

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

For NPS use only

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

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 McCook Public (Carnegie) Library (RW05-155)

and/or common NA

2. Location

street & number 423 Norris Avenue NA not for publication

city, town McCook NA vicinity of

state Nebraska code 031 county Red Willow code 145

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 checked="" 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 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	<u>NA</u> 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 McCook

street & number NA

city, town McCook NA vicinity of state Nebraska

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Red Willow County Courthouse, Register of Deeds

street & number NA

city, town McCook 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
 good
 fair

deteriorated
 ruins
 unexposed

Check one

unaltered
 altered

Check one

original site
 moved date N/A

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The McCook Public (Carnegie) Library is located in McCook, Nebraska (1981 population: 8,404), 65 miles south of North Platte, and the Red Willow county seat. The one-story-over-raised basement, rectangularly shaped concrete structure has a clay tile gable roof and a prominent entrance pavilion. The building is an excellent example of the Spanish Colonial Revival style of architecture. Although an addition was made to the structure in 1953, the structural and historical integrity has been preserved.

The McCook Public (Carnegie) Library is a one-story concrete building of Spanish Colonial Revival architecture. The overall measurements of the rectangularly-shaped structure are 15.0 meters x 10.42 meters. The building has a raised basement and gable roof covered with clay tile. The west (front) facade consists of an arched entry pavilion with datestone (1907) and namestone (Carnegie Library) as decorative features. The north and south walls display curvilinear parapets. The structure is symmetrical in massing; fenestration in the main level consists of arched window openings.

The interior has been changed to accommodate the library's current status as a museum. A brick fireplace is located at the south end, and a library office is situated in the northwest corner (wood panels halfway up, glass to the ceiling).

The vestibule is designed with two interior doors, wooden with leaded glass inset.

The McCook Public (Carnegie) Library was built in 1907 with a grant from Andrew Carnegie. The library was designed by architect Willis A. Marean of Denver, Colorado.

The library was remodeled slightly in 1953 at a cost of \$20,000. Restroom and office space was added and the basement was renovated for a children's room.

The city of McCook built a new library in 1969. Since that time, the Carnegie structure has housed the collection of the Museum of the High Plains.

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 1905 - 08

Builder/Architect Willis Marean

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

Architecturally significant, the McCook Public (Carnegie) Library represents the Spanish Colonial Revival style, being designed by architect Willis A. Marean of Denver, Colorado. This style enjoyed its first widespread popularity in the second and third decades of the 20th century. Significance also 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. Local firms played a significant part in establishing the library through various donations.

DATE OF PREPARATION BY THE BUREAU OF LAND

The McCook Public (Carnegie) Library exemplifies the Spanish Colonial Revival style, which became increasingly popular in the early 20th century. Panek observes, however, that "there is no clear breaking point in time or space between the Spanish Colonial style and its later revival."¹ The Revival style is characterized by the use of brick or concrete block in construction, often finished in plaster or stucco. Windows are either rectangular or arched, while the buildings are often enriched with curvilinear and decorated parapets (Blumenson, 1977, p. 9). The Spanish Colonial Revival style reached its peak around 1940, but remains in evidence throughout the southwestern United States.

The Library was designed by Willis Adams Marean of Denver, Colorado. Marean was born in Woodhull, New York in May 1853. He received his architectural training at State Normal School and at a private institution in New York City (1873-1876). Marean's move to Denver in 1880 resulted in a partnership with F. E. Edbrooke, which was dissolved in 1895. Marean became the senior partner in the firm Marean & Norton, formed the same year. Through his work at these two firms, Marean designed many of the turn-of-the-century buildings of prominence within Denver and the surrounding area. As of this date, the public library in McCook is the only structure in Nebraska known to have been designed by Marean.

Research to date has revealed little about the beginnings of the McCook Public (Carnegie) Library. It was decided to construct a new library when the collection within the county courthouse expanded beyond storage capacity. Property was donated by a local firm, and Andrew Carnegie donated \$11,000 on December 8, 1905, for the building's construction.

Willis A. Marean of Denver, Colorado, was hired as architect. It was decided that Spanish architecture would be chosen because it is believed that Coronado's expedition passed through the area. Dedication ceremonies took place on February 17, 1908.

9. Major Bibliographical References

See Continuation Sheet

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property less than one acre

Quadrangle name McCook West

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References

A

1	4	3	6	1	6	8	0	4	4	5	1	1	8	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

This property is described as lots 16, 17 and 18, Block 10, original town of McCook and includes all historically associated property

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

state n/a code county code

state n/a code county code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Mark Dollase, Historic Preservation Intern

organization Nebraska State Historical Society

date April 1985

street & number 1500 R

telephone 402-471-3270

city or town Lincoln

state Nebraska

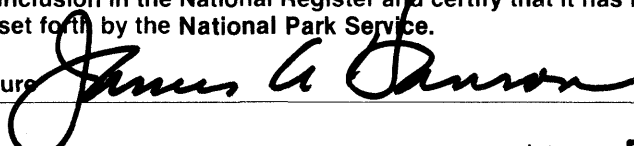
12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

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

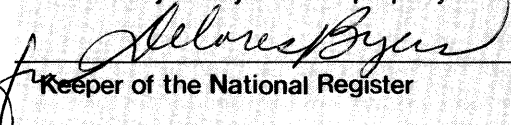


title Director, Nebraska State Historical Society

date 8/8/85

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

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Continuation sheet Significance

Item number 8

Page 2

Although Andrew Carnegie wanted the structures to be used solely as libraries, McCook is one of many that broke the rule. In addition to being used as a polling place, the library also housed the city water commission office, the police court, and all council meetings.

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, 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. These requirements helped to insure that the city would continue the library's 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 Carnegie Corporation, in 1911, published a leaflet defining the approved design ideas of the library profession to aid communities and architects in library projects. (Chatfield, Penelope, "North Bend Carnegie Library," National Register nomination form). Since the McCook Public Library was built before the design recommendations, Marean chose his own style of architecture and accompanying floor design. He did incorporate basic design ideas however, such as one-story with raised basement and a rectangular structure. The McCook Carnegie Library is the only library building designed in the Spanish Colonial Revival style thus far identified in the Nebraska Historic Buildings Survey.

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

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Continuation sheet

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Item number

9

Page

2

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Chatfield, Penelope. National Register of Historic Places Inventory--Nomination Form. North Bend Carnegie Library, Dodge County, Nebraska. Lincoln: Nebraska State Historical Society. February, 1981.

"City Buildings' History Rich" McCook Daily Gazette, Centennial Edition (1882-1982). *

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

Smiley, Jerome, "Willis Adams Marean," Semi-Centennial History of the State of Colorado, vol. 2. Lewis Publishing Co., Chicago, 1913.

* The 1982 Centennial Edition was used because there were no newspaper reports for parts of 1907 or any of 1908 in the Red Willow County Reporter. (MD)