

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

For NPS use only

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

received **JUL 18 1985**

date entered **AUG 15 1985**

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

1. Name

historic Browns Valley Carnegie Public Library

and or common N/A

2. Location

street & number Broadway Avenue and Second Street

N/A not for publication

city, town Browns Valley N/A vicinity of

state Minnesota

code 22

county Traverse

code 155

3. Classification

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

4. Owner of Property

name City of Browns Valley

street & number N/A

city, town Browns Valley

N/A vicinity of

state Minnesota 56219

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Traverse County Courthouse

street & number Second Avenue N.

city, town Wheaton

state Minnesota 56296

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Minnesota Statewide Historic Sites Survey

has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 1983-84

federal state county local

depository for survey records State Historic Preservation Office, Fort Snelling History Center

city, town St. Paul

state Minnesota 55111

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one	
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved	date N/A
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed			

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Browns Valley Carnegie Library, built in 1915-16, is located on a large lot at the southeast corner of Broadway Avenue and Second Street at the east end of Browns Valley's main commercial street. The building is situated in a mixed commercial and residential neighborhood and is flanked by two churches standing to the east and west. The architect of the library is not known. Construction of the \$5,480 building was started by McClure Construction Company of Minneapolis, but the library was finished by local builders. The library is a modest, one story Classical Revival building with a three bay main facade and two bay sidewalls. The exterior walls are faced with soft light brown and cream colored brick, laid to form decorative patterns on all facades. The building has striated brick piers forming a slightly projecting entrance bay which is topped by a triangular parapet. The entrance has double leaf doors covered with iron grills, a wooden sign at the transom level, two wrought iron lamps attached to the walls flanking the entrance, and three windows with geometric patterning above the transom area. The library has brick corner pilasters, a simple metal cornice beneath a brick parapet wall, and rectangular window openings now filled with large glass panes and glass block. The date "1915" is incised in an open book above the cornice at the center of the main facade.

The library is in good condition and has been altered very little. Exterior changes have included installing glass block and thermopane windows during the 1960's and covering the foundation with stucco. During the 1940's the interior walls were repainted and the woodwork refinished, and during the 1960's the interior was renovated again when the circulation room ceiling was lowered and the walls covered with masonite panelling. At the same time, a public meeting and activity room was created in the previously unfinished basement.

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/
<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 1915-16 **Builder/Architect** McClure Construction Co., builder

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Browns Valley Carnegie Library, built in 1915-16, is historically and architecturally significant as one of Browns Valley's most architecturally significant buildings dating from the early twentieth century and as a building which illustrates the efforts of the Andrew Carnegie Corporation to provide free public library services and architecturally sophisticated public library buildings to small rural Minnesota communities.

Browns Valley is a small town located on the South Dakota border in west central Minnesota. The community's first public library was a small facility which opened in November of 1908 on the second floor of a commercial building. The library was organized by community members and stocked with materials donated by local residents and provided by a small circulating library operated by the St. Paul Public Library. The Browns Valley library was next housed in the local public school. By 1913 increasing demand for library services prompted a group of interested citizens led by the local Catholic priest to approach the Andrew Carnegie Corporation for funds to construct a modern library building. In February of 1914 the village council voted to accept a Carnegie offer of \$5,500, to allocate \$550 annually for library maintenance, and to provide a site for the building, a lot then occupied by the city's circa 1870 Episcopal church. The Village submitted its building plans to the Carnegie Corporation for approval and the contract for construction was awarded to low bidder McClure Construction Company of Minneapolis. The building project began during the summer of 1915 when McClure moved the Episcopal Church two lots to the east and prepared the library site. After construction of the library was well underway, a contract dispute began between McClure Construction and the library board, and the building was eventually finished by construction workers hired locally. The library opened officially in 1917.

Efforts by Browns Valley residents to provide a public library for themselves extended beyond the work of those who initially contacted the Carnegie Corporation. Civic groups including the Progress Club, the Interlochen Club, and the American Legion contributed to the library project by hold fundraising events, assisting in cataloging books, and soliciting private donations to the library. The library was administered by the village council until 1931 when the first library board of directors was created from representatives of various local organizations. Community support for the library continued through the 1950's and 1960's when a group of volunteers helped recatalog the library in 1953 and when members of the local Citizens Club finished the basement of the building to create a public meeting and activity room.

The Andrew Carnegie Corporation, which funded the Browns Valley library, financed 1,679 libraries nationwide between 1886 and 1919, many in small communities like Browns Valley whose resources could not otherwise support construction of a library building. In many cases, Carnegie libraries constructed during the early twentieth century continue as nearly sole providers of educational services to adults in rural Minnesota, and stand as among the most architecturally significant buildings in many small rural Minnesota towns. This is true in Browns Valley, where Carnegie's relatively modest grant of \$5,500 provided the facilities and impetus for vital community library services which continue today.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bobinski, George. Carnegie Libraries. Chicago: American Library Association, 1969.
Piechowski, Helen. "Browns Valley's Public Library." Valley News, Centennial Edition,
June 9, 1966.

10. Geographical Data

Acree of nominated property less than one

Quadrangle name Browns Valley Quad.

Quadrangle scale 7.5

UTM References

A

1	4	6	6	9	2	0	0	5	0	5	7	1	2	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

West half of Lot 10 and all of Lots 11-12, Block 10, Original Plat of Browns Valley.

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

state N/A code N/A county N/A code N/A

state N/A code N/A county N/A code N/A

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Susan Granger, Field Assistant

State Historic Preservation Office

organization Minnesota Historical Society

date December 1984

street & number Fort Snelling History Center

telephone (612) 726-1171

city or town St. Paul

state Minnesota 55111

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 Russell W. Fridley

Russell W. Fridley

title State Historic Preservation Officer

date 6/26/85

For NPS use only

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

Entered in the
National Register

date 8-15-85

Delores Byer
Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration