

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY  
RECEIVED JUN 13 1978  
DATE ENTERED NOV 17 1978

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

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

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC

Old Post Office

AND/OR COMMON

Old Post Office

**2 LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER

Main St. and South Main St.

\_\_NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Oneonta

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

\_\_ VICINITY OF

32nd

STATE

New York

CODE

36

COUNTY

Otsego

CODE

077 ✓

**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 pending
- YES: UNRESTRICTED
- NO

**PRESENT USE**

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

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME City of Oneonta

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Oneonta

\_\_ VICINITY OF

STATE

New York

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Otsego County Clerk's Office

STREET & NUMBER

County Office Buildings

CITY, TOWN

Cooperstown

STATE

New York

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

NYS Survey of Historic Resources

DATE

1977

\_\_ FEDERAL  STATE \_\_ COUNTY \_\_ LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

Historic Preservation Field Services, NYS Office of Parks and

CITY, TOWN

Albany

STATE

New York

Rec.

# 7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" 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 Old Post Office is a massive stone building which serves as a focal point to Oneonta's central commercial section. Sited on the corner of South Main and Main Streets, its grandeur and dignity set the tone for the entire downtown area.

The original (1915) portion of the building is almost square, seven bays to each side. A giant portico extends from the central portion of the front facade (Photograph 1). In the 1950's, a low wing was added at the rear of the building to provide a loading dock. The structure is built of Indiana limestone, with Concord granite trim, except for the central portion of the rear and the modern wing, which are yellow brick. The main building rises two stories above a full basement, while the wing is only a single story. The end bays of each of the four corners of the building are set off by quoins. The Neoclassical design is appropriately symmetrical and balanced.

The basement is lit by a row of small windows at or just above ground level. A water table with string course marks the first-floor level, and serves as a base to classical orders on the front and sides. At the front of the building, five steps rise from the sidewalk to this level, where a small terrace is formed under the giant portico. Six massive Greek Corinthian columns support the portico, echoed by square Tuscan pilasters behind them on the front wall. Six Greek Corinthian pilasters divide each of the two identical sides. The tall first story is lit on the sides and on the end bays of the front and rear by a row of high, rectangular, double-hung sash windows, above which is another stringcourse and a row of shorter, rectangular, casement windows. In the center of the front facade, behind the portico, are four large, round-headed sash windows and a central door with a semicircular transom. Below each window is a rectangular panel carved in high relief to suggest a balustrade; over the five openings are rectangular tablets elaborately carved with an urn-and-foliage motif in low relief. A full entablature runs above this level over the columns, pilasters, and second-story windows. Topping that is a panelled parapet which hides a low attic.

The rear of the building (Photograph 2) originally echoed the front facade with five high, arched windows. However, the addition of the wing on the west side of the rear damaged this symmetry and partially blocked some of the windows.

The interior of the building corresponds with its Neoclassical exterior. Most striking is the long service counter (Photograph 3), which repeats in marble and wood the arches of the front and rear windows. Behind this lies the spacious sorting room, two stories high, with an enclosed surveillance bridge crossing the space at the second floor. Also of note are the marble staircase and wainscoting, the wrought-iron stair rail and much fine woodwork of classical inspiration.

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

SPECIFIC DATES            1915                                    BUILDER/ARCHITECT    Oscar Wenderoth

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The plans for a new post office in Oneonta were announced in 1913, with the anticipatory claim that: "It will vie with the finest in any city of its size in the U.S."<sup>1</sup> It has served as a major local landmark since it was completed in 1915, its mass and dignity dominating the downtown streetscape.

Oneonta achieved importance in the late nineteenth century because of its central location on the Albany-Binghamton transportation routes. The Albany and Susquehanna Railroad was completed in 1869, and with the siting of extensive railway shops there in 1870, Oneonta's position as a major railroad center was established. The city became, and has remained, the commercial and transportation hub of the Upper Susquehanna Valley.

The public buildings of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries reflect the local prosperity of the period in their solidity and grandeur. In architectural character, the Old Post Office is similar to the older portion of the Wilber Bank, on the opposite corner, and the three-story Oneonta Hotel, across Main Street and one block south. These three buildings and the Municipal Building, an elaborate Beaux-Arts structure one-half block south, are the major remnants of a Main Street which at one time had great architectural character. Intervening structures once displayed handsome late nineteenth-century commercial facades, but in the era of Urban Renewal most of these were demolished or remodeled beyond recognition. At one time, the Post Office was slated for demolition by Urban Renewal, but such public outcry arose that the city is now considering reuse of the building for its municipal offices and jail facilities.

The Old Post Office is the least changed of Oneonta's older public buildings and the most imposing. Throughout the entire county, there is no other structure of its style and period to equal it in scale and quality. Thus, the Old Post Office is of regional architectural significance, as well as being a local landmark.

<sup>1</sup>Oneonta Herald. May 29, 1913.

# 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Oneonta Herald, Oneonta, NY.

## 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY .45

UTM REFERENCES

A 18 195020 4700060  
ZONE EASTING NORTHING

B           
ZONE EASTING NORTHING

C         

D         

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The property is an irregular quadri-lateral on the east corner of the junction of Main and South Main Streets. It is lot number 22 of block 1 on Tax map section 300.23, and is bounded on the northwest by Main Street, the northeast by the Presbyterian Church, the southeast by Anthony Chicorelli, and the southwest by South Main Street.

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

## 11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Lucy A. Breyer

ORGANIZATION

NYS Office of Parks and Rec., Div. for Historic Preservation

DATE

STREET & NUMBER

Agency Bldg. #1, Empire State Plaza

TELEPHONE

(518)474-0479

CITY OR TOWN

Albany

STATE

New York

## 12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL   

STATE   

LOCAL XX

As the designated State Historic Preservation 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.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

TITLE Dep. Commissioner for Historic Preservation

DATE

6/1/78

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

Chuck Offenberg  
DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

DATE

11-17-78

ATTEST: Lynna A. Debe  
KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

Nov. 17, 1978

Property Old Post Office  
State N.Y. Working Number 6.13.78.3352

78501895

TECHNICAL  
Photos 3  
Maps 1

CONTROL  
OK pl  
6.14.78

The old Postoffice is significant as a public building which reflects Ontario's prosperity of the late 19th + early 20th centuries. The nomination also states that throughout the entire county, there is no other structure of this building's style + period to equal it in scale + quality.

HISTORIAN  
accept  
Frost  
11/17/78

Statement of significance could be stronger.

ARCHITECTURAL HISTORIAN  
accept  
Brigham  
8.23.78

- Old P.O. is a monumental, classically designed structure dating from 1915 - reflective of 2nd Renaissance Revival.

ARCHEOLOGIST

OTHER

HAER

Inventory \_\_\_\_\_  
Review \_\_\_\_\_

Discussion of archil. significance could be fuller, but concur with Brigham + Frost review.

REVIEW UNIT CHIEF

Accept  
L. Deese  
11/17/78

BRANCH CHIEF

KEEPER

[Signature]  
11/17/78

National Register Write-up \_\_\_\_\_  
Federal Register Entry 2-6-79

Send-back \_\_\_\_\_  
Re-submit \_\_\_\_\_

Entered NOV 17 1978

INT:2106-74



NOV 17 1978

Old Oneonta Post Office  
Oneonta, Otsego County

# 1

Photo Credit: R. R. Bingham 1977  
Neg. Filed: Community Development  
Agency, Oneonta

View: from the west JUN 13 1978



NOV 17 1978

Old Oneonta Post Office  
Oneonta, Otsego County

# 2

Photo Credit: R. R. Bingham 1977  
Neg. Filed: Community Development  
Agency, Oneonta

View: from east

JUN 13 1978



NOV 17 1978

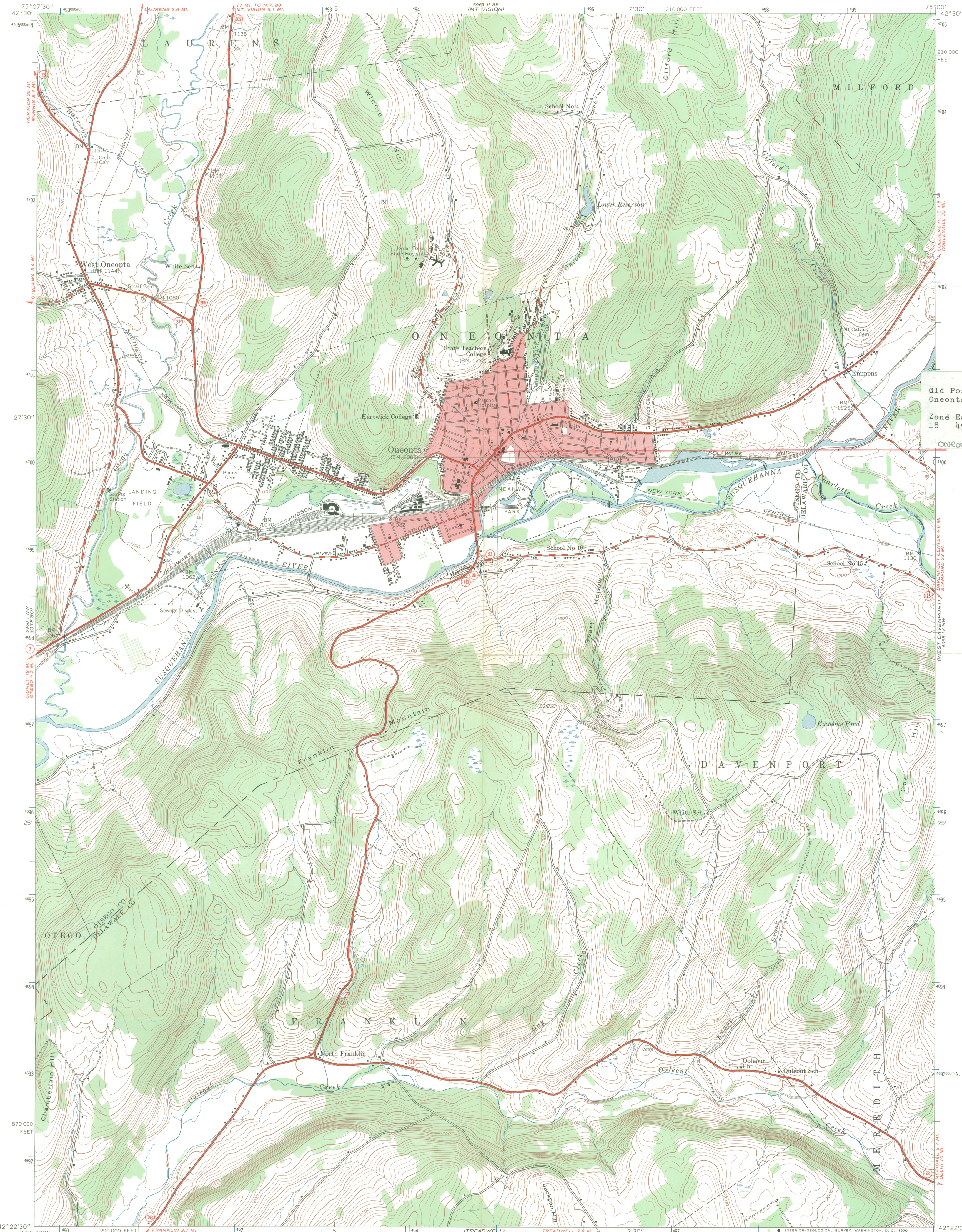
Old Oneonta Post Office  
Oneonta, Otsego County

#3

Photo Credit: R. R. Bingham 1977  
Neg. Filed: Community Development  
Agency, Oneonta

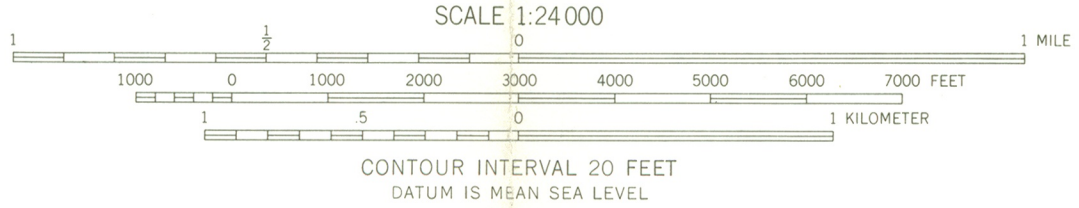
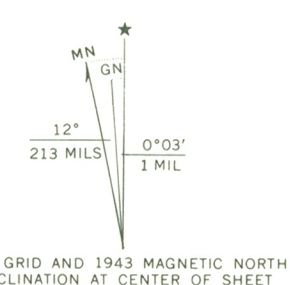
JUN 13 1978

View: Interior, main lobby

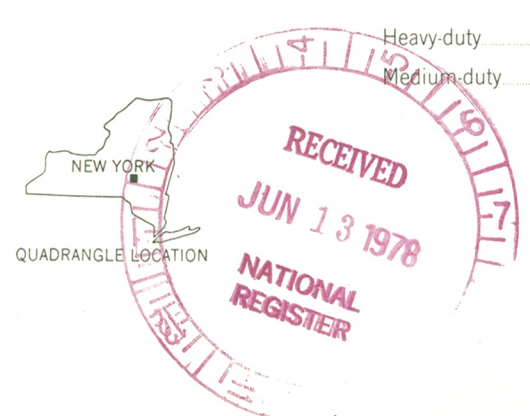


Old Post Office  
Oneonta, Otsego County, NY  
Zone Easting 495020    Northing 4700060  
oneonta quadrangle

Mapped by the Army Map Service  
Published for civil use by the Geological Survey  
Control by USC&GS and TVA  
Topography from aerial photographs by photogrammetric methods  
Aerial photographs taken 1942. Field check 1943  
Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum  
10,000-foot grid based on New York coordinate system, east zone  
1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks,  
zone 18, shown in blue  
Red tint indicates areas in which only  
landmark buildings are shown



THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS  
FOR SALE BY U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, WASHINGTON, D. C. 20242  
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST



ROAD CLASSIFICATION  
Heavy duty ——— Light duty ———  
Medium duty ——— Unimproved dirt - - - - -  
○ State Route

ONEONTA, N. Y.  
NE/4 ONEONTA 15' QUADRANGLE  
N4222.5—W7500.7.5

1943  
AMS 5968 1 NE - SERIES V821

NOV 17 1978

ENTRIES IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

STATE NEW YORK

Date Entered NOV 17 1978

Name

Location

Old Post Office

Oneonta  
Otsego County

Also Notified

Honorable Daniel P. Moynihan  
Honorable Jacob K. Javits  
Honorable James M. Hanley

State Historic Preservation Officer  
Mr. Orin Lehman  
Commissioner  
Parks and Recreation  
Agency Building #1  
Empire State Plaza  
Albany, New York 12238

# NATIONAL REGISTER DATA SHEET

① NAME as it appears on federal register: Old Post Office  
 ② OTHER NAMES:  
 ③ date of entry: NOV 17 1978  
 ④ county code: 77

⑤ LOCATION street & number: Main St. city / town: Oneonta vicinity of: state: NY county: Otsego  
 ⑥ NPS REGION: NA

⑦ OWNER  PRIVATE  STATE  MUNICIPAL  COUNTY  MULTIPLE  FEDERAL (agency name)  
 ⑧ ADMINISTRATOR:

⑨ EXISTING SURVEYS  HABS  HAER  NHL ⑩ FUNDED?  YES  NO ⑪ CONGRESS. DISTRICT 32nd ⑫ SOURCE of NOMINATION  STATE  FEDERAL  
 if state who prepared form?

⑬ WITHIN NATIONAL REGISTER HISTORIC DISTRICT?  YES, NAME:  NO ⑭ WITHIN NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK?  YES, NAME:  NO ⑮ ACREAGE:  LOCAL  PRIVATE ORGANIZATION

⑯ CONDITION  deteriorated  altered  original site  
 excellent  ruins  unaltered  moved  
 good  unexposed  reconstructed  unknown  
 fair  unexcavated  excavated  
 ⑰ features: INTERIOR  SUBSTANTIALLY INTACT-1  SUBSTANTIALLY INTACT-2  SUBSTANTIALLY INTACT-3  
 NOT INTACT-0  NOT INTACT-0  NOT INTACT-0  
 UNKNOWN-4  UNKNOWN-5  UNKNOWN-6  
 NOT APPLICABLE-7  NOT APPLICABLE-8  NOT APPLICABLE-9  
 EXTERIOR ENVIRONS

⑱ ACCESS  YES-Restricted  YES-Unrestricted  No Access  Unknown ⑲ ADAPTIVE USE  YES  NO ⑳ SAVED?  YES ㉑ IS PROPERTY A HISTORIC DISTRICT?  yes  no

㉒ AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE:  ENGINEERING-11  LANDSCAPE ARCH.-15  POLITICS / GOVT.-21  RECREATION-28  
 ARCHEOLOGY-prehistoric-2  COMMERCE-6  ENTERTAINMENT-26  LAW-16  RELIGION-22  SETTLEMENT-29  
 ARCHEOLOGY-historic-1  COMMUNICATIONS-7  EXPLORATION-12  LITERATURE-17  SCIENCE-23  URBAN PLANNING-31  
 AGRICULTURE-3  CONSERVATION-8  HEALTH-27  MILITARY-18  SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN-24  OTHER (SPECIFY)  
 ARCHITECTURE-4  ECONOMICS-9  INDUSTRY-13  MUSIC-19  SOCIAL / CULTURAL-30  
 ART-5  EDUCATION-10  INVENTION-14  PHILOSOPHY-20  TRANSPORTATION-25  
 ㉓ CLAIMS: explain  
 'first'   
 'oldest'   
 'only'

㉔ functions WHEN HISTORICALLY SIGNIFICANT: CURRENTLY:  
 ㉕ dates of initial construction: major alterations: historic events:  
 ㉖ ETHNIC GROUP ASSOCIATION

㉗ architectural style(s): ㉘ architect: ㉙ master builder: ㉚ engineer:

㉛ landscape architect / garden designer: ㉜ interior decorator: ㉝ artist: ㉞ artisan: ㉟ builder/contractor:

㊱ NAMES give role & date  
 PERSONAL:  
 EVENTS:  
 INSTITUTIONAL:

㊲ NATIONAL REGISTER WRITE-UP