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United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NOV 09 1993

### National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

NATIONAL  
REGISTER

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

#### 1. Name of Property

historic name Auld Public Library

other names/site number NeHBS #WT07-096

#### 2. Location

street & number 537 North Webster not for publication [NA]

city or town Red Cloud vicinity [NA]

state Nebraska code NE county Webster code 181 zip code 68970

#### 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this  nomination  request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant  nationally  statewide  locally. ([ ] See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

*Lance Sommer*  
Signature of certifying official

November 1, 1993  
Date

Director, Nebraska State Historical Society  
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. ([ ] See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of certifying official/Title

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau

#### 4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register.  
[ ] See continuation sheet.

determined eligible for the  
National Register  
[ ] See continuation sheet.

determined not eligible for the  
National Register.

removed from the National Register.

other, (explain): \_\_\_\_\_

*Guym. Lapsley*

12/10/93

*DL* Signature of Keeper

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date of Action

Auld Public Library  
Name of Property

Webster County, Nebraska  
County and State

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**  
(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

**Category of Property**  
(Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

**Number of Resources within Property**  
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

| Contributing | Noncontributing |            |
|--------------|-----------------|------------|
| <u>1</u>     |                 | buildings  |
|              |                 | sites      |
|              |                 | structures |
|              |                 | objects    |
| <u>1</u>     |                 | Total      |

**Name of related multiple property listing**  
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

NA

**Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register**

0

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

EDUCATION: Library  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Current Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

EDUCATION: Library  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

Classical Revival  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Materials**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Brick  
walls Brick  
\_\_\_\_\_  
roof Terra Cotta  
other Stone  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Narrative Description**  
(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

**8. Statement of Significance**

**Applicable National Register Criteria**

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

- A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

**Criteria Considerations**

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** a birthplace or a grave.
- D** a cemetery.
- E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F** a commemorative property.
- G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

**Narrative Statement of Significance**

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

**Bibliography**

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

**Previous documentation on file (NPS):**

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_

**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions)

- Architecture
- Education
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

**Period of Significance**

1917-1918

**Significant Dates**

1917-1918

**Significant Person**

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

NA

**Cultural Affiliation**

NA

**Architect/Builder**

Fiske & Meginnis

**Primary Location of Additional Data:**

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository: \_\_\_\_\_

Auld Public Library  
Name of Property

Webster County, Nebraska  
County and State

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### 10. Geographical Data

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Acreage of Property Less than one acre

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

|    | Zone | Easting | Northing |    | Zone | Easting | Northing |
|----|------|---------|----------|----|------|---------|----------|
| 1. | 14   | 540970  | 4437715  | 3. |      |         |          |
| 2. |      |         |          | 4. |      |         |          |

[ ] See continuation sheet.

### Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

### Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

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### 11. Form Prepared By

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name/title Teresa Young, Director  
organization Auld Public Library date April, 1993  
street & number 537 North Webster telephone (402) 746-3352  
city or town Red Cloud state NE zip code 68970

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### Additional Documentation

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Submit the following items with the completed form:

#### Continuation Sheets

#### Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

#### Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

#### Additional items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

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### Property Owner

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(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name City of Red Cloud  
street & number 540 North Webster telephone (402) 746-2215  
city or town Red Cloud state NE zip code 68970

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Auld Public Library

Name of Property

Webster County, Nebraska

County and State

Section 7, 8 Page 1

Description

The Auld Public Library is located in Red Cloud (1993 population: 1,204), Nebraska, the county seat of Webster County. A fine example of the Neo-Classical Revival style, the one-story brick building was constructed and furnished entirely from a donation by businessman William T. Auld in 1917. The building is located on main street (Webster Street) across from the City Hall in the original town district. It is primarily a commercial setting, except for several residential homes in the area. Facing east, the library is located on a large corner lot, which includes shrubs in front and along the north side of the building, and trees scattered around the property. Structural and historical integrity of the library has been preserved.

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Constructed of brick, the one-story with raised basement, rectangular building has a hip roof covered with clay tiles. The cornerstone reads "Presented to the City of Red Cloud by W.T. Auld, 1917." The raised entry pavilion features two large stone pillars flanking the double door entry which has an arched multi-paned window above it. The columns visually support a projecting wall cornice and pediment with a stone frieze inscribed with "Auld Public Library." Wall surfaces are enhanced by an abundant use of decorative brickwork, including corbelling and quoining. Stone trim is used in the wall cornice and coping. Fenestration consists of rectangular shaped openings with the main facade showing three window units with transoms above.

The vestibule features marble floors, steps, side ledges, and wainscotting. The main level consists of one large reading room with bookshelves as the only divisions. The original woodwork is intact with the ceiling framed by oak cove. The original furnishings, including the librarian's desk, bookshelves, tables, and chairs, are still in use. The basement houses a kitchen, two bathrooms, a large room which is currently used as a preschool, two storage rooms, and a furnace room.

Construction of the library began in the summer of 1917 and was completed in March of 1918. Fiske & Meginnis of Lincoln served as the architects, and William N. Gedney served as the general contractor. Today, the building is in excellent condition and has recently had the interior walls and the exterior wood trim painted. No structural changes have been made to the building except for changing a basement window into a door for an emergency exit. The building continues to serve as a library.

Statement of Significance

Locally significant under Criterion "C" (architecture), the Auld Public Library is an excellent example of educational architecture in Red Cloud. Designed in the Neo-Classical Revival style by the architectural firm of Fiske & Meginnis, the building is a fine representative of early twentieth-century library design as found in communities throughout Nebraska during this time period. The privately-funded Auld Public Library is also significant under Criterion "A" in the area of education for its contribution to, and important role in Red Cloud's educational history. Red Cloud's educational needs were met through William T. Auld's generous donation to erect the first permanent library building for the community. The period of significance is derived from the original construction date (1917-18) of the building.

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National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Auld Public Library

Name of Property

Webster County, Nebraska

County and State

Section 8 Page 2

Statement of Significance (continued)

William T. Auld was a prominent citizen and successful banker in Red Cloud. He established the State Bank of Red Cloud in 1892, and also had banking interests in Kearney, Lincoln, and Omaha. In January of 1917, Auld agreed to donate \$20,000 to build and furnish a public library building. In the January 4, 1917 issue of the *Webster County Argus* it states: "Through the generosity of W.T. Auld...the city is to be presented with \$20,000 to be used for purchasing a site of a library, erecting a building and providing furniture, equipment and books. The condition of the gift is that the city promise to provide \$1000 per year for maintenance, and that the building plans be submitted to the donor for his approval. This offer is to take place of the one submitted by the Carnegie Corporation some time ago, but which was never formally accepted by the city council."

Similarities in the establishment of the Auld Public Library and that of a "Carnegie" library are apparent from the newspaper article. It appears Auld's conditions are patterned after the requirements set forth by the Carnegie Corporation, including selection of a site, review and approval of architectural plans, and maintenance pledges by the city. In this case, Auld assumed the role of Andrew Carnegie in that he was the one providing the funds for building construction, requesting review of the architectural plans, and setting up conditions for future maintenance of the library by the city.

Red Cloud met Auld's condition for city maintenance as requested and passed Ordinance No. 50 on April 4, 1917, "an ordinance establishing and providing for the maintenance of a free public library in and for the City of Red Cloud, Nebraska." On April 8, 1917, library board members were appointed by the mayor. The architectural plans of Fiske & Meginnis of Lincoln were accepted by the library board on June 26, 1917.

The architectural firm of Fiske & Meginnis are credited with the design of numerous library buildings in Nebraska, including: Plattsmouth Carnegie Library (listed NRHP); David City Carnegie Library; Hebron Public Library; Loup City Carnegie Library; Blair Carnegie Library; and Arcadia Township Carnegie Library. These library buildings, except for David City, exhibit Renaissance Revival and Neo-Classical Revival styling. The Auld Public Library is very similar in plan and design to that of the Plattsmouth Library, completed one year earlier, in 1916.

Like the Plattsmouth Carnegie Library, the Auld Public Library typifies that of the building plan prototype established by Carnegie's personal secretary James Bertram in his *Notes on Library Buildings* developed in 1910. These libraries, for the most part, are one-story with a raised basement, rectangular shaped in plan, of brick construction, and exhibit a three bay, Neo-Classical facade with a projecting central entry pavilion. When compared to other Fiske & Meginnis Carnegie library designs (especially Plattsmouth), it is apparent that the architects used the same guidelines set forth in Bertram's *Notes on Library Buildings* when they designed the privately-funded Auld Public Library.

The Auld Public Library had its formal opening on March 8, 1918. The acknowledgement in the program reads: "This beautiful building and the books therein are the gift of W.T. Auld to the people of Red Cloud. Mr. Auld came to Red Cloud at a time when its financial situation was at the worst...In the midst of these unpropitious circumstances, Mr. Auld established the State Bank of Red Cloud...The people of Red Cloud will always read and speak his name with affectionate gratitude and his memory will be more cherished and abiding than this stately monument of his generosity."

As the first permanent library facility, the Auld Public Library played an important role in the educational history of the Red Cloud community. The building served not only as the library, but provided

United States Department of the Interior  
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**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Auld Public Library  
Name of Property  
Webster County, Nebraska  
County and State

Section 8, 9, 10 Page 3

**Statement of Significance (continued)**

facilities for other educational and cultural activities as well, and as a meeting place for various organizations and committees. In Nebraska, these privately funded public libraries number far less than those that were constructed as a result of grant monies from Andrew Carnegie. While many of these "Carnegie" libraries have been recognized due to their important role in Nebraska history, it is equally important to identify and preserve those libraries such as Red Cloud's that were erected solely as a result of privately-secured funds.

**Bibliography**

Auld Public Library, library board minutes, 1917, Red Cloud, Nebraska.

*Commercial Advertiser*, Webster County, Nebraska, 1918.

Fimple, Kathleen, "Educational Enrichment: Carnegie Libraries," Historic Context Report 06.02.01.01, 1990, on file, Nebraska State Historical Society.

Hagedorn, Martha Gray, "Carnegie Libraries of Kansas," National Register of Historic Places Inventory-Nomination Form, April, 1987, Kansas State Historical Society, Topeka, Kansas.

Kohmetscher, Suzanne, "York Public Library," National Register of Historic Places Registration Form, July, 1990, on file, Nebraska State Historical Society, Lincoln, Nebraska.

Skjelver, Mabel R. Cooper, *Webster County: Visions of the Past*, Red Cloud: Webster County Historical Society, 1980.

*Webster County Argus*, Red Cloud, Nebraska, 1917-1918.

**Verbal Boundary Description**

The property is described as Lots 1, 2, 3, Block 6, Original Town, Red Cloud, Webster County, Nebraska.

**Boundary Justification**

The boundary includes that parcel of land which has historically been associated with the property.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Auld Public Library

Name of Property

Webster County, Nebraska

County and State

Section Photos Page 4

**Photograph Descriptions**

Auld Public Library (NeHBS #WT07-096)  
Red Cloud, Webster County, Nebraska  
Teresa Young, Photographer  
February 1993  
Original negatives kept at Auld Public Library

- Photo 1 of 8: Front of Auld Public Library looking west.
- Photo 2 of 8: Front of Auld Public Library looking slightly southwest.
- Photo 3 of 8: The back and side of Auld Public Library looking northeast.
- Photo 4 of 8: Auld Public Library front entrance looking west.
- Photo 5 of 8: Auld Public Library entry way marble steps, looking west into the library.
- Photo 6 of 8: The adult section of Auld Public Library looking southwest.
- Photo 7 of 8: The adult section of Auld Public Library looking south.
- Photo 8 of 8: The children's section of Auld Public Library looking northwest.