

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Federal Building at Ruston, Louisiana is a small rectangular one story limestone structure, surmounted by a balustrade. Behind the balustrade is a hipped roof, rising to a flat deck and pierced by a series of circular dormer or bull's eye windows. The front or Vienna street facade has five large rectangular openings, each surrounded by a simple moulded architrave. The entrance, in the center opening, is reached by a flight of steps with stone buttresses. The building has a low basement story crowned by a strong, half round moulding and pierced by small, grilled, oblong windows, beneath each of the principal windows of the facade. The building is crowned by a well designed stone cornice with modillions. Modern aluminum block letters "Federal Building" have been inserted in the frieze and cast aluminum circular plaques have been applied to the wall on either side of the entrance door. The balustrade or parapet above the cornice is composed of turned balusters set between a series of paneled pedestals. The rear and the side facades are similar to the front, the sides having four bays and two dormers while the front and rear have each five bays and three dormers. The Mississippi Street facade has two small windows, one in the center of the second bay from the front and the other in the center panel between the bays, besides three windows like those in the front. The original casement windows with transoms, on all four facades have been removed and replaced by smaller metal windows, the space remaining above being filled with masonry. The rather recent additions have somewhat marred the original clean, simple lines of the building. The interior has been remodeled for office use and nothing remains of the original post office lobby.

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

When completed in 1909, the Ruston Post Office must have been the most impressive building in this small north central Louisiana town. It is still one of the architecturally outstanding buildings in the community in which it set a significant standard of design and construction. It is an excellent example of early twentieth century eclectic architecture in the then popular French style. Its cornerstone records that it was built during the administration of "Franklin Mac Veagh, Secretary of the Treasury; James Knox Taylor, Supervising Architect, MCMIX." The building was vacated about 1961 when the present post office was completed. In 1963 it was remodeled in its present form as a federal office building by McInnis Bros. Inc., Contractors, Minden, Louisiana.

MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Brochure - Ruston, Louisiana, 1884 - Diamond Jubilee 1959, Ruston, 1959. p. 33