a brick staircase leading to a simple service door on the first floor. The door is flanked by two simple, slightly recessed windows on each side. Above the string course, there are five equally spaced windows on each of the three stories. This pattern of fenestration is repeated on the other five story tower near Eighth Street, except that the door is replaced by a vent and there are four basement windows instead of a stairway.

A 160 foot long postal loading dock occupies the central sector of the basement. Surmounted by a marquee, the loading dock is serviced by an alley which ramps down from both Eighth and Ninth Streets. Above the dock there are eighteen windows, each of which is more vertical than windows on the other facades. The recessed central tower faces the alley with three rows of four windows, with the upper windows (similar in proportion to the windows above the loading dock) interrupting the frieze. The courtyard formed by the E-shaped towers is faced with common brick and lined with regularly spaced fenestration.

Decorative elements of the building that still remain include two free-standing lamps outside the main entrances, brass entrance and elevator doors, and brass interior lighting fixtures in the first floor corridor. This corridor also has an elaborately coffered ceiling, and is lined with marble, polished steel, and aluminum postal screens (the screens are presently boarded over). The terrazzo floors in the building corridors are in good condition and a small amount of wood wainscoating and paneling remains in what was formerly the court areas on the fourth story.

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	Built 11/6/33	Addition 3/28/38	BUILDER/ARCHITECT	Starks and Flanders
----------------	------------------	---------------------	-------------------	---------------------

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Designed in 1931, the Federal building is a good example of the classically influenced French Renaissance building style of which there are few major examples in the West. At the time of its full completion in 1938, the building housed all federal agencies in the area, and thus for many years provided a strong centralized federal presence in the seat of California state government.

The building was designed by the Sacramento firm of Starks and Flanders, who were responsible for the design of many major buildings in this area, including the nearby City Hall. Construction started on April 21, 1932, and the building was first opened to the public on November 6, 1933. It represented an investment of over \$1,300,000, with \$1,050,000 appropriated for the building itself. An additional \$40,000 was later contributed by public spirited Sacramento citizens in order to meet a deficit in the federal funding for the location.

The establishment of most of the major federal operations under one roof was welcomed by both government employees and citizens in the area. The post office, which occupied the entire first floor was furnished with the very latest postal equipment. With this newly increased capacity, Sacramento was established as the major domestic mail-handling center in northern California. Two elaborate courtrooms on the fourth floor and the large amount of office space in the remainder of the building was quickly put to full use.

Four years later, after an unexpected rapid expansion of federal agencies, two additional wings were constructed to relieve overcrowding. Finished on March 28, 1938, the two wings cost over \$206,000. The usable space in the building was increased by 20,000 square feet, marking it the third largest federal building in the state.

In 1961, a major remodeling effort converted the courtrooms and half of the first floor into office space. This alteration destroyed most of the significant features of the upper floors. Some of the splendor of the block-long first floor corridor was also lost, but the decorative ceiling and much of the ornamental work remains. There is a possibility that a lot of these first-floor features could be restored.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

- "City's Beautiful New Post Office Home Is Opened," Sacramento Bee, (November 6, 1933.)
- "First Stamp Sale Officially Opens New Post Office," Sacramento Bee, (November 6, 1933.) (See continuation sheet)

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 0.9

UTM REFERENCES

DATA NOT VERIFIED
MORTGAGE NOT VERIFIED

A	1,0	63,121,5	4,217,113,2,0	B			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C				D			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The building occupies a 1/2 block site (roughly 180' x 300' in size) bordered on the south by I Street, on the east by Eighth Street, on the west by Ninth Street, and an alley on the north side. The county assessors parcel number is 00603510.

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Carl Blalock / Facilities Planner

ORGANIZATION

General Services Administration

DATE

August 31, 1979

STREET & NUMBER

525 Market Street

TELEPHONE

415-556-2532

CITY OR TOWN

San Francisco

STATE

California

12 CERTIFICATION OF NOMINATION

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

YES

NO

NONE

NOV 2 1979

Thomas M. Ellison

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

[Signature] 1-17-80 W. Proth

TITLE

DIRECTOR,
Regional Historic Preservation Office

STAFF, GSA
OFFICE

DATE

11/13/79

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

Carl D. Shull

DATE

1-25-80

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST:

[Signature]

DATE

1-25-80

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
RECEIVED	DEC 28 1979
DATE ENTERED	JAN 25

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8

PAGE 2

The exterior of the building, however, retains all of its massive, imposing qualities. The addition of the wings in 1938 brought the building mass more in balance with the classical stylings of the main facade. There is no comparable building in the city, and only one or two similar buildings exist in the entire state.

Although many of the original federal functions have moved from the old building to newer facilities, the building remains full of activity. Situated across from the city library and only a short distance away from the state capitol building, it still provides a unique federal focal point in Sacramento, as well as memories of an important milestone in the city's development.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
RECEIVED	DEC 28 1979
DATE ENTERED	JAN 25 1980

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 9

PAGE 2

3. "Beautiful New Building Thrown Open To Public," Sacramento Bee,
(November 7, 1933.)
4. "City Outgrows Federal Offices In Four Years," Sacramento Bee,
(September 9, 1937.)
5. "Federal Building Addition Will Be Completed Friday," Sacramento Bee,
(March 24, 1938.)
6. "\$1,059,000 Job On Post Office Goes In Budget," Sacramento Bee,
(March 23, 1961.)
7. "Senate Unit Nods To Sacramento Post Office Work," Sacramento Bee,
(June 26, 1961.)
8. Building Files, General Services Administration, Region IX,
San Francisco, California.