

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

DATE ENTERED

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

**1 NAME** UNITED STATES POST OFFICES IN NEW YORK STATE -- 1858-1943 --  
 HISTORIC THEMATIC RESOURCES  
 U.S. Post Office & Federal Office Building, N.Y.C.: Church Street Station, NY  
 AND/OR COMMON  
 Church Street Station

**2 LOCATION**

STREET &amp; NUMBER

90 Church Street

CITY, TOWN

New York City

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

STATE

New York

CODE

036

COUNTY

New York

CODE

061

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

## CATEGORY

DISTRICT

X BUILDING(S)

STRUCTURE

SITE

OBJECT

## OWNERSHIP

X PUBLIC

PRIVATE

BOTH

## PUBLIC ACQUISITION

na IN PROCESS

na BEING CONSIDERED

## STATUS

X OCCUPIED

UNOCCUPIED

WORK IN PROGRESS

## ACCESSIBLE

X YES: RESTRICTED

YES: UNRESTRICTED

NO

## PRESENT USE

AGRICULTURE

COMMERCIAL

EDUCATIONAL

ENTERTAINMENT

X GOVERNMENT

INDUSTRIAL

MILITARY

MUSEUM

PARK

PRIVATE RESIDENCE

RELIGIOUS

SCIENTIFIC

TRANSPORTATION

OTHER:

**4 AGENCY**

REGIONAL HEADQUARTERS: (If applicable)

United States Postal Service, Northeast Region, F.R.E.B.O.

STREET &amp; NUMBER

90 Church Street

CITY, TOWN

New York

VICINITY OF

STATE

NY

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

County Clerk's Office, City of New York

STREET &amp; NUMBER

31 Chambers Street

CITY, TOWN

New York

STATE

NY

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

United States Postal Service Inventory

DATE

183

X FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

N.Y.S. Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation

CITY, TOWN

Albany

STATE

NY

## 7 DESCRIPTION

### CONDITION

☐ EXCELLENT  
☒ GOOD  
☐ FAIR

☐ DETERIORATED  
☐ RUINS  
☐ UNEXPOSED

### CHECK ONE

☐ UNALTERED  
☒ ALTERED

### CHECK ONE

☒ ORIGINAL SITE  
☐ MOVED      DATE \_\_\_\_\_

### DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

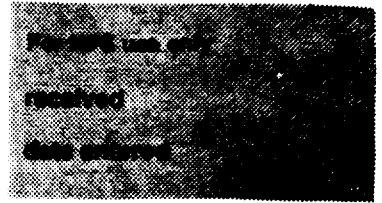
The Federal Office Building and Church Street Station Post Office is located at 90 Church Street in lower Manhattan and takes up the entire block bounded on the north by Barclay Street, on the south by Vesey Street, on the east by Church Street and on the west by West Broadway. The building is located in a densely built up urban area not far from New York City's civic center and Wall Street. The World Trade Center is directly across Vesey Street from the nominated building. Within a few blocks of the building are several National Register listed properties. These include St. Paul's Chapel and Cemetery, which is diagonally across Church Street from the post office, the New York Evening Post Building at 20 Vesey Street, St. Peter's Roman Catholic Church at 22 Barclay Street across from the federal building, the building at 75 Murray Street and the Woolworth Building. The building takes up its entire lot. The Federal Office Building and Church Street Station Post Office retain its integrity to an extraordinary degree on both the exterior and interior. The nomination includes one contributing building.

The Federal Office Building and Church Street Station Post Office is a fifteen-story symmetrically massed limestone-faced structure. The main facade faces onto Church Street. The austere base of the building is pierced by three crisply cut rectilinear openings with recessed entrances. Each entrance contains a revolving door and two regular doors set within an aluminum frame composed of stylized fasces crowned by eagles. Vertical aluminum screens run over the glass panels of the doors and transoms. Above the entrances the words "FEDERAL OFFICE BUILDING" are carved into the facade. To either side of the front facade are Paul Jennewein's circular relief sculptures. To the right is "Night," represented by a lethargic winged female figure and to the left is "Day," shown as a dynamic winged male figure.

In the center of the front facade, above the first story, are six monumental four-story-tall Doric pilasters which flank deeply recessed windows. At the base of these pilasters are classically inspired bronze railings and between the first two levels (second and third stories) are panels with incised horizontal lines and single stars. These panels are almost flush with the pilasters. Between the other stories are limestone spandrels with paired raised squares. The recessed windows consist of paired two-over-two steel sash. To either side of the pilasters are end bays that are articulated on each floor by a single small crisply cut window with no enframing. At the sixth floor level is a Doric frieze that incorporates triglyphs, metopes with raised roundel panels, and small rectangular windows. Above this is a wall pierced by stone grilles. At the corners are large stylized

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**



Federal Office Building and Church St. Station, New York, NY  
Continuation sheet New York County

Item number 7

Page 2

eagles.

The side and rear facades, facing Barclay and Vesey Street and West Broadway, are somewhat similar in design to the front facade. On the first floor of the thirteen-bay-long side elevations are paired windows with single stone grilles at either end. Above these are shallow four-story pilasters. The panels with horizontal bands and stars, the modified Doric frieze, and the stone grilles seen on the front facade continue on the side elevations. Each side window on the fourth and fifth floors has a spandrel with raised stone panel.

Rising above the six-story base is the nine-story office block which is set back from the street on all sides. The most prominent features of this H-shaped tower are the metal spandrel panels with Art Deco decorative motifs, the carved horizontal stone bands and stars at the parapet and the acroteria set at each corner.

The interior contains three lobby spaces. The central lobby leads to the office tower and elevators and the two side lobbies lead to the post office. The lobby floors are terrazzo and marble set in a geometric pattern with checkered borders throughout. In the center of each lobby is a marble sunburst panel. The lobbies have plaster ceilings with decorative geometric borders and stars. The ceiling has a geometrically arranged pattern of lights that echo the floor pattern. In the center of each ceiling is an octagonal glass panel with an etched eagle. The walls of the lobbies are clad with greenish-tan marble with greenish-black pilasters. Monumental marble Doric columns spanned by glass, aluminum grillework and doors divide the main lobby from the post office lobbies. Additional ornament in the lobbies includes aluminum entrance vestibules with acroteria, aluminum grilles, and panels with the names of those who participated in the design and construction of the building. There are three elevator banks in the main lobby.

Terrazzo stairs with aluminum handrails lead from the side lobbies into the U-shaped post office. The public spaces of the post office have terrazzo floors set with squares of alternating colors. A marble wainscot rises approximately half way up the walls and incorporates the screenlines. The original teller's cages and aluminum sign boards are extant. The upper walls are plaster. The walls are interrupted by small square openings with anthemion grilles. The walls are crowned by a cornice with groups of guttae. Each of the three post office sections has a segmental-arched plaster ceiling vault. Other original features

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**

Federal Office Building and Church St. Station, New York, NY

Continuation sheet New York County

Item number 7

Page 3

found within the lobby spaces are aluminum radiator grilles, lock-boxes, hanging lamps and marble customer tables. Two types of original tables are found in the post office: freestanding tables with paw feet carved on each side and wall-mounted tables with paw feet on only one side. Several side rooms also contain original detail, although part of the original postmaster's office has been modernized for new lockboxes.

## 8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD		AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
REHISTORIC	<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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)	
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION			

SPECIFIC DATES 1934-8

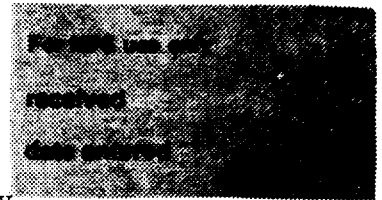
BUILDER/ARCHITECT Cross & Cross; Pennington,  
Lewis & Mills

### STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Federal Office Building and Church Street Station Post Office is architecturally significant as one of the largest and finest federal buildings erected as part of the public works projects initiated by the United States government during the Great Depression of the 1930's. The fifteen-story building is a superb example of a conservative Classical Revival style structure ornamented with finely executed details that reflect the influence of stylized Art Deco forms. The post office was erected between 1934 and 1938 to the design of the prestigious New York architectural firm of Cross and Cross working with the firm of Pennington, Lewis and Mills. These architects served as consulting architects to the Office of the Supervising Architect of the Treasury, headed during the 1930's by Louis A. Simon. The Church Street Station Post Office and Federal Building is the most distinguished of the many post office structures constructed by the Department of the Treasury in New York City during the 1930's. The sophisticated design and exquisite detail of the building survive to an extraordinary degree; almost no changes have taken place since the addition of the six top floors of the tower in 1938, the year following the completion of the original building. Although its scale is much grander than that of the typical post offices of the period, this building exhibits many of the characteristics that typify post office design of the 1930's including a symmetrical principal facade, steel frame and masonry construction, decoration in limestone, terrazzo and metal, and a general high quality of construction and detailing. The massive six-story lower section of the building is quite plain in its overall appearance, but is enhanced by monumental decorative elements including four-story pilasters on the Church Street facade, a one-story-high Doric frieze and stylized carved eagles at the top corners. Also on the Church Street facade at either end of the building are a pair of artistically significant and well-preserved relief roundels carved by the noted academic sculptor Carl Paul Jennewein. The nine-story H-shaped upper section of the building (including the six-story 1938 addition) is recessed from the lower section and lightens the heavy quality of that section. Large acroteria at each corner of the parapet complete the composition.

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**



Federal Office Building and Church St. Station, New York, NY  
Continuation sheet New York County

Item number 8

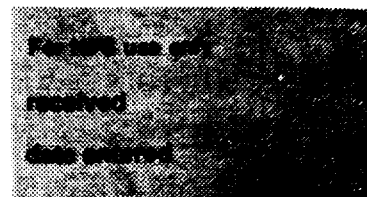
Page 2

The Federal Office Building and Church Street Station Post Office was one of a large number of new post office structures and other federal facilities built in New York State during the Great Depression. These buildings were authorized under a series of omnibus building acts and amendments which were enacted as a response to the unemployment caused by the onset of the Great Depression. In Manhattan alone, fourteen postal buildings were erected during the 1930's. All of these Manhattan buildings except the Morgan General Mail Facility were the work of consulting architects commissioned to design the buildings by the Office of the Supervising Architect of the Treasury, headed between 1933 and 1939 by Louis A. Simon (prior to 1933, Simon was responsible for the design department of the Supervising Architect's office). A 1930 amendment to the Public Buildings Act of 1926 permitted the Supervising Architect to hire outside consultants. After this amendment was passed some of America's most talented architects and architectural firms were commissioned to design post offices in New York State. These architects included Dwight James Baum (Flushing), Delano and Aldrich (Glen Cove), Walker and Gillette (Garden City), Mott B. Schmidt (Mount Kisco). Bottomley, Wagner and White (Oyster Bay) and Cross and Cross.

The architectural firm of Cross and Cross was a leader in the design of houses, clubs and apartment buildings for New York City's wealthiest residents and was also actively involved in the design of commercial buildings and in the development of New York City real estate. The brothers John Walter Cross (1878-1951) and Elliott Cross (1884-1949) established their partnership in 1907. They continued to practice together for thirty-five years. John Cross, the main designer of the firm, was educated at Yale, the Columbia School of Mines and the Ecole des Beaux-Arts. His brother, who was more active as a developer, was educated at Harvard. Most of Cross and Cross's residential work, many examples of which are located within the Upper East Side Historic District (NR listed), was designed in the Colonial Revival style. The firm's club buildings, such as the Links Club (1916, Upper East Side Historic District), are also in this style. Cross and Cross's first post office commission, the Jamaica Post Office in Queens (1933-4, included in thematic nomination) is also a Colonial Revival style structure. In the 1930's, Cross and Cross began to use Art Deco forms as well as stylized Classical Revival details on their buildings. The firm's most important Art Deco structure is the R.C.A. Building (1931, now General Electric Building) on Lexington Avenue and East 51st Street. In 1940, they designed the Tiffany Building on Fifth Avenue and East 57th Street. This stylized Classical Revival structure with Art Deco detail has much in common with the design of the Federal Office

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**



Federal Office Building and Church St. Station, New York, NY  
Continuation sheet    New York County    Item number    8

Page    3

Building on Church Street.

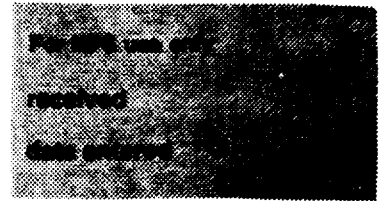
Assisting Cross and Cross in the design of the Federal Office Building was the firm of Pennington, Lewis and Mills. The senior partner in this firm was Hall Pleasants Pennington (1889-1942). Pennington was born in Baltimore and studied at Princeton and Ecole des Beaux-Arts. In 1918, he entered his father's practice in Baltimore, moving to New York in the 1920's where he joined with Lewis and Mills. The firm specialized in the design of apartment houses, including two that are in the Upper East Side Historic District.

The Federal Office Building is one of the largest federal buildings in New York State. It was planned to house the Church Street Station Post Office as well as Post Office Department offices and offices of the Foreign and Domestic Commerce Bureau of the Department of Commerce, the Federal Housing Administration and the Treasury Department. The building is an extremely impressive, grandly scaled, and austere detailed Classical Revival style structure clad entirely in limestone. This use of somewhat stylized Classical Revival forms is seen on other New York State post offices but it was never as popular as the Colonial Revival style for post office design. In smaller scale buildings, Classical Revival forms are evident on the Canal Station (Alan Balch Mills, 1937-9), Madison Square Station (Lorimer Rich, 1935-7) and Mott Haven Station (attributed to Lorimer Rich, 1936) post offices in New York City and on such post offices as those in Great Neck (William Dewey Foster, 1939-40), Garden City (Walker and Gillette, 1935-6), Hempstead (Tooker and Marsh, 1931-3) and Patchogue (John V. Van Pelt, 1931-3). All of these buildings are contributing components of the thematic nomination and they are among the most impressive post office installations in New York State. In scale, the Classical Revival building that comes closest to the Federal Office Building is the Morgan General Mail Facility (1931-3) in New York City. Particularly notable Classical Revival features on the Church Street building are the rows of monumental Doric pilasters, the modified Doric frieze with triglyphs and roundel metopes separated by windows, the metal grilles and the highly stylized eagles. These forms are combined with a use of Art Deco detail, particularly evident on the exterior in the use of chevron patterned spandrel panels beneath the windows of the setback tower.

The design of the Federal Office Building was begun in 1933 and completed in 1934. Construction began in that year and the original building, erected by James Stewart and Co., Inc. of New York City, was completed in 1937. The original building was only

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**



Federal Office Building and Church St. Station, New York, NY  
Continuation sheet New York County Item number 8

Page 4

ten stories tall, but by 1938 an additional six stories had been added to the building. The design of the six additional floors is identical to that of the original structure and it was undoubtedly carried out according to designs prepared by Cross and Cross and Pennington, Lewis and Mills.

The interior design of the Federal Office Building and Church Street Station Post Office is among the most lavish of any Depression-era federal building in New York State. The building has a monumental central lobby with elevator banks and two side lobbies which lead directly to the post office. The post office, located behind the three lobbies, is laid out with a U-shaped public area. The lobbies and the post office are richly embellished with stylized Classical and Art Deco detail in marble, terrazzo, aluminum, plaster and etched glass. The building also contains much of its original furniture, including doors, lighting fixtures and customer tables.

On the exterior, the building also contains a pair of roundel panels carved in relief by Carl Paul Jennewein. These panels are set to either side of the entrances; to the south is a male figure representing "Day" and to the north is a female figure of "Night." The roundels were planned as part of the building's design and Jennewein's commission was not received as part of one of the New Deal art projects. Carl Paul Jennewein (1890-1978) was one of the most prominent architectural sculptors of the twentieth century. Jennewein was born in Stuttgart, Germany, and moved to America at the age of seventeen. He studied art at the Art Students League and, in 1915, won the Prix de Rome. Upon returning to New York in 1921, Jennewein was deluged with commissions. Much of his work is in a conservative decorative style that was extremely popular in the 1920's and 1930's. Jennewein served as vice president of the National Sculpture Society and was awarded prizes from the New York Architectural League. Among his other architectural commissions are the sculpture on the facade of 19 East 72nd Street, an apartment house in the Upper East Side Historic District (1936-7), the screen above the entrance to the Brooklyn Public Library (c.1940), the relief figures of "Industry" and "Agriculture" at 1 Rockefeller Plaza (1937) in Rockefeller Center and the bronze relief screen and stone coat of arms on the Fifth Avenue elevation of the British Empire Building (1933), also at Rockefeller Center.



## 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Sanborn Map Company. New York City: 1923; 1923-51.

## 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY less than two acres

UTM REFERENCES

A 18 583520 4507100  
ZONE EASTING NORTHING  
C         

B           
ZONE EASTING NORTHING  
D         

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

See attached site map

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
NA			
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
NA			

## 11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

See also continuation sheet

Larry E. Gobrecht, National Register and Survey Coordinator

ORGANIZATION New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and DATE

Historic Preservation, Field Services Bureau November 1986

STREET & NUMBER

TELEPHONE

Empire State Plaza, Agency Building One

(518) 474-0479

CITY OR TOWN

STATE

Albany

NY

## 12 CERTIFICATION OF NOMINATION

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

YES ☐

NO ☐

NONE ☐

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

In compliance with Executive Order 11593, I hereby nominate this property to the National Register, certifying that the State Historic Preservation Officer has been allowed 90 days in which to present the nomination to the State Review Board and to evaluate its significance. The evaluated level of significance is ☐ National ☐ State ☐ Local.

FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE

TITLE

DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

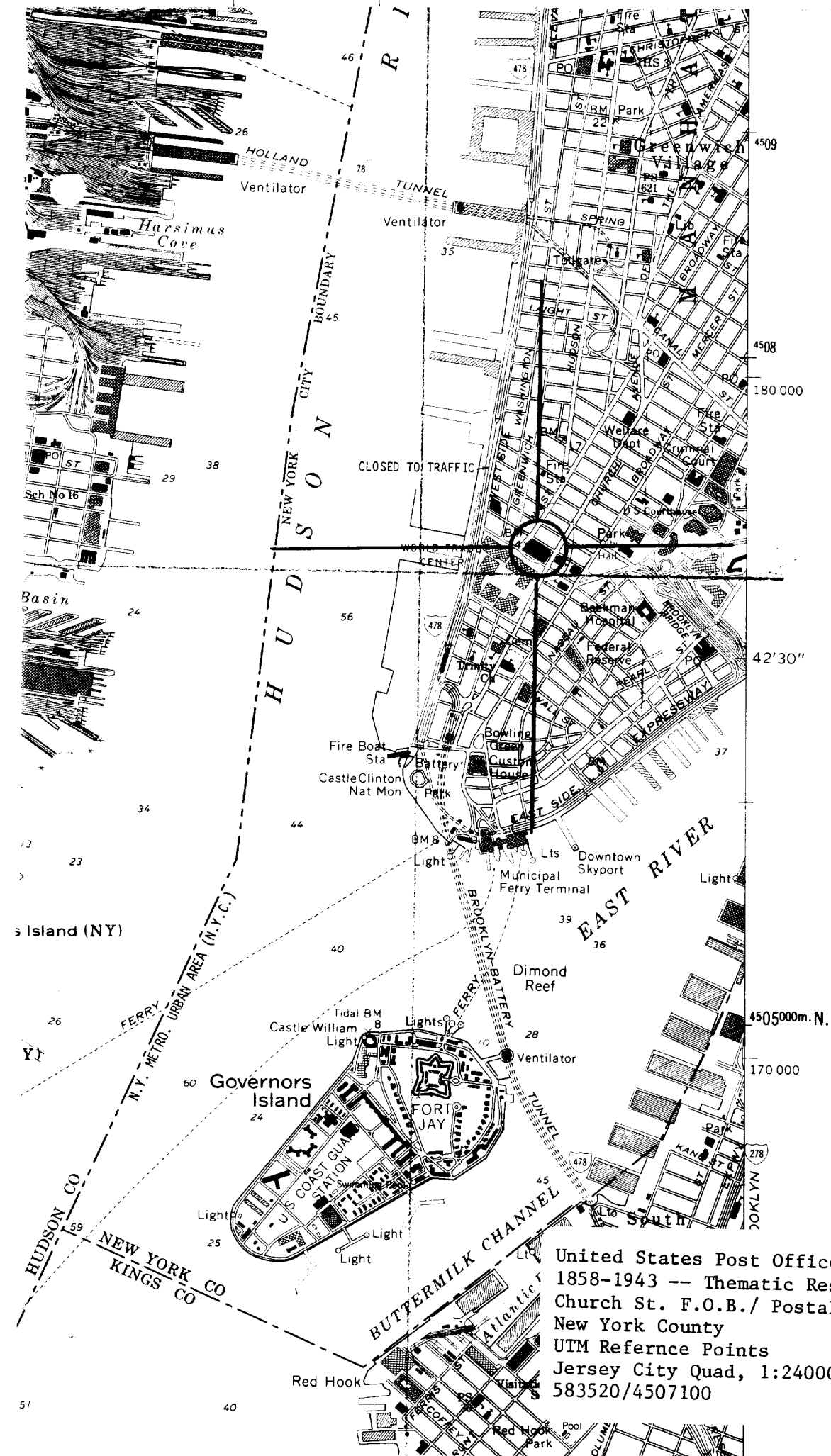
DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST:

DATE

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER





**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**

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received

date entered

Continuation sheet      Church Street Station/F.O.B., New York City, NY  
New York County      Item number 11

Page 2

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b

UNITED STATES POST OFFICES IN NEW  
YORK STATE -- 1858-1943 -- THEMATIC  
RESOURCES  
PHOTO: BEYER, BLINDER, BELLE  
NEG: DIV. FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION  
ALBANY, NEW YORK

CHURCH STREET STATION/F.O.B.  
90 CHURCH STREET, NEW YORK  
NEW YORK COUNTY, NEW YORK  
DATE: 1983  
VIEW: EAST AND NORTH ELEVATIONS  
1 of 5



Church Street Station Post Office,  
Federal Office Building  
90 Church St., New York City,  
New York County, New York  
Date: 1983  
View: East and south elevations

UNITED STATES POST OFFICES IN NEW  
YORK STATE -- 1858-1943 -- THEMATIC  
RESOURCES  
Photo: Beyer, Blinder, Belle  
Neg: Div. for Historic Preservation  
Albany, New York

UNITED STATES POST OFFICES IN NEW  
YORK STATE -- 1858-1943 -- THEMATIC  
RESOURCES  
PHOTO: BEYER, BLINDER, BELLE  
NEG: DIV. FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION  
ALBANY, NEW YORK

CHURCH STREET STATION/ F.O.B.  
90 CHURCH STREET, NEW YORK  
NEW YORK COUNTY, NEW YORK  
DATE: 1983  
VIEW: ENTRANCE DETAIL  
3 OF 5





37

Church Street Station Post Office,  
Federal Office Building  
90 Church St., New York City,  
New York County, New York  
Date: 1983  
View: Main lobby

UNITED STATES POST OFFICES IN NEW  
YORK STATE -- 1858-1943 -- THEMATIC  
RESOURCES  
Photo: Beyer, Blinder, Belle  
Neg: Div. for Historic Preservation  
Albany, New York



UNITED STATES POST OFFICES IN NEW  
YORK STATE -- 1858-1943 -- THEMATIC  
RESOURCES  
PHOTO: BEYER, BLINDER, BELLE  
NEG: DIV. FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION  
ALBANY, NEW YORK

CHURCH STREET STATION/ F.O.B.  
90 CHURCH STREET, NEW YORK  
NEW YORK COUNTY, NEW YORK  
DATE: 1983  
VIEW: POST OFFICE LOBBY  
5 OF 5

