

STATE FILE COPY

Form 10-300
(July 1959)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: Missouri	
COUNTY: St. Louis City	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

1. NAME

COMMON: Old Post Office
AND/OR HISTORIC: United States Court House, Custom House and Post Office

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER: Eighth and Olive Streets			
CITY OR TOWN: St. Louis			
STATE Missouri	CODE 63101	COUNTY: St. Louis City	CODE 510

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Object <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress	Yes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Park <input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) St. Louis Visitors Center

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME: United States Government, General Services Administration		
STREET AND NUMBER: 19th and F streets, N.W.		
CITY OR TOWN: Washington	STATE: District of Columbia	CODE: 08

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.: Office of Recorder of Deeds, St. Louis City Hall		
STREET AND NUMBER: 12th and Market streets		
CITY OR TOWN: St. Louis	STATE: Missouri	CODE: 63103

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY: Historic American Buildings Survey		
DATE OF SURVEY: 1965	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Federal <input type="checkbox"/> State <input type="checkbox"/> County <input type="checkbox"/> Local	
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS: Historic American Buildings Survey, Prints and Photographs Division		
STREET AND NUMBER: Library of Congress		
CITY OR TOWN: Washington	STATE: District of Columbia	CODE: 08

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE: Missouri
COUNTY: St. Louis City
ENTRY NUMBER
DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Old Post Office of St. Louis was designed by Alfred Bult Mullett, Supervising Architect to the Federal Treasury Department from 1865-1874, and was under construction from 1873-1884.

This building is a notable example of the "Second Empire" style in monumental public architecture. (Historic American Buildings Survey data sheet prepared by Buford L. Pickens, 1964.) The building follows the plan of an Italian Renaissance palazzo, built foursquare around an open court with three floors and an attic above street level and two basements below. Air and light are made available to the basements by means of a moat (areaway), 8 feet 6 inches wide by 25 feet deep.

Of the four almost identical facades, the Olive Street side (south) is given prominence by the crowning Mansard dome, originally topped by an ornamental belvedere, and a monumental sculpture, "America at War and America at Peace," executed by Daniel Chester French as his first major commission. The south and north walls have 17 bays; the east and west walls have 13. The long (east-west) axis of the building is 265 feet; the short (north-south) axis is 196 feet.

Granite is the predominant wall material. The foundations are of Missouri red granite, quarry faced and 10 feet thick. Walls above foundation level are gray granite quarried on Hurricane Island, Maine, 3 to 4 feet thick. Projecting porticos of four groups of paired columns are centered on each of the four facades. Granite cornices and entablatures surround the building at the level of each of the four stories. The wall surfaces are richly articulated with recessed window and door openings. These openings are flanked by pilasters and full columns, and are capped by keystone arches at the first floor level, segment arch pediments at second floor level, and triangular pediments at the third floor level.

The windows have wooden double-hung, 2 over 2 light sash in cast iron frames. For fire protection, ½ inch sheet iron sliding shutters pull out from the wall and cover all exterior windows.

A low mansard roof, having slate shingles on the sloping surface, rims the street facade of the building. The roof has an iron supporting structure. A four-sided domical Mansard tower on the Olive Street(south) side also has iron framing and a slate shingle exterior. The central open court was originally covered by a skylight at the level of the main roof. The present skylight is at the second floor level.

The building's 7 chimneys, having 3 to 6 flues each, serve groups of fireplaces. In addition to the chimneys, 2 large air vent shafts project on the roof.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

8. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- | | | | |
|---|---------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian; | <input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 18th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 20th Century |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 15th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 17th Century | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 19th Century | |

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) Under construction 1873-1884

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- | | | | |
|--|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal | <input type="checkbox"/> Education | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Political | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry | <input type="checkbox"/> Science | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sculpture | _____ |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce | <input type="checkbox"/> Military | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation | _____ |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Communications | <input type="checkbox"/> Music | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation | | | |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Old Post Office of St. Louis is primarily significant as an outstanding example of a structure which embodies the distinguishing characteristics of an architectural type specimen. This building is exceptionally valuable as an example of the post Civil War "Second Empire" style incorporating innovative fire-proof construction techniques. Relatively few monumental examples of this style have survived in the United States. The building is also a rare survivor of the work of Alfred Bult Mullett, an important governmental architect of the mid-nineteenth century. George R. Brooks, current Director of the Missouri Historical Society in St. Louis, Missouri has noted further significance of the building in the following: "As the seat of the Federal Courts between 1884-1935, the building has played an important role in the judicial history of the area under the jurisdiction of the courts, and as such, a host of trials, cases, etc. have been heard in its rooms." (Historic American Buildings Survey data sheet, Old Post Office, St. Louis, 1965.)

The Old Post Office of St. Louis is an example of federal (i.e. governmental) architecture belonging to the period of reconstruction following the U. S. Civil War. In this period the country was attempting to regain strength and solidarity and at the same time to protect its government centers from new dangers. The fortress-like, yet noble, appearance of this "Second Empire" style building (Historic American Buildings Survey data sheet prepared by Buford L. Pickens, 1964.) is a superb architectural statement of the desired federal image.

Innovative applications of technology incorporated into the building's design include the use of predominately fire-proof construction methods and structural members. The building has a circulating hot air heating system, elevators and direct access, through the east moat, to an underground railway tunnel for mail service. All of these features were relatively new in the 1870's.

The Old Post Office is one of two survivors of the six major designs produced by Alfred Bult Mullett (1834-1890) during the

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

1. Brooks, George R. "The Old Post Office," Missouri Historical Society Bulletin, XX (July, 1964), pp. 307-9 (illustrated).
2. Hilliker, Frank. Research files. St. Louis, Missouri.
3. Historic American Buildings Survey data sheets prepared by Buford L. Pickens and George R. Brooks, 1964-1965.
4. Leland, Austin P. Research files. St. Louis, Missouri.

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	° ' "	° ' "		38° 37' 44"	90° 11' 34"	
NE	° ' "	° ' "				
SE	° ' "	° ' "				
SW	° ' "	° ' "				

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 1.66

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

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE: M. Patricia (McCue) Holmes, Research Architectural Historian

ORGANIZATION: Missouri State Park Board DATE: November 21, '68

State Historical Survey and Planning Office

STREET AND NUMBER: P.O. Box 176, 1204 Jefferson Building

CITY OR TOWN: Jefferson City STATE: Missouri 65101 CODE: 24

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665). I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National State Local

Name Joseph Jaeger, Jr.

Title Director, Missouri State Park Board, and Missouri State Liaison Officer

Date _____

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date _____

ATTEST:

Keeper of The National Register

Date _____

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Continuation Sheet)

STATE	
Missouri	
COUNTY	
St. Louis City	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

(Number all entries)

OLD POST OFFICE

6.

McCue, G. Building Art in St. Louis, Two Centuries (local)

1964 and 1967

321 South Woodlawn Avenue

Kirkwood, Missouri 63122

Code: 24

Missouri State Historical Survey (state)

1968

Missouri State Park Board

P.O. Box 176

1204 Jefferson Building

Jefferson City, Missouri 65101

Code: 24

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Continuation Sheet)

STATE Missouri	
COUNTY St. Louis City	
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7.

OLD POST OFFICE

The building's structural framing is of fire-resistant materials. Iron beams and cast iron columns were used on the basement and first floors. Above the second floor, brick arches carried on iron joists are supported by brick bearing walls.

On the interior wood was used minimally. An unusual sense of openness and lightness was achieved by creating window openings wider than the intervening sections of wall. The interior was, and remains, elegantly finished with cast iron mouldings framing windows and doors, ornamental plaster cornices, ceramic tile floors and stair risers, art glass windows, bronze door knobs displaying the U. S. seal, and cast iron ventilation grills pierced in ornamental patterns.

Two iron stairways, each in a 25 foot x 37 foot stair well, and three elevators provide vertical circulation.

Both basement levels have 16 foot ceilings; the first floor's is 26'; the second through fourth floor ceilings are 22'.

Red Italian Bologna marble fireplace mantles are major ornamental features of the offices on the second through fourth floors. An average of ten of these fireplaces are located on each floor.

Presently, the building is almost original in form and material. The belvedere has been removed and the office space on the second and third floors has been redecorated and partitioned. The interior is in need of plaster repairs and general refurbishment. In 1963 the exterior masonry was steam-cleaned and pointed, and the trim and metal work painted. The structure and exterior are in excellent condition.

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Continuation Sheet)

STATE Missouri	
COUNTY St. Louis City	
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(Number all entries)

8.

OLD POST OFFICE

presidency of General U. S. Grant. Mullett was Supervising Architect to the Treasury Department from 1865-1874. His only other major design which has survived is the former State, War and Navy Building, now the Executive Office Building, in Washington, D. C. Although the Old Post Office of St. Louis is considerably smaller than the Executive Office Building, similarities in general format, articulation and detail relate these buildings stylistically.

The building originally served the three-fold purpose of United States Court House, Custom House and Post Office. It later housed offices of federal agencies, and presently continues as a post office and St. Louis Visitors Center.

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INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Continuation Sheet)

STATE	
Missouri	
COUNTY	
St. Louis City	
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(Number all entries)

OLD POST OFFICE

9.

5. Original drawings, plans. National Archives, U.S. Treasury Department, Washington, D. C.
6. Pickens, Buford L. Research files. Washington University, St. Louis, Missouri.
7. Wodehouse, Lawrence. Paper delivered before the Society of Architectural Historians, Annual Convention, January, 1968.

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Continuation Sheet)

STATE	
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COUNTY	
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(Number all entries)

OLD POST OFFICE

11.

- * Form originally submitted November 21, 1968 on Draft (July 1968) version of the National Register of Historic Places Inventory Nomination Form, and given acceptance to the National Register of Historic Places with the provision that the data be transferred to an updated version of the form. Date of transfer was October, 1969.

Form 10-301
(Dec. 1968)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

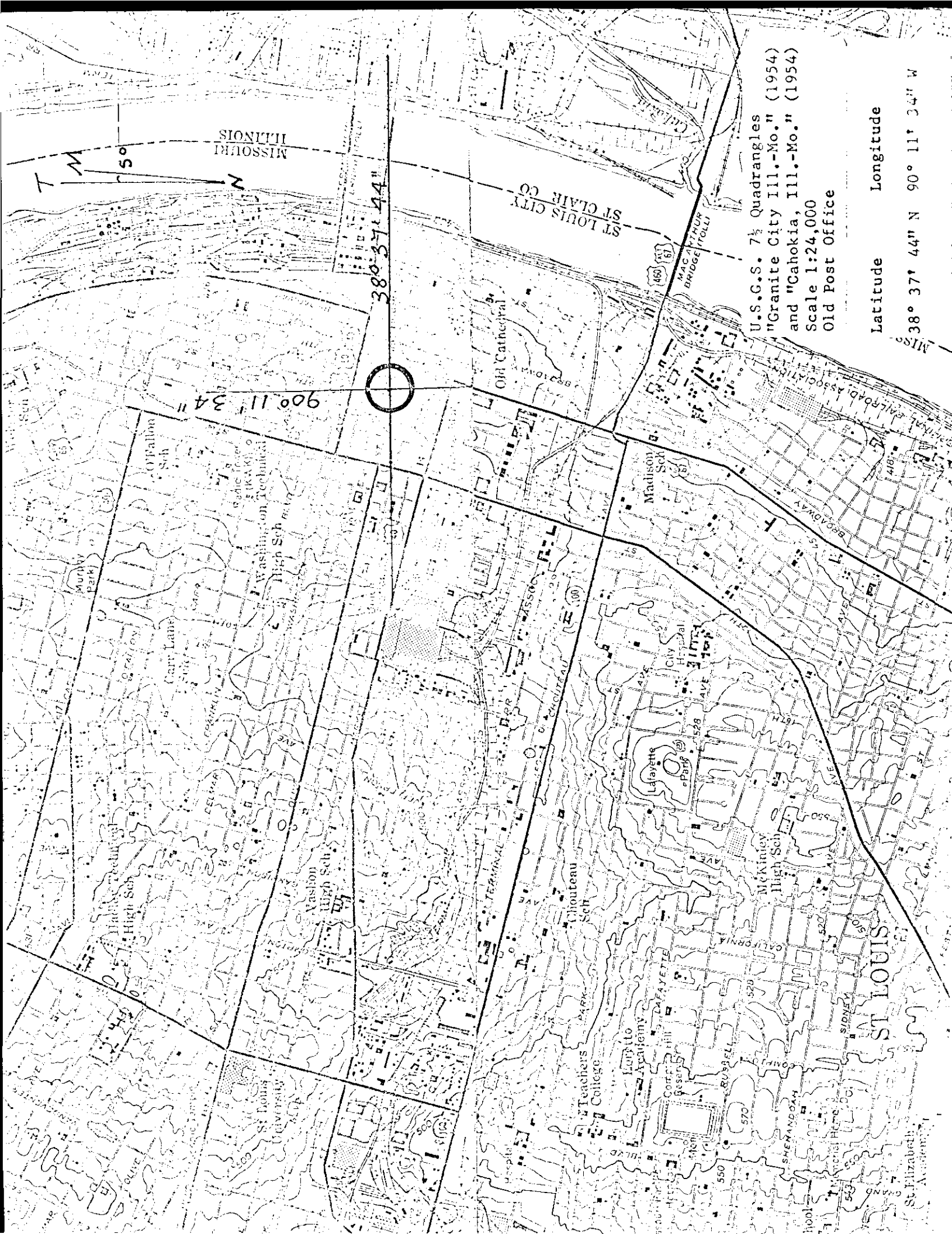
**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
PROPERTY MAP FORM**

(Type all entries - attach to or enclose with map)

STATE	
Missouri	
COUNTY	
St. Louis City	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

1. NAME			
COMMON: Old Post Office			
AND OR HISTORIC: United States Court House, Custom House and Post Office			
2. LOCATION			
STREET AND NUMBER:			
Eighth and Olive streets			
CITY OR TOWN:			
St. Louis			
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
Missouri 63101	24	St. Louis City	510
3. MAP REFERENCE			
SOURCE: U.S.G.S. 7½' Quadrangles "Granite City Ill.-Mo." and "Cabokia, Ill.-Mo."			
SCALE: 1:24,000			
DATE: 1954			
4. REQUIREMENTS			
TO BE INCLUDED ON ALL MAPS			
1. Property boundaries where required.			
2. North arrow.			
3. Latitude and longitude reference.			



MISSOURI
ILLINOIS

ST LOUIS CITY
ST CLAIR CO

U.S.G.S. 7½ Quadrangles
 "Granite City Ill.-Mo." (1954)
 and "Cahokia, Ill.-Mo." (1954)
 Scale 1:24,000
 Old Post Office

Latitude Longitude
 38° 37' 44" N 90° 11' 34" W

90° 11' 34"

38° 37' 44"

ST LOUIS

St. Elizabeth's
Academy

O'Fallon
Sch.

Washington Technical
High Sch.

Washon
High Sch.

Chouteau
Sch.

Lafayette
High Sch.

McKinney
High Sch.

Madison
Sch.

Missouri
Railroad
Association

MACARTHUR
BRIDGE TOLL

Washon
High Sch.

Washington
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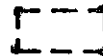
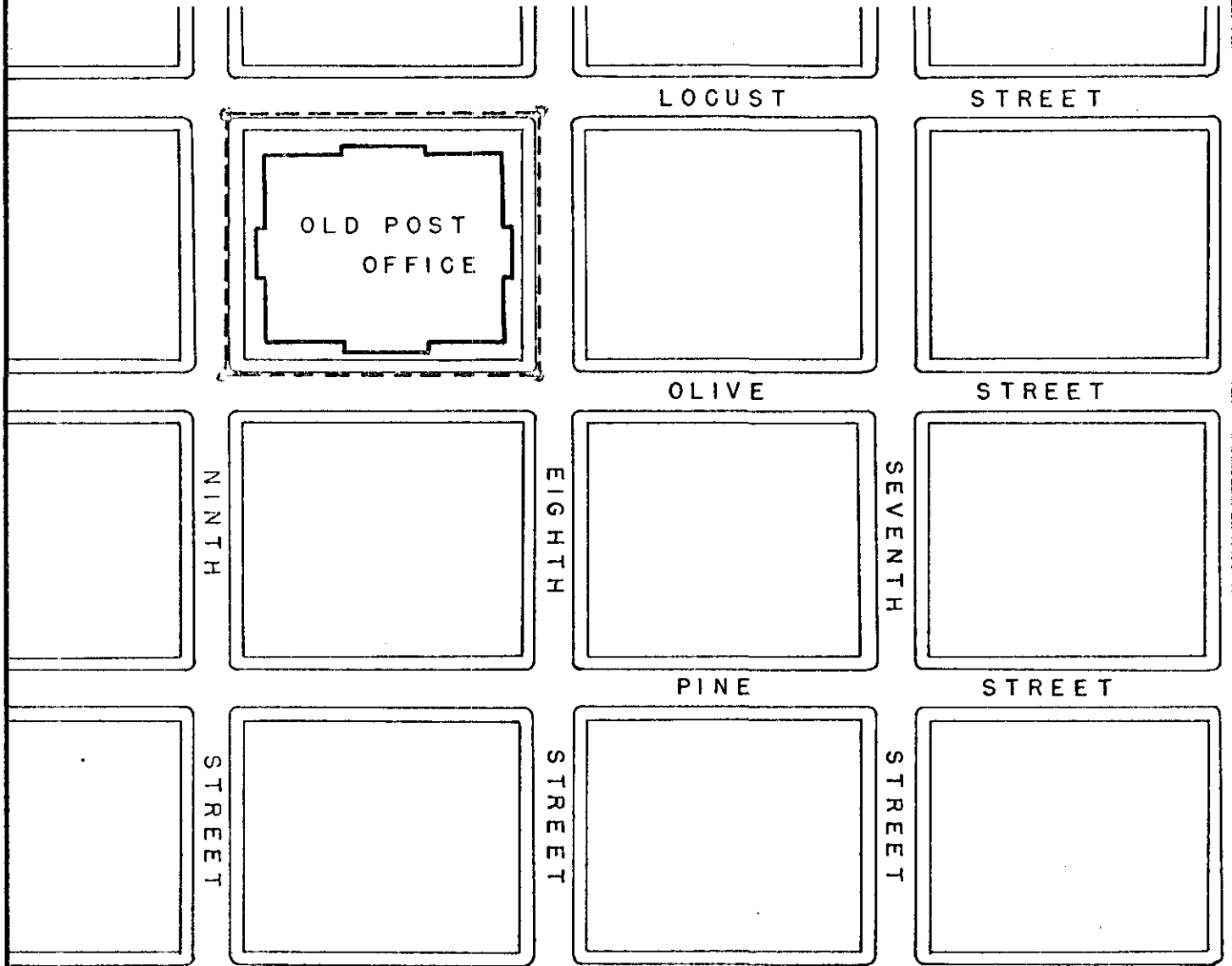
Washington
High Sch.

Washington
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Washington
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OLD POST OFFICE

St. Louis, Mo.



Property nominated to the
National Register