

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	JAN 18 1985
DATE ENTERED	MAR 4 1985

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

1 NAME

HISTORIC

U.S. Post Office, The Dalles, Oregon

AND/OR COMMON

U.S. Post Office, The Dalles, Oregon

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

100 West Second Street

NA NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

The Dalles

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

NA VICINITY OF

2

STATE

Oregon

CODE

41

COUNTY

Wasco

CODE

065

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

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

Thematic
 Group

OWNERSHIP

- PUBLIC
- PRIVATE
- BOTH

PUBLIC ACQUISITION

- NA IN PROCESS
- BEING CONSIDERED

STATUS

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

PRESENT USE

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

4 AGENCY

REGIONAL HEADQUARTERS: (If applicable)

U.S. Postal Service

STREET & NUMBER

850 Cherry Avenue

CITY, TOWN

San Bruno

NA VICINITY OF

STATE

California 94099

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,

REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Wasco County Assessor's Office

STREET & NUMBER

5th and Washington

CITY, TOWN

The Dalles

STATE

Oregon 97058

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

Federal Government Buildings in Oregon

DATE

July, 1968

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

Oregon State Historic Preservation Office

CITY, TOWN

Salem

STATE

Oregon 97310

7 DESCRIPTION

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

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Dalles Post Office is a well preserved and unaltered example of the Classical design style. The sandstone building is two stories in height on a raised basement and is symmetrical in elevation. A colonnade of colossal order fronts the recessed entry and window bays of the central portion of the building. The central section is flanked by identical flat single-bayed wings. The building is topped by a low metal clad hipped roof, which is obscured by the balustraded parapet wall.

Physical Appearance:

The basement footings consist of concrete with brick piers and foundation walls. The floors of the basement and first floor are poured concrete. The walls of the first and second floors are brick reinforced with steel framing and faced (exterior) with Tenino sandstone. A metal covered hipped roof covers the main portion of the building, while the rear flat roof over the mailing platform consists of tar composition. Granite is used for the main entry stairs and a portion of the mailing platform. Wrought iron and cast iron are used for grilles, railings, and other detailing.

The Dalles post office is two stories in height, symmetrical in plan, and classically proportioned. The basic design style is Classical Revival, Greek. The front facade (north) is dominated by a colonnade of colossal order (more than one story). Four smooth, tapered columns (of sandstone) with Corinthian capitals create a monumental entry porch. Square pilasters with Corinthian capitals form the exterior corners of the entry porch. The ends of the buildings each contain two double hung wood sash windows (6-over-6 on the second floor, located directly above the 12-over-12 first floor windows).

Quions, slightly raised, delineate the building's corners. The columns support a relatively simple entablature with nominal frieze ornamentation (raised circles aligned with columns). Molded dentils hang from the underside of the cornice. The parapet consists of balustrade (sandstone) aligned over the entry porch with a solid wall over the ends of the building.

The main entry door is framed by a sandstone molding which projects slightly from the facade. Pilasters with Corinthian capitals support a simple entablature over the door frame. A panel "Post Office" separates the double aluminum (with single glass panels in each with raised letters) doors and cast iron hypaethrum. (The original doors were replaced in the 1960s.)

Flanking each side of the doors on the first floor level are two double hung wood sash windows (12-over-12 lights). Five equally spaced double hung wood sash windows (8-over-8 lights) are located at the second floor level. Other entry features include wrought iron ballisters between the porch columns, granite steps, and flanking sandstone buttresses extending from the front facade to the sidewalk. A cast iron light standard is set on each of the buttresses. The light standards are embellished by an ornate leafwork pattern and topped by a milk glass globe.

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CONTINUATION SHEET The Dalles ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 1

The east (along Union) and west facades are identical. The main portion of the building is two stories in height with a relatively flat facade of sandstone. Quions (slightly raised) delineate the corners. Three windows, equally spaced, are located at the first floor level. These windows are double hung wood sash (12-over-12). The smaller second floor windows (8-over-8) are aligned with the first floor windows. The entablature detailing is identical to the front facade. The parapet wall is solid sandstone block. A rear wing, one story in height, extends from the rear of the main building. This wing is also of cut sandstone. Two Venetian windows with flat arch dominate the facade of this wing (double hung wood sash, 9-over-9, with 3-over-3 side lights). A simple cornice tops the wall. A glass enclosed mailing vestibule extends from the rear wing to the alley. The windows are multi-paned set in wood sash. The roof of both the rear wing and mailing vestibule are flat, built-up tar composition.

The lobby is ornately detailed with ceramic tile floor edged with grey marble, green marble base molding, and wood panel (white oak) walls. Square pilasters with ionic capitals support exposed oak ceiling beams. The beams are framed by oak molding and embellished with denticulation. Other interior materials include:

- * Post master's office: vinyl asbestos tile floor, plaster walls, and ceiling;
- * Work room: hardwood floors, plaster walls with wainscotting, and plaster ceiling;
- * Swing room: concrete floors, plaster walls, and ceiling; and
- * Rest rooms: terrazzo floors with marble border, plaster walls with 6-foot high marble wainscotting, and plaster ceiling.

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 See Below BUILDER/ARCHITECT Oscar Wenderoth, Supervising Architect, Dept. of Treasury

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE Site acquired in 1911; building completed in 1916.

The Dalles Post Office represents an outstanding example of early 20th Century federal construction in the Classical design motif. The use of the colonnade fronting the recessed entry section is the sole example of such use in post office construction in the State of Oregon (and one of two such examples in northwest post office construction, the other located in Vancouver, Washington (1916)).

Architecture

The Dalles Post Office was the first federal building constructed in the city of The Dalles and one of nine constructed in the State of Oregon between 1910 and 1920. It (along with the Pendleton post office and courthouse, also included in this nomination) is one of the two remaining postal facilities from this era administered and operated by the U.S. Postal Service in the state. As with most all its counterparts, the building was constructed from standardized plans under the direction of Supervising Architect Oscar Wenderoth. The design of this relatively small building is well executed and the construction displays fine craftsmanship in its stonework. Particularly outstanding is the monumental entrance--provided by four smooth columns topped with corinthian capitals--which manifests the dignity of the federal presence in the city.

Local Context

Lewis and Clark camped at The Dalles in 1805. They were followed by David Thompson, Dr. Marcus Whitman, and Rev. H.H. Spalding. A Methodist mission was established in 1838. In 1843, 800 people arrived by wagon after traveling the Oregon Trail (The Dalles is the end of the Oregon Trail). The Whitman Massacre in 1847 led to the establishment of a stockade at The Dalles. The first post office was established in 1851, and steamboat service began in 1854. The discovery of gold in Eastern Oregon in 1860 created a boom as gold seekers used The Dalles as an outfitting center. The Dalles maintained its position as the trade and commercial center of the region and grew rapidly from a population of 972 in 1870 to 2,232 in 1880. The Dalles received a setback in the early 1880s when the Oregon Railroad and Navigation Company moved its shops to Portland. The city continued to grow, however, with populations of 3,029 in 1890 and 3,542 by the turn of the century. Railroads again played an important role in The Dalles history between 1907 and 1910 when James J. Hill constructed his lines through the area. By 1910 the population had reached 4,480 and expanded to 5,807 in 1920. The Dalles today is the hub of the area's agricultural industry. The Dalles Dam and port district also foster industry related to river transportation. The Dalles 1980 population was 10,900.

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The Dalles Post Office is located near the west end of the city's central business district. It lies within a commercial zone and is surrounded by commercial uses: to the west, motel; to the north, machine shop, parking lot, auto repair; to the east, auto repair and various retail; and to the south, masonic lodge and various commercial. The Masonic Lodge, adjacent to the post office to the south, was the second Wasco County Courthouse. This two-story brick building (Italianate style) was constructed in 1881 and is on the local and state historic registers. The old courthouse and the post office (also included on both the local and state historic registers) are included in a proposed historic district and overlay zone (which would include only the two structures). The other immediately surrounding structures are of recent vintage and of conflicting architectural character.

Local News Coverage of The Dalles Post Office Construction

The history of the planning and construction of The Dalles federal building was reported in The Dalles Weekly Chronicle between April of 1910 and July of 1916. On April 15, 1910 the Chronicle reported that Congressman William R. Ellis had recommended an appropriation for a public building at The Dalles to the Public Buildings Committee.

On June 10, 1910 the Chronicle quoted Representative Ellis as stating he was reasonably sure that he could secure an appropriation for a federal building site in The Dalles that year and that there was a good chance he could get an appropriation for the building itself in the next session of Congress. The article noted that The Dalles held an advantage over some cities seeking the funding for federal buildings in that good land was available and a suitable parcel could be secured soon after the appropriation for the site was made. It also noted that many had suggested that the county property east of the Hotel Dalles would make an ideal site for the new federal building.

Two weeks later (June 24, 1910) the Chronicle reported that the Senate Public Buildings Committee had retained the House Committee proposal to appropriate \$80,000 for a site and the construction of a building on the site in The Dalles. No funding was appropriated, however.

On July 8, 1910 the Chronicle ran an article focusing on the desirability of selecting a site for the new federal building as soon as possible. It was noted that Postmaster Edgar Hostetler had been making inquiries about possible sites and had found several desirable locations. However, the prices were in some cases prohibitive, having increased by \$6,000 or \$7,000 within the last year. The article also noted that the city's merchants generally wanted the site to be in the heart of the business section and would probably cost in the neighborhood of \$11,000 or \$12,000.

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CONTINUATION SHEET The Dalles ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 3

On November 23, 1910 the Chronicle reported that a city council meeting had been called at the request of J.W. Hill of Portland, who had been appointed by the government to select the sites for the federal buildings in The Dalles and Portland. Mr. Hill had asked the city to set a price for a parcel it owned along Third Street, between Washington and Court. The article stated that the locally favored building site included this city parcel and adjacent parcels consisting of a flat building owned by a Mr. Condon (priced at \$15,000) and a home owned by the Brogans (priced at \$7,500). The Chronicle reported that several businessmen had subscribed a few thousand dollars to enable the federal government to secure this site for \$12,000 to \$15,000. The three-parcel site would provide 174 feet of frontage along Third Street.

On January 12, 1912 the Chronicle reported that the Wasco County Treasurer had received a \$14,000 check for the county-owned site just north of the courthouse and that the new federal building would thus be erected on the parcel east of the Hotel Dalles. It was not known at that time just when construction would begin, but it was thought that ground would be broken in the early spring.

On March 22, 1912 the Chronicle announced that a bill had been introduced by Congressman A.W. Lafferty to increase the appropriation for the site and building by \$24,000, bringing the total amount of the appropriation to \$104,000. The Business Men's Association had urged the Congressman to ask for an additional \$14,000, and the Department of the Treasury had pointed out that the building could be fireproofed for \$10,000 more. The Congressman opted to ask for the full \$24,000. On April 24th the Chronicle announced that the bill including the requested addition had been passed by Congress.

Bids for the federal building construction were opened in November, 1914. Thirteen firms had submitted bids, with Campbell Construction Company of Salt Lake City the low bidder with a bid of \$79,468. On February 13, 1915 the Chronicle reported that the contract had been let to George Issackson of Portland with a bid of \$79,658.

An article that appeared in the Chronicle on February 25, 1915 described the proposed structure in some detail, declaring that it would be a "handsome structure" with six massive stone columns from the top to the bottom of the two-story front, with a sandstone exterior. The building was to be completely fireproof, with a steel frame and front steps and porch constructed of granite. The interior finish would be of yellow pine and oak, with marble and terrazzo floors and marble wainscoting and stairs.

The March 25, 1915 issue of the Chronicle noted that ground had been broken for the federal building. The next mention of the construction is in the July 3rd issue, which reported that there had been a delay relating to the stone for the structure, as a communication from Senator George E. Chamberlain indicated that the government could not decide on what stone to use; Tenino sandstone was then under consideration. In the December 2nd issue it was announced that Oregon fir had been selected for the federal building over southern yellow pine.

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The modified plans for the building were described in the December 16, 1915 edition of the Chronicle, where it was noted that the \$100,000 structure would have everything for the convenience of the local postal force, including a hot air system "second to none on the coast." The outer architecture of the building was said to follow "the simple, yet elegant Greek style." The immense front columns, with solid stone handsomely-cut ornaments, the wide windows and the spacious front steps, will mark the structure as one of the handsomest in the city." It was also pointed out that the building would be a decidedly attractive addition to the part of the city in which it was to be situated.

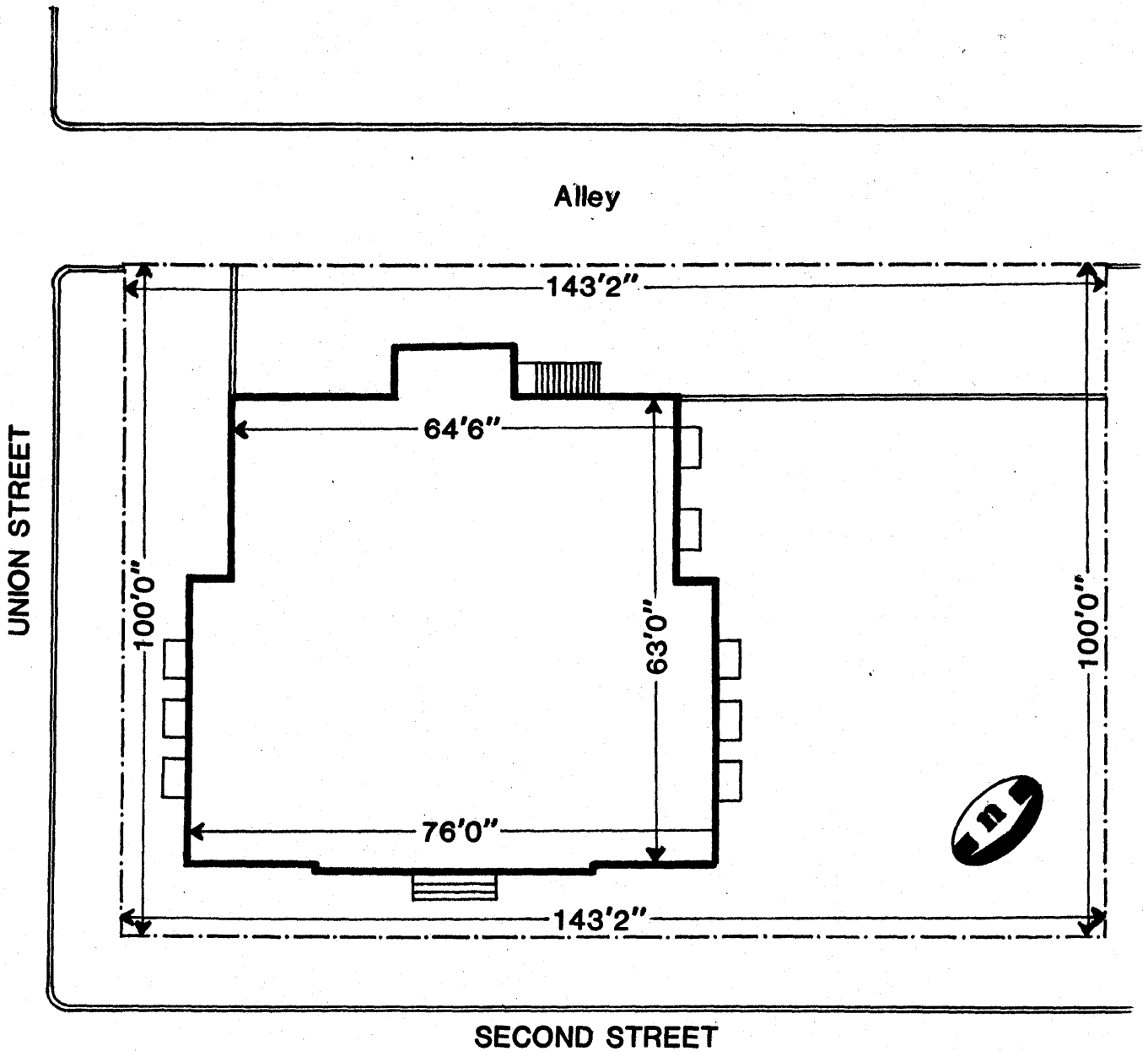
On July 13, 1916 the Chronicle reported that the federal building was to be in use soon. The July 27th issue announced that the public could view the handsome structure Friday of that week and that the building would open the following Monday. The U.S. Land Office was to move to the new building on Saturday. A number of prominent citizens had been invited to participate in the opening ceremonies.

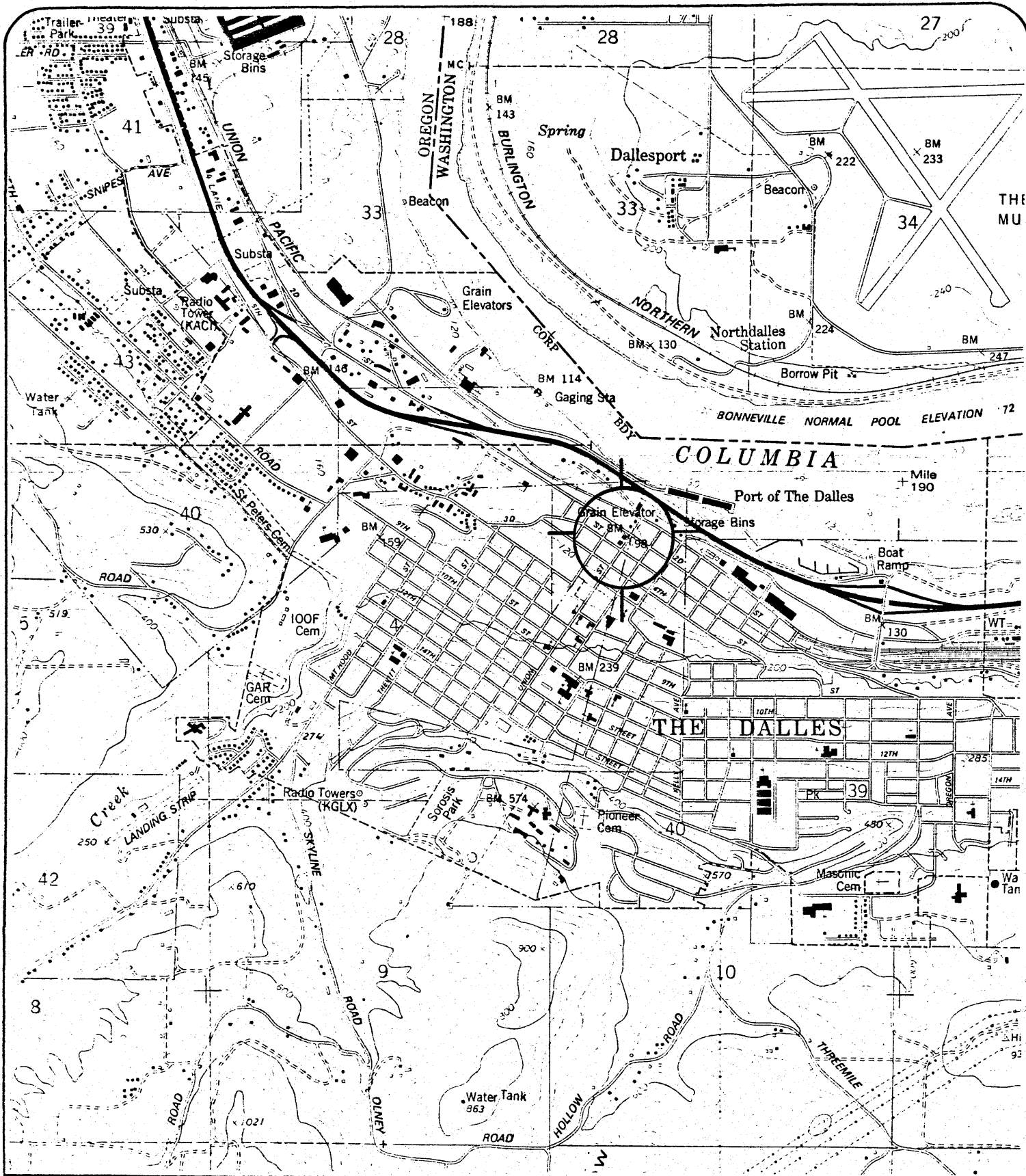
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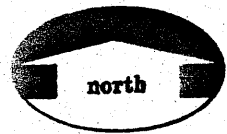
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CONTINUATION SHEET The Dalles ITEM NUMBER 10 PAGE 5





U.S. POST OFFICE
 The Dalles, Oregon
 UTM Reference:
 10/641665/5051265





NO
LEFT
TURN

ONLY

↑
ONLY

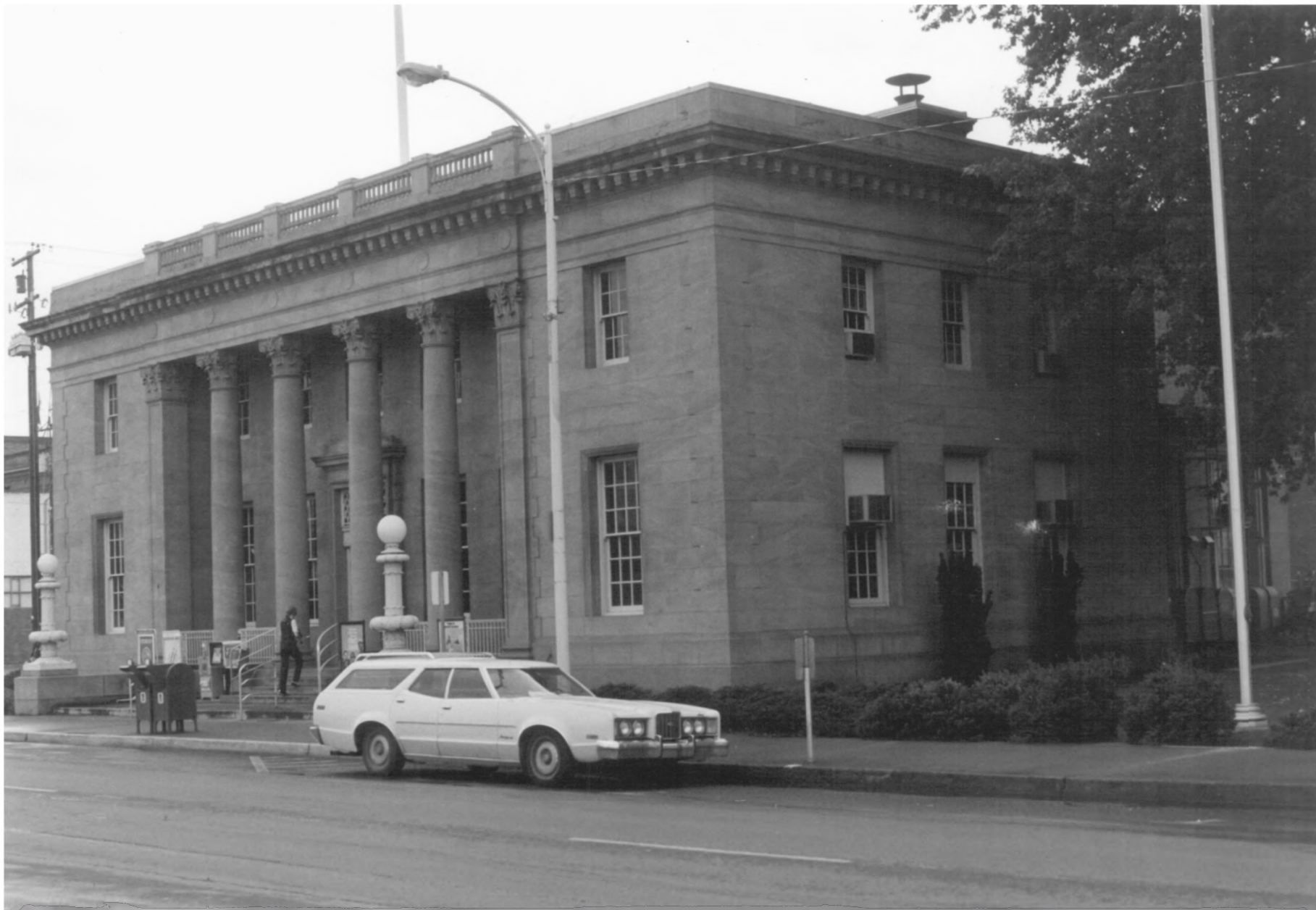
← OLD FORT DALLES
MUSEUM →

PULPIT ROCK
CITY PARK
SOROSIS PARK
←

phone

THE DALLES, OREGON
U.S. POST OFFICE
September 1984

STREET VIEW TO RIGHT
Negative #5



THE DALLES, OREGON

U.S. POST OFFICE

September 1984

STREET VIEW TO LEFT

Negative #1



THE DALLES, OREGON

U.S. POST OFFICE

September 1984

FRONT FACADE (northeast)

Negative #2