

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only
received AUG 16 1985
date entered SEP 12 1985

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic Fairbury Public (Carnegie) Library (NeHBS #JF04-22)

and/or common NA

2. Location

street & number 601 7th Street NA not for publication

city, town Fairbury NA vicinity of

state Nebraska code 031 county Jefferson code 095

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture <input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial <input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> educational <input type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment <input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NA in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government <input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial <input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military <input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name City of Fairbury

street & number NA

city, town Fairbury NA vicinity of state Nebraska

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Jefferson County Courthouse, Register of Deeds

street & number NA

city, town Fairbury state Nebraska

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Nebraska Historic Buildings Survey has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date On-going federal state county local

depository for survey records Nebraska State Historical Society

city, town Lincoln state Nebraska

7. Description

Condition
 excellent deteriorated unaltered original site
 good ruins altered moved date NA
 fair unexposed

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Fairbury Public (Carnegie) Library is located in Fairbury (1983 population: 4,885), the county seat of Jefferson County. The one-story-over-raised basement, rectangularly shaped brick structure has a hipped roof and a prominent portico. The Neo-Classical Revival building, constructed in 1908-1909, was designed by the firm of Tyler and Son of Lincoln. Structural and historical integrity has been preserved.

The Fairbury Public (Carnegie) Library is a one story brick Neo-Classical Revival building. The structure is rectangular-shaped in plan and has a raised basement and hipped roof. The south (front) facade shows a one story portico and is supported by columns grouped in three. "Public Library" is inscribed on the frieze and the typanum displays an elaborate panel of bas relief work depicting cherubs holding a ring which encircles a shield. The raised entry, which shows double doors with transom above, is framed with a projecting door surround. Fenestration consists of rectangular-shaped window openings with stone lintels.

The interior has remained intact and features a decorative tin ceiling, square columns, round arched openings and natural woodwork. The foyer features a set of inner doors with beveled and stained glass.

The Fairbury Public Library was built in 1908-1909 with a grant from Andrew Carnegie. The building was designed by the firm of Tyler and Son of Lincoln.

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates 1907-09 ~~Builder/Architect~~ James Tyler

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Fairbury Public (Carnegie) Library is significant in two ways. First, it is an excellent example of the Neo-Classical Revival style, and was designed by the Lincoln architectural firm Tyler and Son. The style began in the late nineteenth century, and was prominently used in the designs of civic buildings. The second point of significance lies in the library's associations with Andrew Carnegie, often called the "Patron Saint" of libraries, who was responsible for funding the construction of libraries throughout the United States. The Fairbury Woman's Club took the initial steps toward the founding of the town's present library, which became an important part of Fairbury's educational growth.

The Fairbury Public (Carnegie) Library exemplifies the Neo-Classical Revival style of architecture, which was popular in the United States in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. "Building types on which the style was commonly employed are: governmental buildings, libraries, museums, railway terminals, banks, college buildings, monuments and memorials." The Neo-Classical Revival style is characterized by monumentality, strict use of the orders and sparing application of ornament upon buildings of stone or brick construction (Harris, 1977, p. 372). Features exhibited in Fairbury's Library include formalism in plan, symmetrical lines, rectangular window openings and a prominent portico.

The library was designed by architect James Tyler, who was born in England in September 1843, and emigrated to the United States with his new family in 1869. After designing buildings in St. Louis and Chicago, Tyler moved to Lincoln in 1874. After working on his own, he linked up with his son James Jr. to form Tyler and Son in 1899. Examples of their work include three other Carnegie Libraries, located in Grand Island (see NRHP May 2, 1975), Havelock (now a Lincoln suburb) (non-extant) and Seward; the Johnston-Muff House in Crete (see NRHP September 19, 1977), the William Tyler House in Lincoln (see NRHP April 6, 1978), and the Episcopal Church in Beatrice.

The first steps toward the formation of Fairbury's Carnegie Library began in November 1899 by the Fairbury Woman's Club. The organization donated \$100 and 100 books to a future permanent library. In January, 1900 a library board was founded, and this group raised \$1,100 for a new library. During the first meeting of the Commercial Club on April 24, 1907, a resolution was adopted instructing the secretary to correspond with Andrew Carnegie in an attempt to secure \$12,500 for a public library building. Carnegie agreed, providing a site for the building was furnished. The Red Ribbon Club and Library Association donated \$2500 to purchase the site; the Fairbury City

9. Major Bibliographical References

See continuation sheet

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property less than 1 acre

Quadrangle name Fairbury, Nebr.

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References

A

1	4	6	5	5	2	4	0	4	4	4	4	5	1	0
Zone				Easting				Northing						

B

Zone				Easting				Northing						

C

Zone				Easting				Northing						

D

Zone				Easting				Northing						

E

Zone				Easting				Northing						

F

Zone				Easting				Northing						

G

Zone				Easting				Northing						

H

Zone				Easting				Northing						

Verbal boundary description and justification

The property is described as the south 90 feet of lots 7 and 8, block 2, Original Town, in Fairbury, Jefferson County, Nebraska, including all historical associated real estate.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state NA code county code

state NA code county code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Mark Dollase, student intern

organization Nebraska State Historical Society

date April 1985

street & number P.O. Box 82554

telephone 402/471-4767

city or town Lincoln

state Nebraska

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

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 Director, Nebraska State Historical Society

date 8-9-85

For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

Entered in the National Register

date 9/12/85

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

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

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

For NPS use only

received

date entered

Continuation sheet

Significance

Item number 8

Page 2

Council passed a resolution agreeing to provide funds for the library support. Groundbreaking ceremonies took place on October 5, 1908, and construction was completed October 30, 1909. The building was opened to the public December 10, 1909.

Andrew Carnegie, a great philanthropist, offered his famous grants for the construction of library buildings. These grants (1898-1921) played a significant role in library history, providing communities with the opportunity to establish their own public libraries. Mr. Carnegie funded the construction of 1,679 libraries in the United States, their value totaling over 40 million dollars (Chatfield, Penelope, "North Bend Carnegie Library." National Register Nomination form). Carnegie's assistance to cities for library buildings included stipulations stating that the community must authorize continuing tax funds for library operation, and that the community be required to own the site and approve an annual tax levy equal to a certain percent of the Carnegie gift for library support. After 1908, library design plans were required to be submitted to Carnegie for approval. This was to prevent non-professional plans, and encourage simplicity with decorative elements being kept to a minimum. The Fairbury Public Library follows the recommendations put forth by the corporation in library design; that is, a one-story with a raised basement and brick rectangular structure.

¹ Panek, R. T. American Architectural Styles 1600-1940. Architectural Styles, Dover, MA., 1976.

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

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

For NPS use only

received

date entered

Continuation sheet

Bibliography

Item number

9

Page

2

- Andreas, A. T. History of Nebraska "James Tyler," Western Historical Publishing Co., Chicago 1882.
- Bobinski, George S. Carnegie Libraries: Their History and Impact on American Public Library Development, American Library Association, Chicago, 1969.
- Chatfield, Penelope. National Register of Historic Places Inventory - Nomination Form. "North Bend Carnegie Library," Dodge County, Nebraska. Nebraska State Historical Society, Lincoln, February 1981.
- Harris, Cyril M. Illustrated Dictionary of Historic Architecture. Dover Publications Inc., New York, 1977.
- Nesbit, Marguerite, "Nebraska and Carnegie Libraries." Ms. and Scrapbook, 1930. Filed at the Nebraska State Historical Society, Lincoln, NE.
- Panek, R. T. American Architectural Styles 1600-1940. Architectural Styles, Dover, MA., 1976.