orm No. 10-300 (Rev. 10-74)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

DAIA SHEET

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RECEIVED MAR 3 1976

DATE ENTERED APR 1 4 1976

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

| SEE | INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW T TYPE ALL ENTRIES | | | S | |
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| HISTORIC | Carnegie Library | | | | |
| AND/OR COMMON | | | | | |
| LOCATION | J | | | | |
| STREET & NUMBER | Northwest corner, 1 | .7th and Broadway | NOT FOR PUBLICATION | | |
| CITY, TOWN | Parsons | | CONGRESSIONAL DISTR | | |
| STATE | Kansas | CODE 20 | COUNTY Labette | CODE 099 | |
| CLASSIFIC | ATION | · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · | | | |
| CATEGORY | OWNERSHIP | WNERSHIP STATUS | | PRESENT USE | |
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| | BEING CONSIDERED | YES: UNRESTRICTEDNO | INDUSTRIAL MILITARY | TRANSPORTATION | |
| OWNER O | FPROPERTY | | | | |
| NAME | Urban Renewal Agency | | | | |
| STREET & NUMBER | 45-H Parsons Plaza | | | | |
| CITY, TOWN | Parsons | Parsons vicinity of | | STATE Kansas 67357 | |
| LOCATION | OF LEGAL DESCR | RIPTION | | | |
| COURTHOUSE. REGISTRY OF DEEDS, | ETC. Register of De | eeds | | | |
| STREET & NUMBER | Labette County | Courthouse | | | |
| CITY, TOWN | Oswego | | STATE Kansas 67356 | | |
| REPRESEN | TATION IN EXIST | ING SURVEYS | | | |
| TITLE H: | istoric Sites Survey | | | | |
| DATE Au | igust 8, 1970 | FEDERAL X_ | STATECOUNTYLOCAL | | |
| DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS] | Kansas State Historica | ıl Society | | | |
| CITY, TOWN | opeka | | STATE Kan | sas 66612 | |



CONDITION

CHECK ONE

CHECK ONE

__EXCELLENT

__FAIR

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__MOVED DATE_____

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. 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 win-There are large triple windows centered on either side of the door. These windows on the first floor have dressed stone silk 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. 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.

| PERIOD | AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW | | | | | |
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| —PREHISTORIC —1400-1499 —1500-1599 —1600-1699 —1700-1799 —1800-1899 —X1900- | ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORICARCHEOLOGY-HISTORICAGRICULTURE X_ARCHITECTUREARTCOMMERCECOMMUNICATIONS | COMMUNITY PLANNING CONSERVATION ECONOMICS LEDUCATION ENGINEERING EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT INDUSTRY INVENTION | LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE LAW LITERATURE MILITARY MUSIC PHILOSOPHY POLITICS/GOVERNMENT | RELIGIONSCIENCESCULPTURE | | |
| SPECIFIC DAT | ES 1909 | BUILDER/ARCI | HITECT F. E. Park | er | | |

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 exentually \$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.

| "Carnegi "Carnegi Connelle His Crispina | e Library Building Now e Will Build," Parsons y, William E., A Stand torical Society, Inc., , Mrs. Tommie J., editoterstate Book Manufactu | Nearing Comple Daily <u>Sun</u> , No <u>ard History of</u> 1928) pp. 1606 r, <u>The</u> <u>Centenr</u> | etion," Parsons D by. 19, 1907. Kansas and Kansa 1, 1607. Hial Story of Pars | ns_, (Chicago, Americ |
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| CITY OR TOWN | | | STATE | |
| 10 CT A TELL | Topeka | TION OFFI | | Kansas 66612 |
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| hereby nominate to criteria and proced | State Historic Preservation Officer his property for inclusion in the Nures set forth by the National Park | ational Register and Service. | | |
| TITLE Ex | ecutive Director, Kansa | s_State Histor | DATE rical Society | February 5, 1976 |
| I HEREBY CERT I HEREBY CERT DIRECTOR OF ATTEST: | | LUGED IN THE NAT | IONAL REGISTER DATE | 4/14/96 |

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Carnegie Library

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER

PAGE

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 <u>Sun</u>, 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.