

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

PH0699225

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RECEIVED FEB 6 1979
DATE ENTERED APR 30 1979

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**
FOR FEDERAL PROPERTIES

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

1 NAME

HISTORIC

United States Court House (New) Portland, Oregon

AND/OR COMMON

United States Court House (New) Portland, Oregon

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

620 S.W. Main Street

__NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Portland

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

01

__ VICINITY OF

STATE

Oregon

CODE

COUNTY

Multnomah

CODE

051

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

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

OWNERSHIP

- PUBLIC
- PRIVATE
- BOTH
- PUBLIC ACQUISITION**
- IN PROCESS
- BEING CONSIDERED

STATUS

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

PRESENT USE

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

4 AGENCY

General Services Administration

REGIONAL HEADQUARTERS: (If applicable)

Regional Headquarters Building

STREET & NUMBER

GSA Center, 10PG

CITY, TOWN

Auburn,

__ VICINITY OF

STATE

Washington 98002

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Multnomah County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Portland

STATE

Oregon

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

Survey of Federal Properties in Oregon

DATE

1968

__FEDERAL STATE __COUNTY __LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

Department of Transportation, State Historic Preservation Office

CITY, TOWN

525 Trade Street, S.E., Salem,

STATE

Oregon 97310

7 DESCRIPTION

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

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Federal Courthouse (New) in Portland, Oregon, is a 160' square doughnut in plan. A 65' X 78' light court occupies the core of the building above the first storey. The building has a basement and eight storeys including an attic. The Courthouse is of steel and concrete construction. It is faced in Wilkerson sandstone (a very hard, light colored material) laid in what the drawings call "American" bond. This is comparable in appearance to chimney bond.

The site slopes from a high point on the northeast corner to a point 21' lower on the southwest corner. It is bordered by S.W. Broadway on the west, Madison Street on the south, 6th Avenue on the east, and Main Street on the north. The Main Street facade is also the building's main facade. A low, stepping-down masonry wall with a double metal railing separates the site from the sidewalks on all four sides. Planting strips 18' wide are inside the wall on the east and west sides. Two semicircular recesses formed by taller sections of the wall open toward the sidewalk on the north side. They extend into the 28' wide landscaped area on either side of the building's main entrance. In the center of each recess is a flagpole capped by a bronze eagle with outstretched wings. At the center of the north facade 24 granite steps lead straight up from the sidewalk to a landing 42' wide. Two bronze lamps, 8½' tall, are mounted on the masonry cheekblocks.

The cornerstone at the northeast corner of the building reads:

"Andrew W. Mellon
Secretary of the Treasury
Morris H. Whitehouse and Associates
Architects
James A. Wetmore
Acting Supervising Architect
1931."

The main facade is divided horizontally into three parts. The base extends up to a string course at the floor level of the first storey. The 21' first storey and an 11' 6" second storey extend to a second string course. Above this, five upper storeys, each 11' 6" tall except for a 13' 6" seventh storey, extends to the entablature which encloses the eighth storey rooms and attic.

The base is faced in smooth masonry. Banded rustication is almost the only embellishment of the austere first and second storey section. The only other ornamentation is around the three centrally-located doorways. A stone star-in-a-circle pattern is repeated at roughly 2' intervals on the surrounds with a garland pattern added across the lintel. A Deco- esque stone eagle with wings outspread and clutching three arrows surmounts the center door.

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INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
RECEIVED	FEB 9 1979
DATE ENTERED	APR 30 1979

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 1

The facade is vertically divided into 11 bays. Two windowless masonry bays 20' wide at each corner of the building have the words "United States of America" incised into them at the seventh storey level. Nine window bays are distributed symmetrically at 14' on center.

Within the doorways a cast bronze semiabstract floral pattern strip frames each 16' X 6' opening. The 7½' double doors are of hollow bronze with brass trim. The glazed panel above each pair is covered by an iron grille with cast bronze floral and geometric ornamentation. Similar grilles cover the six first storey windows.

The first storey windows are 14' X 7' vertical rectangles. The unadorned casement windows of the second storey are 7' X 6' rectangles divided into twelve lights. The third through fifth storey windows are similar but 8' tall. Similar windows 19' tall extend from the sixth storey through the seventh.

Eight fluted masonry pilasters with rudimentary Doric capitals separate the window bays. The abbreviated architrave is a simple moulding. The frieze is terra cotta with alternating triglyphs and metopes with an incised stylized floral pattern. A modified egg and dart ovolo moulding beneath a moulded cornice and a solid parapet with cheneaux finish the facade.

All other facades are similar. The east and west facades have ten window bays. The central eight bays are similar to the nine of the main facade, but without the doorways. The end bays of the east and west facades are similar but without the fluted pilasters, and with a masonry division between the sixth and seventh storey windows. The end window bays take the place of the solid masonry bays of the main facade.

A ground level entrance is in the third bay of the first storey of the west facade. The basement storey of the east facade contains eight small rectangular windows and a ground level entrance door in the tenth bay.

The rear facade has 11 window bays. The central nine are similar to those of the main facade and the two end bays are similar to the end bays of the east and west facades. The last three bays in the first storey contain a recessed mailing platform.

The east and west light well facades have six pairs of tall double-hung windows on the second through fifth storeys, and single double-hung windows and narrow louvered openings in the eighth storey. North and south light well facades have three pairs of tall rectangular double-hung windows in the end bays of the three upper storeys, with single double-hung windows in the remainder of the five bays. The entire light well is faced in smooth white brick.

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INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

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DATE ENTERED	APR 30 1979

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 2

A ground level entrance on the northeast corner of the building's east facade leads directly into the basement and to a stairway and elevator up. A similar stairway and elevator rise from the northwest corner of the west facade. A third stairway leads up from an entrance on the south facade.

The basement originally contained a large swing room and restrooms for the male employees. Both rooms were visible from the enclosed lookout gallery. Storage for the post office, separate rooms and toilets for male and female custodial employees, an engineer's room, storage for court exhibits, boiler room and unassigned space filled the remainder of the basement.

The three bronze doors in the main facade lead from the landing into a foyer. The foyer is 18' 5" tall, 42' wide and 20' deep. The floor is of Brown Nebo Golden Travis marble with borders of Red Nebo Golden Travis. The base and wainscot are of Pint Kasota Fleuri marble with handsome bas-relief figures on the end walls memorializing Oregonians who fell in military service in World War I. The cornice and ceiling are of plaster. Opposite the entrance doors are three more doorways of bronze and glass. These lead into the lobby.

The lobby is about 125' wide and 25' deep with three 14' X 11' bays on the south wall. The south wall and the bays contain lockboxes and Postal Service windows. At the west end of the lobby is the small foyer of the ground level Broadway entrance. At the east end is a vestibule of the stairs leading down to the 6th Avenue entrance. The floor of the lobby is paved with 1½' X 1½' and 3½' X 1½' squares of Brown Nebo Golden Travis marble. Lobby walls are of Pink Kasota Fleuri marble inset with panels of ornamented cast bronze and glass in the lock box and service window areas. Four elaborate cast bronze writing desks are placed along the horizontal axis of the lobby. The original turquoise colored ceramic ash receptacles stand on the floor beside the desks. Signage is of cast metal letters on black glass. Rolling metal curtains shutter service windows in off hours. Wall clocks in the lobby are of bronze. Most of the ornament is stylized, symmetrical, repeated floral designs. The ceiling of the lobby is 18' 9" high. Square coffers, 3½' X 3½', with floral patterned borders and stylized birds, eagles, and a floral lattice pattern are all of cast plaster. The lobby has a warm, rosy hue. It has not been significantly altered since it was built.

Smooth bronze doors in alcoves at each end of the north wall of the lobby lead into what were postal savings and money order and stamp rooms. These had linoleum floors, wood base and trim, plaster walls and ceiling and marble window stools. These rooms were converted into a GSA conference room and an office for the railroad retirement board. The GSA conference room was remodeled in 1968. A suspended ceiling with fluorescent panels was installed.

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NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
RECEIVED	FEB 6 1979
DATE ENTERED	APR 30 1979

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 3

The large Postal Service workroom occupies most of the space behind the service screen. It has a wood block floor, 7' 1" high wainscoting and wood trim and window stools. The wood was originally stained and varnished fir, but most of it has now been painted. The walls, ceiling and window jambs are plaster. The lookout gallery with its silencing cork floor runs east and west across the center of the room. A large skylight opening from the workroom into the light well above was roofed over when air conditioning was installed in 1968. Air conditioning ducts and fluorescent lighting fixtures now occupy much of the room's ceiling space as well as some of the wall space.

A bronze-doored elevator at either end of the lobby and marble stairways nearby, as well as a stairway in the south end of the building, provide access to the second storey. Restrooms are located at the top of the stairs as is the stairway to the upper storeys. The restrooms have wainscots and partitions of French Pink Tennessee marble.

Offices about 20' deep surround the light well on the north, east, and west sides of the second storey. A corridor circles these and provides access to an outer ring of larger offices. Offices typically had marble window stools, Philippine mahogany wood trim, picture mould, doors and base. The floors were covered with mahogany colored linoleum. The doors had chipped glass windows and glazed transoms. The walls and ceilings were of plaster. Many of these characteristics have remained, but most offices have had fluorescent lights installed, often in suspended, acoustical tile ceilings. Floor covering is either vinyl asbestos tile or carpeting.

The second storey originally held the offices of the army, navy and marine corps recruiting; coast guard, hydrographic, public health, narcotics and secret service, and the post office inspectors. Government offices are still housed there. Fluorescent lights have been installed in the east corridor leading to the public health offices. Carpeting has been installed in all corridors. The floors were originally of terrazzo with pink Italian marble chips in colored cement and Persian Red chips in the borders. The base is still marble. Most of the plaster walls, cornice and ceiling remain as well as many of the incandescent lights.

The third through the fifth storeys are similar to the second storey. The third originally housed offices of agricultural and economic services, the farm board, Internal Revenue Service, and immigration offices. The fourth storey housed the Forest Service. The fifth storey was occupied by the U.S. Marshall, the District Attorney, the Office of Naturalization, the Federal Grand Jury and U.S. Commissioners. The public corridors of the third and fourth storeys remain much as they were originally, but the fifth storey corridors have lowered ceilings and fluorescent lights. The lowered ceilings accommodate the 1968 air conditioning.

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NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

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DATE ENTERED APR 30 1979

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 4

In the sixth storey are two District Courts, judges' chambers, a court library and offices of the Clerk of the Court. The two courtrooms occupy nearly 80' of the east and west sides of the building. Originally they had rubber tile floors. The base, trim, and clock face were of Brown Nebo Golden Travis marble. Main doors were of leather. The walls, trim, cornice, window reveals, railing, clerk's and judge's desk, platform and steps were of oak. The ornamented coffered ceiling and acoustical wall panels were of plaster. Ornate heating grilles and clock trim were of bronze. Few changes, and none of any real impact, have been made. Some carpeting has been added and the jury boxes extended in both rooms. The door leading to the judge's chambers is enclosed by Corinthian pilasters and a segmented pediment. The judge's desk is flanked by Corinthian columns of oak paired with similar pilasters. These support an entablature with modillions. This theme continues throughout the room. The ceiling coffers contain small plaster rosettes. The coffers are bordered by a plaster cable moulding. Glass and bronze lamps are suspended from the ceiling. Floor-to-ceiling windows open in the outside walls.

The judges' chambers originally had rubber tile floors; pine wainscoting, panelled walls, window reveals and cornice and a plaster ceiling. The library had rubber tile floors, oak and glass bookcases, oak wainscoting, ceiling mould, trim and window stools. The walls and ceiling were plaster. The muntins of the bookcases, the ladder and track were of bronze. These rooms have retained much of their original appearance.

Main corridors on this floor had rubber tile floors, Brown Nebo Golden Travis marble base, 4' Pink Kasota Fleuri marble wainscot and plaster ceiling, walls and cornice. The hallways have been carpeted, but are otherwise relatively unchanged.

The 24' 4" high sixth storey district courtrooms extend into the seventh storey, occupying all but a 6' wide corridor around the light well on the east and west sides of the building. The court of appeals on the north side originally had rubber tile floors, marble base, cherry wood walls, cornice, window reveals, railing, clerk's and judge's desks, platform and stairs. The 15' 6" ceiling was ornamented with cast plaster coffers. The entrance doors were leather covered. Double Roman Doric pilasters flanked the door to the judge's chamber behind the judge's desk. A carved wood eagle was mounted at the top of the broken pediment over the door. A moulded cornice with modillions finished the entablature just below the ceiling. Acoustical plaster wall panels and ornate bronze heating grilles and hanging lamps completed the scheme. The court of appeals courtroom remains much as it was originally. Fluorescent panels have been set into some of the coffers. The floors have been carpeted.

The seventh storey library is similar to the lower library.

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NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
RECEIVED	FEB 6 1979
DATE ENTERED	APR 30 1979

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 5

The south side of the seventh storey originally housed the jury rooms and offices. In 1957 a new courtroom was added and the jury room was moved to the eighth storey where a file room had been previously.

The entire exterior of the building and light well was cleaned and repointed in 1962. A prospectus for modernization of the building was submitted to the Senate and House Committee in 1977.

Stylistic definition of the Courthouse is difficult. It is typical of many General Services Administration properties in its eclecticism. In the general building massing and horizontal organization, it manifests the influence of the Renaissance Revival. Neo-Classical Revival influences may be seen in the plain, light colored wall surfaces, unadorned linteled windows, and the ranks of Doric pilasters on each facade. (See, for comparison, A. E. Doyle's U.S. National Bank in Portland.) The ornamentation of the entablature is a combination of Neo-Classical elements and Art Deco. The influence of the Art Deco is felt strongly in the building interior.

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

St. Louis

SPECIFIC DATES	Designed	1930	BUILDER/ARCHITECT	Builder: Murch Construction,
	Built	1933		Architect: Morris H. Whitehouse

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

On March 5, 1928 Congress allocated \$500,000 for site acquisition and commencement of a new U.S. Courthouse for Portland, Oregon. The total cost was estimated at \$1,500,000 with the provision that the existing Federal Courthouse at Morrison and Fifth should be sold at not less than \$1,750,000. (The Government placed the old courthouse on the surplus property list making it available for private acquisition. A 35 year long battle over the fate of the Pioneer Courthouse began then. In 1973 the General Services Administration finally restored and rededicated that landmark building.) On December 20, 1928 the cost estimate for the new courthouse was increased to \$1,950,000.

Block 183 of the City of Portland was the selected site. It was occupied by two large one storey garages, a three storey frame rooming house, five frame residences, three healthy elms and a sick maple tree.

In January, 1929, Maurice W. and Ina Seitz sold lots three and four of Block 183 to the U.S. Government for \$150,000. The Ladd Estate Company sold lots one and two for \$160,000. Fred and Sophia Elwert were paid \$160,000 after the condemnation of lots five and six in September 1929. Julius H. Meier, Grace Meier and Elizabeth Yeon, co-administrators and executor of the estate of John Yeon, were paid \$192,500 after the condemnation of lots seven and eight.

The Portland Oregonian reported on March 24, 1930 that the site survey for the new Federal Courthouse had been completed. Beasley and Stoehr, local surveyors and engineers, accomplished this "first step towards actual work on preparing plans for the building."

On June 5 the Oregonian's Washington, D.C. correspondent broke the news that Morris H. Whitehouse was to be chosen as architect for the new building. No recommendations had been made by local Senators, according to the Oregonian, "in view of the numerous, well-qualified candidates."

Morris H. Whitehouse was a 52 year-old native of Portland. He had been educated in Portland, then at MIT. In 1906 he received one of the early travelling scholarships for a year of study at the American Academy in Rome. He began working in Portland in 1908 and became one of the city's most

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

See continuation sheet number 10.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY one city block, 200' X 200'

UTM REFERENCES

A	1,0	5 2 5 0 2 0	5,0 4,0 1,5,0	B			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C				D			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Lots 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8, Block 183
City of Portland, Multnomah County, Oregon.

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
None			
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Kristine Bak, Operational Planning Staff

ORGANIZATION

General Services Administration, PBS

DATE

STREET & NUMBER

Regional Headquarters Building, GSA Center, 10PG

TELEPHONE

(206) 833-6500, Ext. 317

CITY OR TOWN

Auburn,

STATE

Washington 98002

12 CERTIFICATION OF NOMINATION

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

YES

NO

NONE

David G. Talbot
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

Michael F. Mulvey - GSA HPO

TITLE

Historic Preservation Officer, GSA, Region 10

DATE 2-2-79

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

Charles Adams
DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

DATE

9-30-79

ATTEST:

W. R. Luce

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

4/11/79

for KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 6

respected architects. Among Morris H. Whitehouse's outstanding works are the 1927 Temple Beth Israel ("One of the most satisfying designs of that quarter century. . . beautifully detailed. . ."),¹ the Sixth Church of Christ Scientists, the Columbia Gorge Hotel, the 1913 University Club, the Multnomah Amateur Athletic Club, the old Lincoln High School and a number of club houses for Oregon country clubs. The University Club was selected in 1919 by the Oregon AIA as one of the "most notable examples of architecture in Oregon."²

Morris H. Whitehouse was also a past-president of the Oregon Chapter of the AIA.

The Oregonian commented on his selection for the Federal Building commission:

"Word that he and his firm (had been chosen) met with widespread approval from other Portland architects. Even those who were also seeking the commission, for they admittedly regard Mr. Whitehouse as an outstanding member of their profession and his associates (A. Glenn Stanton and Walter E. Church) as highly capable architects."

The private architectural firm was to develop plans from directives formulated by agencies of the Federal government. J. H. DiSibour of Washington, D.C., was the consulting architect. J. A. Wetmore was Treasury Department Supervising Architect. He was then in the last few years of a career spanning over forty-five years in the Supervising Architect's office.

On February 4, 1931, Morris Whitehouse showed readers of the Oregonian a rendering of the approved design for the building and said the working drawings would be ready in five months. Five months later, however, the site was just beginning to be cleared. The Oregonian of June 2 described the activity in an article entitled "Landmarks Fall on Federal Building Site:"

"Wreckers are dismantling the old Whitehall Hotel, once one of the city's finer small hostelryes, and two one storey garage buildings. . . to make way for the new two million dollar Federal Building which Uncle Sam has promised to start erecting this summer. The Muckle Wrecking Company has the contract to clear the block. . ."

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 7

Murch Construction Company of St. Louis was finally selected in December as low bidder for the project. They offered to do the building entirely in sandstone for \$1,156,000; in sandstone to the seventh storey and then terra cotta for \$1,133,000; and for sandstone to the third storey then terra cotta for \$1,120,000.

Stebinger Brothers and Porter Construction, both of Portland, also bid on the project but their bids were higher than those of the St. Louis firm.

Senator Steiwar of Oregon asked that Oregon granite be substituted for sandstone but sandstone was retained. The Walker Cut Stone Company of Tacoma was selected to supply grey Wilkerson sandstone (The December 25, 1931 Oregonian described it as, "hard in texture and impervious to water.") providing work for 150 Tacoma quarry workers.

Ninety-two percent of the contract money available for labor and material went to Portland and Seattle area firms providing the region with an economic boost.

Excavation began in January 1932, with the projected construction completion date of May 1, 1933. The Oregonian was on the scene on January 19 as the elms on the site were toppled:

"The starting of activities brough a large crowd of onlookers--a familiar site in the days when the erection of business structures was the normal thing."

A wage dispute held up construction for two weeks in March but otherwise the job progressed smoothly.

On August 24, 1932 the Oregonian reported dramatically about the halls of the new building:

"The marble halls of the new two million dollar Federal Building will be inlaid with gold. The gold, according to P.A. Spice, construction engineer for the U.S. Treasury Department, is contained in the Mt. Nebo marble which has been adopted for the lower portions of the hallway walls and for the window stools. Traces of what Mr. Spice declares is the yellow metal may be seen in the specimens of the marble sent (to Washington, D.C.) from Salt Lake City, Utah, sixty miles northeast of Mt. Nebo. About \$60,000.000 worth of this marble has been ordered for the building, but the rich material is so tightly held by the hard stone that it cannot be extracted. . .Other marble for floors and trim will come from Tennessee and Arkansas. . ."

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 8

The Oregonian reporter waxed rapturous about the "fantastic figures," "rainbow colors," "crystals," and "rings" in the Mt. Nebo marble.

At 10:00 A.M. on August 23, 1932 the Federal Building cornerstone was laid by Morris Whitehouse and U.S. Attorney George Neuner. The Oregon Journal reported:

"Copies of five Portland daily newspapers occupied space in the metal box. . .in the cornerstone," and "A snapshot of Whitehouse, Stanton and Church swimming in Oswego Lake was included." (Also included were documents of historic interest related to the building.)

The new Federal Courtrooms were officially opened on September 25, 1933. Federal Judges John H. McNary and James Alger Fee presided. U.S. Marshall John L. Day was also present. According to the Oregon Journal Judge McNary said:

"I appreciate the consideration the members of the bar have shown to the court by their presence on this occasion. I assume you admire these rich and artistic surroundings and trust you will not expect the standard of judicial utterances to improve proportionately. . ."

The October 29, 1933 Oregonian carried photographs of the "Five Impressive Structures" housing "local and regional branches of more than a score of government services." The article continued:

"Looming immense and impressive, five federal buildings today stand as symbols of Portland's progress. Most handsome of all is the new Federal Court House."

Although the city around it has changed dramatically in the last forty-five years the Federal Court House remains impressive. Its monumental shape and handsome proportions, along with the obvious quality of construction and materials makes it a dominant form even among Portland's skyscrapers. It provides a focal point for the upper end of S.W. 6th and of S.W. Broadway.

The exterior, the courtrooms, the foyer, the Postal Service lobby, stairways and all of the hallways except those on the second and fifth floors have been maintained with care. Many of the offices and other rooms of the building have been altered but some retain much of their original character. Most of the interior environment is attractive and comfortable; some of it is dramatic and beautiful.

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DATE ENTERED APR 30 1979

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 9

The Federal Court House is also an important Portland landmark as a work of Morris H. Whitehouse. Portland has always been proud of its architecture and Mr. Whitehouse has earned a notable place in that tradition.

- 1 Marion Dean Ross, A Century of Architecture in Oregon, Women's Architectural League of the Oregon Chapter of the AIA, June 1959.
- 2 Space, Style and Structure, Building in Northwestern America, Thomas Vaughan, Editor, Virginia Guest Farriday, Associate Editor, Oregon Historical Society, Portland, 1974, Volume 1.

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 9 PAGE 10

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