

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

FEB 02 1993

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 U.S. Post Office--Crystal Springs, Mississippi

other names/site number N/A

2. Location

street & number 224 East Marion Street N/A not for publication

city or town Crystal Springs N/A vicinity

state Mississippi code MS county Copiah code 029 zip code 39059

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

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

Hee Ree Odum, Historic Coordinator 9/2/92
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

United States Postal Service, Memphis Facilities Service Center
State of Federal agency and bureau

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

Kenneth H. P. Pool JAN. 28, 1993
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer
State or Federal agency and bureau

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.
- removed from the National Register.
- other, (explain): _____

for Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

Maq. H. Way

3/18/93

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1		buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
1	0	Total

Name of related multiple property listing
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)
Mississippi Post Offices
Thematic Resources, 1931-1941

**Number of contributing resources previously listed
in the National Register**
0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

Government: Post Office

Government: Post Office

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

Colonial Revival

foundation Brick
walls Brick
Limestone
roof Asbestos
other _____

Narrative Description

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

See the continuation sheets for #7.

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for 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: N/A

- 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)

Politics/Government

Art

Architecture

Period of Significance

1940-1941

1943

Significant Dates

1940-1941

1943

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Office of the Supervising Architect

Dye-Mullins, Inc. (Columbia, MS)

Narrative Statement of Significance

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

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- 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:

U.S. Postal Service

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#7 Narrative Description

The United States Post Office in Crystal Springs is located in the central business district. It is Colonial Revival in style. A brick basement level rises above grade to a limestone water table. The elevated main floor is accessed by a flight of granite steps with cast iron railings which terminate at the sidewalk in a pair of prominent lamp standards. The exterior walls consist of one full story crowned by a wooden frieze and a denticulated cornice which encircle the main block of the building. A hip roof clad in shingles covers the public lobby area while the roof over the work area is of the flat, built-up type. A square, wooden, two stage cupola is centered on the roof ridge over the central bay. It is articulated by a quoined base and wooden, double hung, six over six windows flanked by fluted pilasters. Additionally, it has a peaked metal roof and weather vane. The street facade consists of five bays reading window-window-door-window-window. The central doorway is articulated by a pair of flanking, wooden, Tuscan columns; block paneled transom; a dentilled architrave; and, at the head, a semi-elliptical, stucco panel with a brick voissior surround in which is centered a cast stone eagle approximately eighteen inches high. Windows in this facade are wooden, double hung, twelve over twelve sash with limestone lintels and sills. The northwest side elevation has seven bays and the southeast side elevation has six bays, each comprised of a window. Some of these side windows have their upper sashes boarded up and others are replacements which are smaller than the original windows. A loading bay and mailing vestibule are inset into the north corner of the rear facade. Brick masonry laid in the common bond is used throughout.

The interior plan (see attached plan drawings) consists of an L-shaped public lobby immediately northeast of the central doorway with the postmaster's office on the south corner. The remaining area is given over to a large workroom and the aforementioned mailing platform and vestibule. A partial mezzanine level exists over the vault area (where a lookout is located) and also over the rear third of the building where storage space is maintained. The lobby contains a polychrome terrazzo floor, marble wainscoting, the original wooden vestibule and an altered screenline.

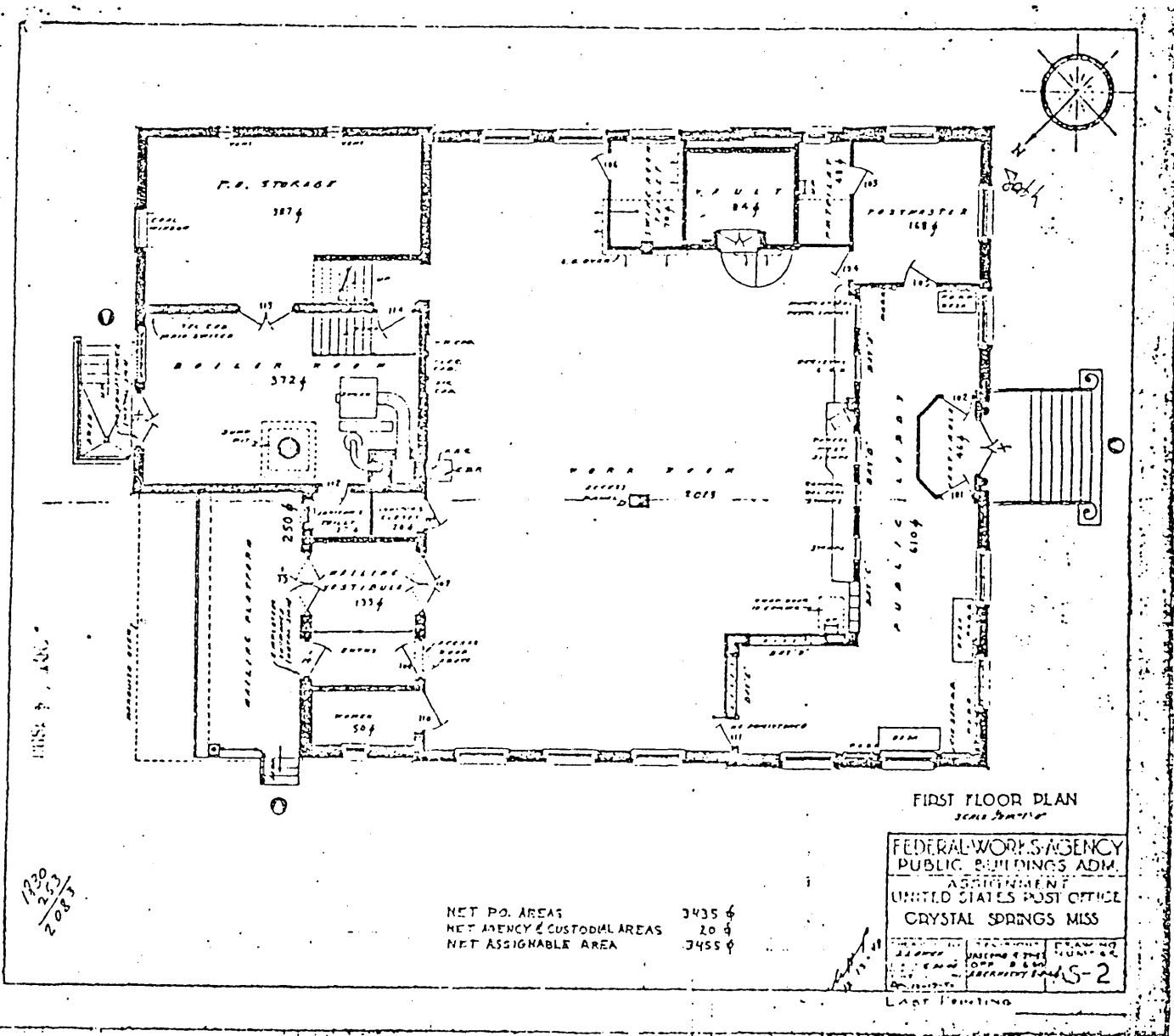
A mural by Henry La Cagnina, created under the Treasury Bureau's Section of Fine Arts program, was completed and installed in 1943 at a cost of \$700.00. The mural, which is located on the wall above the entrance to the postmaster's office, depicts farm workers harvesting and packing tomatoes for shipment. The oil-paint-on-canvas mural is in a fair state of preservation. According to the artist, Henry La Cagnina, the mural was inappropriately restored within the last year. La Cagnina states that the original pearly gray tonality of his work was lost when a glaze, which gives the mural a black tonality, was put on it in order to preserve it. For more information refer to the Statement of Significance (The original nomination and telephone interview with Henry La Cagnina, 7/25/92).

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#8 Statement of Significance

ARCHITECTURE

The Crystal Springs Post Office, built in 1940-1941, is a locally important work of mid-twentieth century Colonial Revival architecture, and is a well-executed and well-maintained example of the colonial style post offices built in Mississippi by the Federal government during the Great Depression. It is the only known institutional building in Crystal Springs that is designed in the Colonial Revival style. The post office is the most imposing government building in the community. As a prominent architectural landmark in the central business district, it represents not only the Federal presence in Crystal Springs but also the town's participation in the Union.

The Crystal Springs Post Office is an excellent example of the Colonial Revival architecture constructed under various New Deal programs in Mississippi during the 1930s and early 1940s and retains a high degree of architectural integrity.

ART

The mural entitled "Harvest" was painted by Henry La Cagnina in 1943. The artist was living in Florida at the time and entered a competition where his work was chosen for the Crystal Springs post office. Although local tradition holds that the farm workers depicted in the mural were residents of Crystal Springs, La Cagnina states that the people in the mural sprang from his imagination. Nevertheless, the mural was quite appropriate for a community which had once been known as the "Tomato Capital of the World". Crystal Springs was the only Mississippi post office that had a La Cagnina mural (The original nomination and telephone interview with Henry La Cagnina 7/25/92).

Henry La Cagnina received his training in art at Cooper Union in New York. He currently resides in Hattiesburg, Mississippi where he still paints and exhibits his work (Telephone interview with Henry La Cagnina 7/25/92).

Although inappropriately restored, Henry La Cagnina's mural entitled "Harvest" is representative of the type of art work generated by the Treasury Department's Section of the Fine Arts in the 1930s and early 1940s. The oil-paint-on-canvas mural depicts in a realistic style "the American scene" as it would have been understood by a community such as Crystal Springs whose livelihood depended on truck farming. Its appeal and significance to Crystal Springs is apparent due to the tradition among locals that Mr. La Cagnina made sketches of workers on the nearby experiment station grounds in

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preparation for the mural and that local people are portrayed in the painting. A mural disliked and unappreciated by its community could hardly have generated such a persistent rumor. Also, the restoration of the mural, though deemed inappropriate by the artist, is an indication of Crystal Springs' continuing commitment to the La Cagnina work entitled "Harvest" (The original nomination and telephone interview with Henry La Cagnina 7/25/92).

POLITICS/GOVERNMENT

The U. S. Post Office in Crystal Springs, built in 1940-1941, is significant for being one of the thirty-two post offices constructed in Mississippi during the Great Depression with funding from one of the New Deal public building programs. Its mural, a work by Henry La Cagnina entitled "Harvest", was also funded by a New Deal program for artists which was administered by the Section of Fine Arts, an agency of the Treasury Department.

The Crystal Springs Post Office and mural illustrate how the Federal government through Franklin Delano Roosevelt's leadership transformed its role from one of "neutral arbiter to social welfare activist", a role the government has retained down to today. Crystal Springs, along with the rest of rural Mississippi, suffered greatly during the Great Depression. The construction of the Crystal Springs Post Office and the painting of its mural demonstrate how the Federal government sought to alleviate the economic hardships of an American community through work relief while also attempting to inspire and encourage that community through public beautification (Craig 1979: 343).

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#9 Bibliography

Craig, Lois and the staff of the Federal Architecture Project. The Federal Presence: Architecture, Politics, and Symbols in United States Government Building. Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1979.

La Cagnina, Henry. Artist of the mural "Harvest" in Crystal Springs. Telephone Interview, 25 July 1992.

Original National Register nomination for the Mississippi Post Offices.

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#10 Geographical Data

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

That property lying and being situated in the City of Crystal Springs, Copiah County, Mississippi, which is more particularly described as follows, to-wit:

Beginning at a point on the northerly side of Marion Avenue easterly 90 feet from the intersection of the northerly line of Marion Avenue with the easterly line of Jackson Street, and being the common corner of Lots 16 and 17, Block 18; thence perpendicular to Marion Avenue in a northerly direction along the line between Lots 16 and 17, Block 18 130 feet; thence perpendicular to the last mentioned line in an easterly direction 10 feet to a concrete monument; thence perpendicular to the last mentioned line in a southerly direction 130 feet to a concrete monument on the northerly line of Marion Avenue; thence perpendicular to the last mentioned line in a westerly direction along the line of Marion Avenue 10 feet to the place of beginning.

Said parcel of land being a part of Lot 17 of Block 18 of the said Town of Crystal Springs according to the Stowell map of said town, of record in the office of the Chancery Clerk of Copiah County, Mississippi (Deed recorded in Book 4-W, page 513, 22 January 1940).

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The boundaries described in this nomination are historically associated with the U.S. Post Office in Crystal Springs.



U.S. Post Office

Crystal Springs, Copiah Co., MS

Susan Enzweiler

July 20, 1992

MS Dept. of Archives & History

view to Northwest

Photo 1 of 2



U.S. Post Office
Crystal Springs, Copiah Co., MS
Susan Enzweiler

July 20, 1992
MS Dept. of Archives & History

view to South

Photo 2 of 2