DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

FOR NPS USE ONLY
RECEIVED
DATE ENTERED

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

1 NAME

HISTORIC: Carnegie Library

AND/OR COMMON:

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER: Northwest corner, 17th and Broadway — __NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN: Parsons — __ VICINITY OF — CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT: No. 5, Joe Skubitz

STATE: Kansas — CODE 20 — COUNTY: Labette — CODE 099

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE	
__DISTRICT	X PUBLIC	X OCCUPIED	__AGRICULTURE	__MUSEUM
X BUILDING(S)	__PRIVATE	__UNOCCUPIED	__COMMERCIAL	__PARK
__STRUCTURE	__BOTH	__WORK IN PROGRESS	X EDUCATIONAL	__PRIVATE RESIDENCE
__SITE	**PUBLIC ACQUISITION**	**ACCESSIBLE**	__ENTERTAINMENT	__RELIGIOUS
__OBJECT	__IN PROCESS	X YES: RESTRICTED	__GOVERNMENT	__SCIENTIFIC
	__BEING CONSIDERED	__YES: UNRESTRICTED	__INDUSTRIAL	__TRANSPORTATION
		__NO	__MILITARY	__OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME: Urban Renewal Agency

STREET & NUMBER: 45-H Parsons Plaza

CITY, TOWN: Parsons — __ VICINITY OF — STATE: Kansas 67357

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.: Register of Deeds

STREET & NUMBER: Labette County Courthouse

CITY, TOWN: Oswego — STATE: Kansas 67356

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE: Historic Sites Survey

DATE: August 8, 1970 — __FEDERAL X STATE __COUNTY __LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS: Kansas State Historical Society

CITY, TOWN: Topeka — STATE: Kansas 66612

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
__EXCELLENT	__DETERIORATED	__UNALTERED	X__ORIGINAL SITE
X GOOD	__RUINS	X ALTERED	__MOVED DATE_____
__FAIR	__UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Carnegie Library in Parsons, a one story structure with a basement, is built of Carthage stone cut in the cyclopean style and backed with concrete The building, which faces east, measures 84 feet long by 50 feet wide. It is situated in an area of institutional and government buildings. To the north is the post office, across 17th street to the east is the city hall, and across Broadway to the south is a Presbyterian church. West of the building is a parking lot.

The style seems to be primarily derived from Beaux-Arts Classicism which has been tempered somewhat to accommodate both the local materials and craftsmen. The building is symmetrical and has a rather elaborate entrance that employs a Serliana motif with Ionic columns as the main focal point on the east facade. The Serliana motif frames another arch with dressed voussoirs and a pronounced keystone. The lintel over the double door is supported on brackets. The entranceway projects forward slightly from the building and is defined by pilasters on either side. Pronounced consoles have been substituted for capitals on the pilasters. A string course of dressed stone divides the building horizontally, beginning above the lintels of the basement floor windows. There are large triple windows centered on either side of the door. These windows on the first floor have dressed stone sills supported by consoles and run up to the entablature. The windows are aligned with those in the basement. The windows are wood framed and many have latticed panes. The corners of the building are beveled and have a centered window. The entablature of the building has an undecorated frieze and the cornice is supported by consoles. There is a limestone balustrade above the cornice line. The name "Carnegie Library" has been carved in the balustrade above the main entranceway. The roof is hipped and a melon dome rises at the crossing. The roof was originally red tile but it was later replaced with asphalt shingles.

There is a secondary entrance centered on the south facade in a wing which projects from the building. It has a double door with a fanlight encircled by accentuated voussoirs and a keystone. The cornice line of this projection is lower than that of the main building but is similarly detailed. Wide stone pilasters accent the corners of the wing. To either side of this wing are single windows.

The north facade has a configuration similar to that on the south, but a triple window on both the basement and first story has been substituted for the doorway.

The west facade has been divided into three bays by two stone chimneys. The center bay has two separate windows with counterparts in the basement, while the bays to either side have triple windows on both floors. The basement window openings on the northern side and beveled corner were boarded up for repairs to the windows at the time the accompanying photographs were taken.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
__PREHISTORIC	__ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	__COMMUNITY PLANNING	__LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	__RELIGION
__1400-1499	__ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	__CONSERVATION	__LAW	__SCIENCE
__1500-1599	__AGRICULTURE	__ECONOMICS	__LITERATURE	__SCULPTURE
__1600-1699	X ARCHITECTURE	X EDUCATION	__MILITARY	__SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
__1700-1799	__ART	__ENGINEERING	__MUSIC	__THEATER
__1800-1899	__COMMERCE	__EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	__PHILOSOPHY	__TRANSPORTATION
X 1900-	__COMMUNICATIONS	__INDUSTRY	__POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	__OTHER (SPECIFY)
		__INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES 1909 BUILDER/ARCHITECT F. E. Parker

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Carnegie Library in Parsons was built in 1908-1909 from plans prepared by Kansas City architect F. E. Parker.

Interest of Parsons citizens in a city library dated back to the formation of a library association in 1877. A large business building was erected by the association, mainly with borrowed money. Part of it housed a library. But when hard times came and foreclosure of the mortgage was imminent, the books were sold in an effort to raise funds. But it was to no avail; the mortgage was foreclosed and the books were scattered.

At the turn of the century Parsons had no library. Local efforts to organize one were renewed in 1904 and for three years a small library was supported by donations and membership fees. Gradually public interest in having a city operated library and in seeking Carnegie funds intensified. The question of a city library was put to the voters on April 5, 1907, and approved. After the election the mayor appointed a library board. On Nov. 8, 1907, the existing private library --books, furniture and equipment--was presented to the city.

The library board pursued the possibility of a Carnegie grant and eventually $22,500 was promised if certain conditions were met by the city: a building site and assurances of continuing financial support. After considerable local debate, a suitable site was located at the corner of Broadway and 17th streets, a 90 day option was secured, and $6500 for its purchase was raised by popular subscription.

In March, 1908, the library board hired architect F. E. Parker of Kansas City to prepare the plans and specifications. On April 8, 1908, the city council approved a resolution to levy a tax of at least $2,250 a year to support the library. Parker's plans were sent to Carnegie and were approved in a letter of June 17, 1908. Bids were advertised and on July 13 the contract was let to William Kee of Parsons.

Construction of the library generally proceded on schedule except for a delay in October because of inclement weather and a delay in the stone shipment. By the end of December, 1908, the stone work was done and workmen were putting on the tiled roof. The library was officially opened on May 18, 1909, with an 8 p. m. reception. The itemized construction costs for the building totaled $22,484.48.

7.

The interior is finished with oak and Canadian walnut. The lower story was divided into an assembly room with a seating capacity of 300, a board room with an adjoining fireproof safety vault, a work room, a fuel room and toilets. The main floor is taken up by the library which is divided by book stacks into a reference room, stock room, librarian's office and adult and children's reading rooms.

The library building has been carefully maintained and its exterior appearance with the exception of the roof and a few window air conditioning units is very similar to the original.

8.

The library building has continued to serve the citizens of Parsons, but it is now inadequate to meet present library needs. In a 1975 election voters approved construction of a new facility. The Carnegie Library was at first scheduled for demolition, but enough interest was generated to retain the building, and the Urban Renewal Agency and various community groups are seeking a new public use so it can continue to serve the community.

The Carnegie Library is a significant building in Parsons and worthy of National Register listing because of the fine quality of its workmanship, pleasing design and long service to the community.

9.

"Library, Where?" Parsons Daily Sun , Dec. 20, 1907.

"Opening Reception of Carnegie Building for Parsons Free Public Library" (Parsons, Kan. 1909), brochure distributed at the reception on May 18, 1909.

Parsons Daily Sun, Feb. 9, 15, 16, Mar. 23, 27, Sept. 28, Dec. 12, 21, 30, 31, 1907; Jan. 3, Feb. 8, Apr. 14, 1908; Sept. 24, Oct. 8, Dec. 26, 1975.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

"Carnegie Library Building Now Nearing Completion," Parsons Daily Sun, Dec. 26, 1
"Carnegie Will Build," Parsons Daily Sun, Nov. 19, 1907.
Connelley, William E., A Standard History of Kansas and Kansans, (Chicago, American Historical Society, Inc., 1928) pp. 1606, 1607.
Crispino, Mrs. Tommie J., editor, The Centennial Story of Parsons, Kansas (Interstate Book Manufacturers, Inc., 1971), pp. 44, 70.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY one

UTM REFERENCES

	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
A	14	299730	4134740
B			
C			
D			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE Richard Pankratz, Director, Historic Sites Survey
Cornelia Wyma, Architectural Historian

ORGANIZATION Kansas State Historical Society

DATE January 30, 1976

STREET & NUMBER 120 West 10th Street

TELEPHONE 913-296-3251

CITY OR TOWN Topeka

STATE Kansas 66612

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL ___ STATE ___ LOCAL X

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 Kyle H. Miller

TITLE Executive Director, Kansas State Historical Society

DATE February 5, 1976

FOR NPS USE ONLY

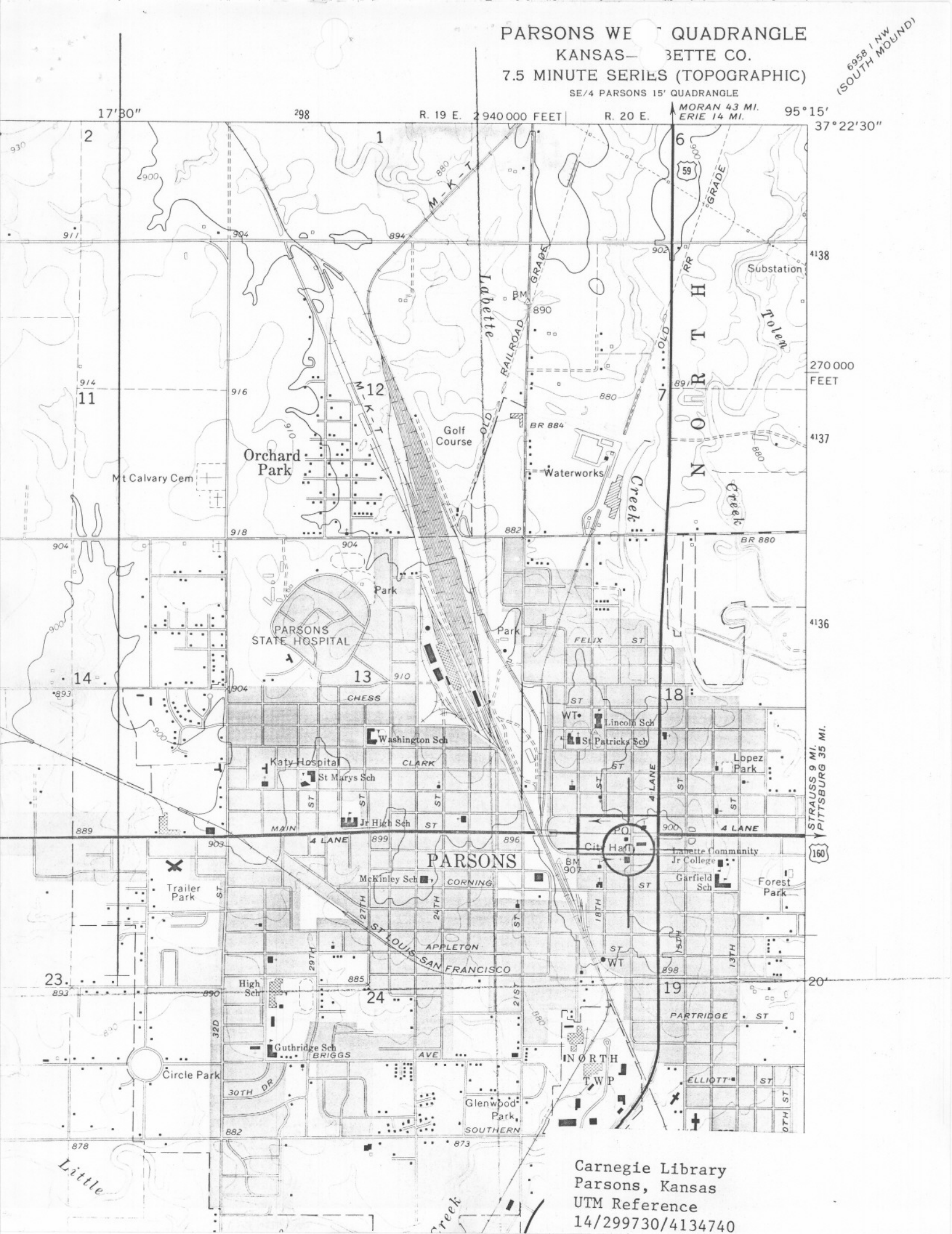
I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST: DATE

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER



Carnegie Library
Parsons, Kansas
UTM Reference
14/299730/4134740