INDIVIDUAL PROPERTY FORM FOR

Fayetteville

X MULTIPLE RESOURCE OR THEMATIC NOMINATION

1 NAME

HISTORIC

(Former) United States Post Office

AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

301 Hay Street

CITY, TOWN

Fayetteville

VICINITY OF

Fayetteville

STATE

North Carolina

CODE

037

COUNTY

Cumberland

CODE

051

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

OWNERSHIP

STATUS

PRESENT USE

-X

PUBLIC

X

UNOCCUPIED

-AGRICULTURE

BUILDING(S)

PRIVATE

UNOCCUPIED

-MUSEUM

-BOTH

-WORK IN PROGRESS

-COMMERCIAL

-PUBLIC ACQUISITION

ACCESSIBLE

-PARK

-IN PROCESS

-YES: RESTRICTED

-EDUCATIONAL

-PRIVATE RESIDENCE

-YES: UNRESTRICTED

-ENTERTAINMENT

-RELIGIOUS

-NO

-GOVERNMENT

-MILITARY

-TRANSPORTATION

-SCIENTIFIC

-X

OTHER: Library

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

County of Cumberland

STREET & NUMBER

P.O. Box 449

CITY, TOWN

Fayetteville

VICINITY OF

Fayetteville

STATE

North Carolina

28302

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC

Register of Deeds, Cumberland County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

P.O. Box 2039

CITY, TOWN

Fayetteville

STATE

North Carolina

28302

6 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Linda Jasperse, Principal Investigator, City of Fayetteville

ORGANIZATION

Consultant for Survey and Planning Branch

DATE

November 18, 1982

STREET & NUMBER

Division of Archives and History, 109 E. Jones Street

TELEPHONE

1-919-733-6545

CITY OR TOWN

Raleigh

STATE

North Carolina

27611
The (Former) United States Post Office in Fayetteville, built between 1909 and 1911 and expanded to the rear in 1935, exhibits the Neo-Classical Revival style which was prevalent in commercial, governmental, and public architecture of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. One of the three buildings in downtown Fayetteville to follow this trend, the Post Office building is distinguished by one-story five-bay construction and fine detailing.

Resting on a foundation of brick, granite, and polished limestone blocks, the brick building is punctuated at the front by a central door flanked by two window openings on each side. The central entrance, approached by seven telescoping steps with flanking cast-iron lamp posts, contains a double door and a transom. It bears a surround enriched with acanthus and circular motifs, talon ornament, rosettes, and a scrolled keystone. Single windows flanking echo this form, and together with the door create a three-bay central mass which dominates the front façade. Corners of the center portion are delineated by quoins, the cornice by dentil and modillion rows, and the roof edge by a balustrade which obscures a tin-covered hip roof.

The two outer front bays, which form side wings to the center section, contain bold but smaller and less-detailed windows. These contain double 1/1 sash and are topped by both a divided transom and segmented lintel consisting of a jack arch with an enlarged central keystone. This window treatment is carried around to the sides, which consist of four bays along the original main block and three along the rear addition. Above window-level is a continuous cyma recta molding course which also ornaments the front facade.

The interior of the building, once containing marble appointments, is now cleared for use as a branch of the local library system.
Documented by a rare daily account of construction, the (former) United States Post Office was erected on a downtown lot between 1909 and 1911. It was the first of three Fayetteville structures to exhibit the Neo-Classical Revival style, popularized around the turn-of-the-century and reflected mainly in commercial, public, and/or governmental architecture. The structure, distinguished by one-story five-bay construction and detailing which includes ornamented door and window surrounds with acanthus, talon, and scrolled keystone ornament as well as a fine roofline balustrade, stands as an example of the forms public architecture took locally during the prosperous years of the early twentieth century. Still being used for public service as a library, it demonstrates historical continuity in a city which has undergone rapid and dramatic growth throughout the twentieth century.

CRITERIA ASSESSMENT

C. The (Former) United States Post Office at Fayetteville, 1909-1911, is reflective of the Neo-Classical Revival trends so prevalent in late nineteenth/early twentieth century American commercial and public architecture.
Fayetteville's early twentieth century main post office was erected between November, 1909, and May, 1911, on the southwest corner of Hay and Maxwell streets. The downtown lot on which it was built was transferred from the Fayetteville Independent Light Infantry, whose headquarters at that time were located next door on Maxwell Street, to the United States Government in 1907.1 A two story frame dwelling then used as a boarding house was cleared to make way for new construction, which by official bond dated 15 November 1909 commenced on 29 November 1909.2

A complete record group documenting construction activity, consisting of a daily diary kept by the government building superintendent and monthly photographs which document building progress, is extant and reveals the following. First, tight supervisory control was exercised by superintendents and foremen who conscientiously kept records of the number of employees and the amount of time it took to complete a job. Second, building materials such as brick, stone, and mortar were sent back to the provider if supervisory personnel considered them to be of unacceptable quality. Third, progress was slower than anticipated, for late shipments, delivery of low-quality materials, and inclement weather caused frustrating but unavoidable delays. Altogether, it took superintendents, subcontractors, laborers, custodians, engineers, rodmen, plumbers, carpenters, masons, stonecutters, tinners, marble-cutters, plasterers, and painters approximately eighteen months to complete the new building, from the digging of the foundation in November and December, 1909, to the putting of finishing touches on interior marble wainscot and other accents in February, 1911. The Post Office was first occupied on 4 April 1911 and completely finished the following month.3

Because of Fayetteville's rapidly growing population and commercial development, expansion of the existing building became necessary. In 1935, the Upchurch Construction Company of Atlanta, Georgia, C.W. Stone, Superintendent of Architecture, and Evan A. Lyon, Construction Engineer, among others, were responsible for erecting a major south wing.4

**9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

Please see continuation sheet.

**10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

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**VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION**

All of Lot 11, Block H, Map 78-2-3-4, Cross Creek Township, as outlined in red on map. See map section.
The 1950s mark the beginning of the transition of the post office facility to a library, which the structure serves as today. In 1956, a small part of library services were moved to the old post office. After the construction of a spacious and modern post office and federal building on Green Street in the middle 1960s, the old Hay Street building was converted entirely into the Frances Brooks Stein Branch of the Cumberland County Library System in April of 1970. One of the few pre-1912 post offices in North Carolina still in public use, the building demonstrates historical continuity in a city which has undergone dramatic growth during this century.
Reference Notes:


2 Daily diary and photographs of construction progress, 1909-1911, in possession of Edward M. Kennedy, Manager of Delivery and Collection, Customer Services Division, United States Post Office, 301 Green Street, Fayetteville, North Carolina, hereinafter cited as photographs and/or diary.

3 Photographs and diary.

4 Photographs.

5 Post Office Scrapbook, United States Post Office, 301 Green Street, Fayetteville, North Carolina; Vertical File "Post Offices and Postmasters," Anderson Street Library, Fayetteville, North Carolina; Library Slide/Tape presentation, developed by the Friends of the Library, Cumberland County Public Library System, Cumberland County, North Carolina.
Cumberland County Records: Deeds.


Friends of the Library. Slide/Tape presentation on the Cumberland County Public Library System. Cumberland County, North Carolina.
