

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY	<b>DATA SHEET</b>
RECEIVED	MAY 24 1978
DATE ENTERED	JUL 7 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

Somerset City School and Carnegie Library

AND/OR COMMON

Same

**2 LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER

300 ~~Block~~ College Street

— NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Somerset

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

— VICINITY OF

05

STATE

Kentucky

CODE

021

COUNTY

Pulaski

CODE

199 ✓

**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

— COMMERCIAL

EDUCATIONAL

— ENTERTAINMENT

— GOVERNMENT

— INDUSTRIAL

— MILITARY

— MUSEUM

— PARK

— PRIVATE RESIDENCE

— RELIGIOUS

— SCIENTIFIC

— TRANSPORTATION

OTHER: Sections

Vacant

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

City of Somerset

STREET & NUMBER

City Hall

CITY, TOWN

Somerset

— VICINITY OF

STATE

Kentucky

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE,

REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Pulaski County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

Fountain Square

CITY, TOWN

Somerset

STATE

Kentucky

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

Survey of Historic Sites in Kentucky (1977)

DATE

Supplement

— FEDERAL  STATE — COUNTY — LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR

SURVEY RECORDS

Kentucky Heritage Commission

CITY, TOWN

Frankfort

STATE

Kentucky

# 7 DESCRIPTION

## CONDITION

EXCELLENT  
 GOOD  
 FAIR

DETERIORATED  
 RUINS  
 UNEXPOSED

## CHECK ONE

UNALTERED  
 ALTERED

## CHECK ONE

ORIGINAL SITE  
 MOVED      DATE \_\_\_\_\_

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### DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Somerset School and Carnegie Library are located in the 300 block of College Street in Somerset, the seat of government for Pulaski County. Facing southwest, the complex is situated three blocks northeast of Main Street and the commercial downtown area. On the west side of College Street, facing the school and library, are residences, and one block to the south is the city hall. A modern elementary school has been built on the property immediately northeast of the school and library, and a brick, single-story structure just to the north of the complex is also part of this new school.

The complex consists of four sections (see photo 1) with the original one being the central block constructed in 1902-03 for the combined use of the elementary and high school. The Carnegie Library was added to the north in 1906, and ca. 1912, a high school wing was added to the south of the original block. In the 1930s, the final section was appended to the extreme southern end of the complex.

Constructed of brick with stone trim, the 1902-03 block exemplifies the Victorian Romanesque style, featuring a square, central tower and adjoining gabled sections (see photo 2). Set within the high stone foundation at the base of the tower, the main entrance is surmounted by a round arch consisting of rows of brick headers. Two pairs of single-pane sash windows with stone sills and heads pierce the second and third levels of the tower. Above the upper windows are two round, blind arches. Polygonal brick buttresses with stone bands strengthen the corners of the upper portion of the tower which is pierced by wide, round arch openings also composed of brick headers. A simple cornice with dentils, surmounted by a pyramidal roof with finial, completes the tower.

Slightly recessed from the tower are the adjoining sections which have gabled parapets. The gable peaks are pierced by small, round arch windows and adorned with stone stringcourses. The main portion of the facade of each section curves outward and in this convex projection are two rows of single-pane, sash windows. Above and below the windows are strips of copper facing. The entire projection is capped by a wide brick arch with stone trim. The same treatment is found on the sides and rear of this block.

Built in the Classic Revival style by G. W. Ashley who is thought to have been a local architect, the Carnegie Library (see photo 3) adjoins the original block on the north. This brick building, resting on a stone foundation, is five bays wide and two stories tall with a high basement. The central bay projects slightly from the facade. Paired Ionic columns supporting a denticulated entablature characterize the portico. A shouldered architrave surrounds the double, glass-paneled doors and rectangular transom. Single-pane, sash windows pierce the facade. A wooden cornice with dentil work surrounds the structure and above this is a brick parapet. Ca. 1934, a one-story, brick reading room was added to the rear of the library (see photo 4). This wing carefully retains the overall architectural character of the original library building.

(continued)

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

SPECIFIC DATES 1902-03; 1906; ca. 1912, 1930s BUILDER/ARCHITECT G. W. Ashley (Carnegie Library)

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The complex composing the Somerset School and Carnegie Library represents the oldest surviving public institutional building in Somerset. In addition, the Somerset Carnegie Library, believed to be the first connected with a public school anywhere in the United States, was also the first library to serve the community. The school carries social significance as well in serving as the meeting place, for several years, of the local Chautauqua society. Several prominent persons were educated at the school who have since gained state, national, and even international renown. Architecturally, the Somerset School and Carnegie Library complex is significant as it denotes both a noteworthy example of the Victorian Romanesque collegiate building tradition and also represents Somerset's involvement in the Classic Revival which characterized American public building in the first quarter of the twentieth century. Given the fact that Somerset was, at the turn of the century and remains a small town, this substantial grouping of public structures assumes a prominent position in the architectural heritage of the community.

The city school system of Somerset, Kentucky, became one of the early leaders in public education in Kentucky. Created as one of the "graded districts" by an act of the General Assembly in 1888, the following year the new school system erected a new building on the site of the "Masonic College Property."<sup>1</sup> Only 100 high schools in the state were organized under this law.<sup>2</sup> The building burned in 1902, to be replaced by the present structure.

Although Kentucky began to make greater strides in public education during the twentieth century as the result of new school support statutes enacted by the General Assembly in 1908 and 1914,<sup>3</sup> Somerset was ahead of these laws and by 1913 its high school was accredited as Class A, which placed it among the few public high schools that were evaluated by the State College Association.<sup>4</sup>

According to the minutes of various school board meetings held during 1904-1907, the Trustees of the Somerset Public Graded Schools were able to secure a contribution of \$10,000 from Andrew Carnegie toward the construction of a new public library building on these premises with the provision that at least \$1,000 was to be spent annually by the Board for the library afterwards.<sup>5</sup>

# 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Biennial Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction of Kentucky [Barksdale Hamlett] for the Two Years, Ending June 30, 1915. Frankfort: The State Journal Co., 1915.

Bobinski, George Sylvan. Carnegie Libraries; Their History and Impact on American Public Library Development. Chicago: American Library Association, 1969. (continued)

# 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY approx. 8 acres

QUADRANGLE NAME Somerset

QUADRANGLE SCALE 1:24000

UTM REFERENCES

A 16 713140 41108010

B               

ZONE EASTING

NORTHING

ZONE

EASTING

NORTHING

C               

D               

E               

F               

G               

H               

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

See continuation Sheet Item #10 Page 2

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

Calvin P. Jones, Historian; Charlotte Schneider, Architectural Historian

ORGANIZATION

Kentucky Heritage Commission

DATE

April 1978

STREET & NUMBER

104 Bridge Street

TELEPHONE

502/564-3741

CITY OR TOWN

Frankfort

STATE

Kentucky

# 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

*Edward W. Melton*

TITLE State Historic Preservation Officer

DATE 5/19/78

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

*Charles A. ...*

DATE 7-7-78

ATTEST: *William ...*

DATE 7-5-78

CHIEF OF REGISTRATION

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To the south of the original block is the high school wing (see photo 5), constructed approximately six years after the Carnegie Library and obviously designed to complement that structure. The only difference between the two buildings is that the high school is nine bays wide rather than five as is the library. A one-story, concrete gymnasium was added to the rear of the high school wing during the 1930s.

The 1930s wing on the south end of the complex is a three-story, rectangular, brick block eight bays in width (see photo 5). Nine-over-nine, double-hung sash windows pierce the facade. The portion adjoining the high school is slightly recessed and contains the entrance, an arched passage, vaguely reminiscent of the round arches employed in the original section.

In recent years, due to the erection of newer facilities, the only portion of the older area of the complex that remains in use is the high school wing. As a result, the abandoned Carnegie Library and the 1902-03 section have been allowed to fall into disrepair. In both of these sections, however, the original hardwood floors and woodwork remain intact. In the central section (1902-03), a high wainscoting of vertical, batten boards exists throughout the corridors. Ceilings are approximately sixteen feet high in both buildings, and the library retains elaborate, pressed tin ceilings on both the first and second floors. The second floor of the library originally consisted of one room with a small stage. This has now been partitioned into two smaller rooms, each retaining a portion of the stage.

In the high school wing where classes continue to meet, there is a large auditorium which, at one time, served the entire student body. The stage, flanked by pilasters with Ionic capitals (see photo 6), has been preserved as have the original seats which display an interesting Art Deco design on the end of each row.

The 1930s addition at the southern end of the complex continues in use as an educational facility and is well maintained.

Included within the nominated area is a small structure to the rear of the high school wing which houses a press box used during athletic events.

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The local Chatauqua Society also contributed \$300 toward the furnishing of the first floor of the building, was duly recognized for this, and was also given permission to use the building for their meetings. Carnegie's grant was made on December 8, 1905, one of several made in the United States during that year.<sup>6</sup> Both the school superintendent, Dr. J. P. W. Brouse,<sup>7</sup> and the Chatauqua Society,<sup>8</sup> have been given credit for bringing about this contribution.

Ca.1912, another section of this building was constructed to be used as a high school building and a more modern wing was added during the decade beginning in 1931.

Throughout the long period that this complex has served in its educational and cultural capacities, several prominent Kentuckians who have gained international reputations received their early training there.<sup>9</sup> Several distinguished alumni of the Somerset Public Schools included the following:

The Honorable John Sherman Cooper (Jr.)  
Former U.S. Senator, U. S. Ambassador to India, U.S. Ambassador to East Germany, American Representative to the United Nations

The Honorable Edwin P. Morrow  
Governor of the Commonwealth of Kentucky (1919-1923)

Arthur W. Allen, M.D.  
Internationally known surgeon, President of the American College of Surgeons, Knights' Cross, Royal Order of St. Olaf, Norway, Fellow of the Royal Colleges of Surgeons, England and Scotland

Lewis Ware  
American Representative to the Guggenheim Foundation,  
President, International Minerals and Chemicals Corporation.

At the present time consideration is being given by the local school system and relevant state agencies to the conversion of the abandoned section of this complex into a facility which can be utilized by approximately 150 residents of Oakwood, a state mental health institution.<sup>10</sup>

Overall the complex presents a pleasing facade to the passerby. The Romanesque central section and the flanking Classic Revival wings blend to form a unified, symmetrical composite. The last addition, dating from the 1930s, was constructed in such a manner so as not to detract from the existing edifice.

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FOOTNOTES

<sup>1</sup>Jack Norton, "Historical Society Opposed to Razing Somerset Central Junior High Building," The Commonwealth Journal, Somerset, Kentucky (November 15, 1977), front page. Also see Pulaski County Deed Book 22, p. 530.

<sup>2</sup>Frank LeRond McVey, The Gates Open Slowly: A History of Education in Kentucky (Lexington, University of Kentucky Press, 1949), p. 264.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., pp. 239-240. Also see "State of Kentucky," A Cyclopedia of Education, Vol. III (New York, the Macmillan Co.), pp. 594-595.

<sup>4</sup>Biennial Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction of Kentucky [Barksdale Hamlett] for the Two Years Ending June 30, 1915 (Frankfort, The State Journal Co., 1915), p. 175.

<sup>5</sup>Minutes of the Meetings of the Trustees (Board of Education of the Somerset Public Graded Schools, November 2, 1904, page 94; December 11, 1905, pages 117-118; January 2, 1906, pages 120-121; January 31, 1906, pages 122-123; February 22, 1906, pages 124-125; March 13, 1906, page 126; October 25, 1906, pages 147-148; and January 11, 1907, pages 150-151.

<sup>6</sup>George Sylvan Bobinski, Carnegie Libraries; Their History and Impact on American Public Library Development (Chicago, American Library Association, 1969), pp. 236-237.

<sup>7</sup>Norton, loc. cit.

<sup>8</sup>Pulaski County Historical Research, Book II (Revised) [Somerset, Kentucky, Somerset Community College, 1970], pp. 122-124.

<sup>9</sup>Letter from Maxine Hillis, Secretary, Pulaski County Historical Society, April 25, 1978.

<sup>10</sup>Jack Norton, "School Buildings Toured: Oakwood Students Need Space," The Commonwealth Journal, Somerset, Kentucky, May 1, 1978, front page and page 10.

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- Hollis, Maxine. Letter from the Secretary of the Pulaski County Historical Society. April 25, 1978.
- Jillson, Willard Rouse. A Bibliography of Pulaski County, Kentucky. Frankfort: Roberts Printing Co., 1954.
- Minutes of the Meetings of the Trustees (Board of Education) of the Somerset Public Graded Schools. November 5, 1904 - January 11, 1907, pp. 94-151.
- Monroe, Paul (ed.). A Cyclopedia of Education. 5 Vols. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1911-1914. (Republished by Gale Research Company, Detroit, 1968.)
- McVey, Frank LeRond. The Gates Open Slowly: A History of Education in Kentucky. Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1949.
- Norton, Jack. "Historical Society Opposed to Razing Somerset Central Junior High Building." The Commonwealth Journal, Somerset, Kentucky, November 15, 1977, front page \_\_\_\_\_.
- "School Buildings Toured: Oakwood Students Need Space." The Commonwealth Journal, May 1, 1978, front page and page 10.
- Pulaski County Deed Books. Office of the County Courthouse, Somerset, Kentucky.
- Pulaski County Historical Research. Somerset Community College, n.d., 239 pages, illustrated.
- Pulaski County Historical Research. Book II (Revised). Somerset, Kentucky: Somerset Community College, 1970.
- Tibbals, Alma Owens. A History of Pulaski County, Kentucky. Bagdad, Kentucky, Grace Owens Moore, 1952. 272 pages (Louisville: The Franklin Press).
- Wilson, John Truesdell. History of Banking in Pulaski County. First Bank in the County, All Banks of Pulaski County, an Accurate, Candid History 1818-1970. Somerset, Kentucky: The First and Farmers National Bank, 1970, 129 pages.



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The nominated area is bounded on the north by an alleyway, on the east by the school yard and recreation area, on the south by Hawkins Street, and on the west by College Street. Starting at the point where the alleyway meets College St., the boundary line runs southeast along the east side of College St. for approximately 900 feet. The line then turns eastward, following the north side of Hawkins St. for approximately 100 feet. The line turns eastward again for approximately 200 feet, then turns northwest for approximately 700 feet, and finally turns westward following the south side of the alleyway for approximately 400 feet to the original point.