



1258

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 Merrill Post Office
other names/site number N/A

2. Location

street & number 430 East Second Street N/A not for publication
city or town Merrill N/A vicinity
state Wisconsin code WI county Lincoln code 69 zip code 54452

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this X 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 X meets does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide X locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

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

Alicia J. Cook
Signature of commenting official/Title

July 26, 2000
Date

Deputy SHPO-WI
State or Federal agency and bureau

Merrill Post Office
Name of Property

Lincoln County
County and State

Wisconsin

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

Edson H. Beall

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(check as many boxes 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)
Late 19th and 20th Century Revivals: Classical Revival

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)
Foundation Limestone
walls Brick
roof
other Limestone

Narrative Description

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

Merrill Post Office
Name of Property

Lincoln 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)

Architecture

Period of Significance

1915

Significant Dates

1915

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Wetmore, James

Narrative Statement of Significance

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

Merrill Post Office
Name of Property

Lincoln 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	16	2/8/8/3/7/0	5/0/0/6/4/1/0	3			
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
2				4			
	Zone	Easting	Northing		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

name/title	Charles W. Causier, AICP and Joseph G. Jurkiewicz, AIA		
organization	HNTB	date	12-29-93
street & number	11270 Wet Park Place	telephone	414-359-2300
city or town	Milwaukee	state	Wisconsin
		zip code	53224

Merrill Post Office
Name of Property

Lincoln 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.)

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

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**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section 7 Page 1 Merrill Post Office, Lincoln County, Wisconsin

Narrative Description

The Merrill Post Office is a two-story building loosely based on the Neo-Classical Revival style. The building sits on a raised basement and its brick walls are laid in Flemish bond with flush mortar joints. It was built in 1915 to the designs of the Supervising Architect's Office. The building cornerstone reads: "William C. McAdoo, Secretary of the Treasury, James A. Wetmore, Acting Supervising Architect, 1915." The post office is located in the downtown business district of Merrill, Wisconsin.

In plan, the Merrill Post Office consists of two main parts. The front block, containing the lobby, is two stories tall. Behind this front portion is a slightly set back, one-and-one-half story block with a projecting loading dock at the rear.

The front façade, facing East Second Street, consists of five bays. A staircase, which curves outward from the doors, leads from the sidewalk to the building's entrance. The three central bays of the facade are brought forward in a temple front motif. Four brick pilasters with acanthus leaf capitals define the bay divisions of this projecting portion. The entrance is located in the central bay. Above the paired, modern replacement doors is a ten-light transom. A classical surround frames the doors and transom. The blocks forming the frame are finished with egg and tongue molding. The frieze above the surround is of rosettes and triglyph-like carvings. A projecting cornice with dentils caps the entire feature. The two side bays of the front portion contain coved niches. (It is unknown if they were intended to house statuary or urns or if they were meant to sit empty.) Above each niche is a festoon panel with leaf and floral forms. The upper story contains an eight-light casement window in each bay. The windows rest on a sill running from one pilaster to the next. The pilasters support an architrave that wraps around the entire building. Above the architrave is a brick frieze and a projecting cornice. The cornice molding is applied to form a pediment above the central portion. The pediment is attached to the brick parapet that wraps around the building. The parapet is capped by masonry coping.

The two side sections of the front façade contain one window per floor. The windows of the first floor are twelve-over-twelve double hung. They rest on stone sills and have a festoon panel above. The windows of the second floor are of the casement type found in the central portion.

The side elevation of the main block of the post office building is a combination of elements of the front façade. Brick pilasters with acanthus leaf capitals demarcate the three bays of this front block. The windows are of the type found in the outer bays of the front facade.

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Section 7 Page 2 Merrill Post Office, Lincoln County, Wisconsin

The back block contains large, arched windows on the ground floor with round porthole windows above. The loading dock at the back is a modern addition. However, it is built of similar materials, minimizing the loss of architectural integrity.

The postal lobby is unique among the Wisconsin post offices surveyed; it has a coffered ceiling with an octagonal skylight. The design of the skylight is enriched through the addition of geometric tracery. Modern lighting fixtures have been installed in such a way as to minimize the impact on the coffering. The lobby retains other original features, including its original tile floor, marble wainscot, and marble door surrounds. The walls and ceiling are of plaster.

The building is in good condition.

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Section 8 Page 3 Merrill Post Office, Lincoln County, Wisconsin

Narrative Statement of Significance

The Merrill Post Office 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 – Architecture as a good local example of the Neo-Classical Revival style. Noteworthy elements include the classical detailing of the facade, such as the cornice, capitals and decorative relief panels, and the leaded glass skylight in the lobby. The original building is largely intact and the loading dock addition to the rear is a small and sympathetic addition.

Historic Context

The Merrill Post Office was built in 1915 to the designs of the Office of Supervising Architect. It was the first federally owned post office in Merrill. Prior to its construction, the post office was housed at various locations. The first post office in Merrill was located in the Jenny Hotel, owned by Cyrus Stowbridge, the first Postmaster. Prior to the construction of the current building, the post office rented space in the Masonic Temple.¹

In addition, this building represents one of the few examples of federal post offices in Wisconsin designed at the transition to the McAdoo Classification System. Following the adoption of the system in 1915, standardized designs dominated post office construction. Prior to the adoption of the McAdoo System, each post office was a unique architectural composition.² While displaying a greater degree of originality than subsequent post office designs, not all of the decorative features found at the Merrill Post Office are unique to this building. The cornice design is fairly standard in post offices from the period and the acanthus leaf capitals are identical to those found on the contemporary Antigo Post Office. Further discussion of post office design during the period and of the McAdoo System is found in the multiple property nomination. This same design was utilized at least once more in Wisconsin. A post office with a nearly identical front elevation was built in Tomah (Monroe County, Wisconsin) in 1927.

Significance

The Merrill Post Office is a good local example of the Neo-Classical Revival style applied to a public building. Several other examples of classically inspired styles are found in Merrill. These include the Neo-Classical temple block of the 1909 National Bank and the richly decorative 1903 Lincoln County

¹ George O. Jones and Norman S. McVean, History of Lincoln, Oneida, and Vilas County, Wisconsin (Minneapolis: 1924), 41.

² Louis Melius, The American Postal System: History of the Postal Service from the Earliest Times (Washington, DC: 1917), 35-37.

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Section 8 Page 4 Merrill Post Office, Lincoln County, Wisconsin

Courthouse (listed on the National Register in 1978). However, each building is unique in its design and offers a different approach to the use of classical vocabulary.

The exterior and interior architectural elements of the Merrill Post Office are intact and many are unique among the post offices included in the multiple property nomination. The style of the building features a symmetrical composition with classically derived ornamentation. Characteristic of the Neo-Classical Revival style is the use of the temple front motif with pilasters and a pediment, as well as the dentilled cornice. The niches to either side of the entrance and the decorative panels between the floors add visual interest to the façade. The use of Flemish bond and the general massing of the building are also akin to the Georgian Revival style. The combination of classical vocabulary and brick wall surfaces was a popular cost saving measure for post office construction.

The skylight in the postal lobby is unique among the post offices surveyed. Furthermore, the inclusion of the skylight and the ceiling cofferring are indicators of the greater expense and individual design found in post offices buildings prior to the adoption of the McAdoo system.

The building retains a high degree of architectural integrity and meets the registration requirements for a federally owned post office as specified in the multiple property nomination.

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Section 9, 10 Page 5 Merrill Post Office, Lincoln County, Wisconsin

9. Major Bibliographic References

The following resources were consulted in addition to those included in the multiple resource nomination for federal post offices in Wisconsin, 1913-1943:

Jones, George O. and Norman S. McVean. History of Lincoln, Oneida, and Vilas County, Wisconsin. Minneapolis: 1924.

Melius, Louis The American Postal System: History of the Postal Service From the Earliest Times Washington, DC: 1917.

Merrill Post Office. Building cornerstone.

10. Geographical Data

Verbal Boundary Description

The nominated property corresponds to the following legal description:
"MA Addition, lots 19, 20, 21, 22, and 23, Block 2. Volume 76, p.431.

Boundary Justification

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

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Section photos Page 6 Merrill Post Office, Lincoln County, Wisconsin

Photos

The following information is the same for all of the photographs:

Merrill Post Office
Merrill, Lincoln County, Wisconsin
Photos by Joseph Jurkiewicz, 1993
Negatives in the possession of HNTB, Milwaukee, Wisconsin

1. Front door detail.
2. Rear elevation, looking south.
3. Cornerstone.
4. Interior view, postal lobby.
5. Interior view, skylight in postal lobby.
6. Front façade. Decorative panel detail.
7. Side elevation, looking east.
8. Front elevation, looking north.
9. Front façade detail, niche.
10. Side elevation, looking west.