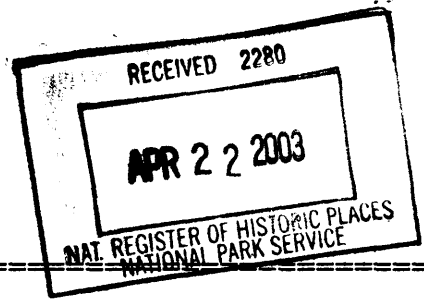


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM



1. Name of Property

historic name Tahlequah Carnegie Library

other names/site number Tahlequah Carnegie Reading Room

2. Location

street & number 120 S. College not for publication
N/A city or town Tahlequah vicinity N/A
state Oklahoma code OK county Cherokee code 021
zip code 74464

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this X 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 X meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide X locally. (N/A See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Bob Sankton 4-18-03
Signature of certifying official Date

Oklahoma Historical Society, SHPO
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 commenting or other official 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):

Edson H. Beall 6.6.03

per
Signature of Keeper Date of Action

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

Contributing	Noncontributing
<u> 1 </u>	<u> 0 </u> buildings
<u> 0 </u>	<u> 0 </u> sites
<u> 0 </u>	<u> 4 </u> structures
<u> 0 </u>	<u> 0 </u> objects
<u> 1 </u>	<u> 4 </u> Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register N/A

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

=====

6. Function or Use

=====

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: EDUCATION Sub: Library

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: EDUCATION Sub: Library

=====

7. Description

=====

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

LATE 19TH AND 20TH CENTURY REVIVALS--Classical Revival

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation CONCRETE

roof ASPHALT

walls BRICK

other METAL-cornice

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.)

- 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.

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)

EDUCATION

Period of Significance 1907-1952

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8. Statement of Significance (Continued)
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Significant Dates 1907

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation N/A

Architect/Builder McCAW and BELLIS--Architects

ASHTON, WILLIAM--Builder

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

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9. Major Bibliographical References
=====

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

Previous documentation on file (NPS) N/A

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 # _____

Primary Location of Additional Data

State Historic Preservation Office

Other State agency

Federal agency

Local government

University

Other

Name of repository: _____

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10. Geographical Data
=====

Acreage of Property Less than 1 (one) acre

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

	Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing
1	15	321990	3975920	3	—	—
2				4	—	—
	N/A 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.)

=====
11. Form Prepared By
=====

name/title Dianna Everett Public Historian
organization Consultant to Tahlequah Library Board date 15 November 2002
street & number 2510 Countrywood Lane telephone (405) 348-272
city or town Edmond state OK zip code 73003-6433

USDI/NPS NRHP Registration Form
Tahlequah Carnegie Library
Cherokee County, Oklahoma

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Property Owner

=====

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

name City of Tahlequah

street & number 123 Delaware Street telephone (580)456-3742

city or town Tahlequah state OK zip code 74464

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 7 Page 9

Tahlequah Carnegie Library
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county and State

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SUMMARY:

Constructed in 1905-07 and still in its original location at 120 S. College in downtown Tahlequah, the Tahlequah Carnegie Library is a brownish-red brick, one-story building sited in a mixed-use, residential and commercial area immediately adjacent to downtown Tahlequah. The setting remains as historically constituted. The library's main visual characteristic, like many "Carnegie Classical" buildings (Classical Revival) is a full-height, pedimented portico sheltering the main/east entrance. Dentil molding decorates the pediment, which is supported by simple, round, wooden Doric columns. Other distinguishing features are decorative stone keystones and cornerstones above large casements, which have divided transoms, and single stones above smaller, single-hung windows. A rusticated stone foundation and concrete banding are also visually prominent, as is a wide metal cornice around the entire building. The building is a prime example of the Carnegie Classical variety and is one of only three Classical Revival buildings in Tahlequah.

Alterations to the building's exterior are restricted to the placement of a connector on the south side, in order to join the original building to a new 1978 library designed in a Modern style. This required only the removal of a window unit and replacement of that with a doorway into the connector. The connector's low, flat roof, makes it relatively unobtrusive, and its length, 22 feet, allows the new building to be very well visually separated from the original building. In the process of creating the connector, only 8 percent of the original south side was affected (and of that, approximately half of the original fabric is covered over, not removed), and of the building's entire vertical surface, only 2 percent was affected by the alteration. All of the original 1907 building's other exterior features are retained in their original state, including all window and door units, and the inside features are retained, as well.

The Tahlequah Carnegie Library building has generally retained all of the necessary integrity of elements, including location, setting, design, materials, craftsmanship, feeling, and association. It is therefore eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A, as representative of an important pattern in the education history of Tahlequah, Oklahoma.

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DESCRIPTION:

The Tahlequah Carnegie Library sits in a residential-commercial area one block west of downtown Tahlequah. The library is still in its original location at 120 South College. The major portion of the building, constructed in 1905-07, faces east on South College. The present setting remains generally the same as it has been since World War II. In the mid- to late-nineteenth century Block 77, on which the library sits, was the "city park reserve," bounded by West Keetoowah, on the south, West Delaware, on the north, and South Cherokee, on the west. On this reserve had once stood the Cherokee Nation's Supreme Court Building (constructed 1844, burned 1875). Presently, on the east half of Block 77 is the Carnegie Library and on the west half is the Cherokee County Court House, built in c. 1980, attached to its annex, a building that was originally the Tahlequah Hospital, built in 1945. To the south and north are residential blocks; to the east is generally downtown commercial property; and one full block to the east is the downtown commercial district, along Muskogee Avenue.

The 1905 Tahlequah Carnegie Library was designed in Classical Revival style by architects McCaw and Bellis, of Muskogee. Theodore Jones, historian of Carnegie Libraries, has identified 500 Classical Revival-style Carnegie Library buildings (of 1,689 total) and proposed a subcategory of 250 called "Carnegie Classical." In this subcategory, which encompasses most of the small- to medium-sized Carnegies, the main characteristics of a building generally included one- or two-story height, a flat/pedimented or hipped roof, a decorated cornice, rusticated stone foundation, brick or stone walls, large windows, and a main elevation marked by two bays of windows flanking a full-height, columned portico with a gabled pediment. The "Carnegie Classical" libraries were otherwise plain. Budgetary concerns generally dictated simplicity of decoration, with certain classical elements chosen "to reflect the importance of the building to the community." Especially in smaller communities with limited assets, the Carnegie Corporation discouraged interior and exterior architectural elaborations, preferring to invest in "useful" design elements such as big windows and practical room arrangement for reading and for shelving books. Judging from the images published in *Oklahoma Libraries* (1937), of the 24 Oklahoma communities that built Carnegie Libraries, only four chose to deviate from "Carnegie Classical" Revival--Collinsville (Craftsman), Cordell (Mission), Hobart (Late Gothic Revival), and Elk City (Mission).

As pictured in a c. 1907 historic post-card photograph of the east (main) and south elevations (a reproduction of this image appears in *Oklahoma*

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Libraries [1937]), the original 1905 Tahlequah Carnegie Library was a one-story "Carnegie Classical" edifice with a roughly rectangular footprint.(1) With a long axis oriented north and south, the building measures roughly 54 feet north-south and 51 feet east-west. The load-bearing walls are constructed of regularly coursed, brownish-red brick. The concrete stem of the foundation is visible and on it sit four courses of rusticated limestone topped with one band of smooth concrete. The concrete and limestone also form the plinths under two round, wooden, unfluted Doric columns that support a full-height, pedimented entry portico. A second concrete band runs around the building's perimeter, serving as the window sills and water table. The flat, parapetted roof is covered with asphalt. A wide, deep metal cornice extends all around the building and has a plain frieze. A concrete-capped parapet projects about two feet above the cornice. Exterior decoration is limited to sets of stone crowns inset into the brick above the larger windows in the north, south, and east and single stones crowning the smaller windows on the main elevation; concrete banding; rusticated limestone in the foundation; and dentil molding that outlines the tympanum of the porch pediment.

The building's primary architectural feature is on the east, or main, facade, which has a projecting fourteen-foot-wide central section with a central, projecting, full-height, pedimented portico. Behind this, the parapet wall is raised up to the height of the pediment. The portico shelters the building's main entry. The doorway, which is slightly recessed retains its original, solid wood, slab units. Above them is an original transom with forty-four square lights divided by wooden muntins. The doorway is flanked by shallow pilasters. Two wooden, Doric columns support the pediment, which is designated "Carnegie Library" on the frieze. A small plaque noting "1905" is placed centrally in the tympanum. From the concrete porch floor a set of wide steps leads down to an open platform enclosed on two sides by low concrete walls that terminate in short posts, each topped by a small, tooled-stone pillar. From this point more steps lead down to the sidewalk. A metal handrail was placed in the center of the walkway at an unknown date. The rear elevation is marked by a double projecting section similar to that on the front. This section is divided into two floors, on the inside, and contains a rear entrance.

All elevations are symmetrical, with regular fenestration. The window

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openings are very slightly arched and decorated with inset stone blocks. The projecting entry section has narrow, tall single-hung windows, with six lights in the top panel over a single light in the bottom. There is one of these in the front wall and one in the side wall, on each side of the entry, and the windows light small cloakrooms on each side of the foyer. Each window is topped by a central narrow keystone-shaped crown. The main windows on the east side, lighting the reading room, are double casements, each window having the same six-over-one glazing pattern as the smaller windows. In addition each of these large windows has a divided light-transom. The transom has three sets of lights that are subdivided into eight triangular sections. This particular double-casement-and-transom glazing pattern is replicated in the three windows on the north and in the two remaining windows on the south (the north and south walls were originally identical, with three tall, transom-topped windows in each elevation; see below, Alterations). In all instances, the original wood window casings are intact. The west wall, or rear of the building, has a twice-stepped out projecting central section that is, on the inside, divided into two shallow floors. This is illustrated on the exterior by the smaller variety of double-hung windows like those in the front. Even smaller, double-hung windows in the furthest-out section illustrate the two-floor arrangement. The bottom floor has a centrally placed, original, wooden slab-type door, on the bottom floor, and a small window above. The rear door is accessed by concrete steps leading to a small porch. A metal handrail was placed around this arrangement at an unknown date.

The library building's interior is very simply arranged. One large central reading room occupies almost all of the plan. The west side (which projects outward in two steps) has five rooms, that is, two rooms (offices and former restrooms) on each side, flanking a central area, placed under a recessed arch, where the circulation desk once stood. Behind this, in the most outwardly projecting part, is the two-floor area, formerly used as book shelving. The projecting east, or main, entry section has a small, foyer flanked by small cloakrooms. Though most Carnegies have internal divisions into two or three reading rooms, Tahlequah Library's central was never subdivided.

Interior decoration includes shallow pilasters regularly placed in all four walls and at each corner. Each pilaster is topped with a voluted capital.

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The walls are plastered and painted. Two pillars, centrally placed, support the roof; the pillars were added in the 1970s when the ceiling began to sag. The nine-section cove ceiling is undecorated. The central section of the ceiling retains a sturdy, wooden casing and muntins that originally was a glass skylight. Because of leaking, this was covered with metal on the outside in April 1925, according to city records, so that it now admits no light. Decoration also includes original oak wainscoting, baseboards, and door casings. Interior doors are the original, three-panel, wooden units. The interior foyer double doors are original half-glass panel "swinging" doors. Above is an original transom with leaded lights in an inverted fish-scale pattern. The foyer retains an original buff and brown ceramic tile floor.

ALTERATIONS:

Interior alterations have been made and unmade over the years. The primary change is the addition of two pillars to bolster a sagging roof. A drop ceiling was added in all rooms in the 1970s but removed from the central reading room c. 1995 to reveal the cove ceiling and the arch arrangement over the former circulation-desk area. The drop ceiling remains in the ancillary rooms. At one point in time the interior walls were covered with inexpensive wood paneling, but this was removed c. 1995 to reveal the original plaster. As mentioned above, the original skylight framing remains but has been unused since 1925 and admits no light.

Alterations to the historic fabric are limited to the south side, where a 12-foot-deep by 21-foot wide, partially glassed-in connector, built in 1978, joins the original 1907 library to a new library building to the south. The purpose of this area is to give sheltered access to both buildings. The height of the walkway's flat roof is fourteen feet. The connecting area shelters one entrance to the original library and one entrance to the new library. The entrance to the old library was formerly a window. The window casing was removed, and about two feet of the wall below it was also removed to accommodate a doorway that is the width of the original window. The bottom of the new doorway is on a level with the top of the original building's foundation. Double wood doors were installed in the opening, each with a small light. Outside, the original window arch and decorative stonework are covered with a metal shield flush with the wall. The portion of the glassed-in walkway

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that touches the original building was restricted to a depth of 8 feet, in order to cover as little of the original material as possible. The east wall of the connector is constructed of widely spaced, steel muntins with glass panels, and in the center is a double, glass door. The west wall is solid material, with a single, metal panel door that accesses a concrete handicapped-access ramp placed along the south side of the original building in 1978. The ramp has a metal-pipe handrail. In the process of connecting new library to old, only 9.38 percent of the original south wall's vertical surface (that is, the square footage of south wall) was covered; comparing this to the total vertical surface of the building, only 2.27 percent of the total vertical wall surface of the entire library was affected. While the connection of the two buildings technically makes them one building, the design, materials, and workmanship of the original building were maintained. As these criteria are vital to integrity, and have not been greatly altered, it is here argued that the building's integrity was not seriously compromised by the alteration. In addition, the connector's low roof minimizes its obviousness and places the new library visually away from the old building. Thus the visual character of the original building is still intact and fully recognizable as a Carnegie Classical library. The 1978 library building measures 108 by 89 feet with long axis north-south. Its exterior is constructed of tilt-up concrete aggregate walls; and the south wall has extensive glazing. In appearance monolithic and unremarkable, the new building was designed in Modern style, with a roofline of intersecting planes.

NONCONTRIBUTING RESOURCES:

Noncontributing resources are restricted to one large electrical transformer unit and three air-conditioner condenser units on the west side. A light pole and parking barriers within the boundaries have not been counted.

ENDNOTES

1. The original plans called for a more elaborate building (see below, Section 8). An architect's rendering of the front elevation appeared several times in 1905-07 in the local newspaper. The building pictured has a hipped roof containing what appears to be a skylight. This has led some local historians to speculate that a "dome" was once placed atop the building. The architect's rendering also shows a full basement with large windows. Neither dome nor basement windows came to be built, as the cost forced plans to be scaled down.

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SUMMARY:

The Tahlequah Carnegie Library, constructed in 1905-07, represents an important aspect of the education history of Tahlequah, Oklahoma, 1907-1952. The building resulted from a community effort to secure grant funding from the Carnegie Corporation of New York. Awarded in May 1905, this was only the second Carnegie grant awarded in Indian Territory and the first to an Indian Nation capital city, that of the Cherokees. The Carnegie Library took its place near other important National buildings, including the National Capitol, the Supreme Court Building, and the Cherokee Female Seminary, all in Tahlequah. The library's development coincided with the initiating of a city public school system, which became reality with the building of Tahlequah Free School in 1906. The previous year that library had secured funding, and its construction began in 1905. The building was completed around the end of March 1907 but fund shortages kept it closed. The library finally opened to the public in February 1908.

Through the years, the Tahlequah community encouraged city government to keep the library doors open. However, city funds always fell short, and local citizens took it upon themselves to hold book sales and donate items, so that collections and circulation grew. Librarians extended the circulation to serve outlying rural areas and the African American community's "separate school" during the 1930s, 1940s, and 1950s. In addition, another important educational purpose was served. The library became the unofficial Cherokee Nation Museum, and various items of furniture, paintings of tribal leaders, and documents were repositied there until the mid-1960s. Teachers were able to use these items to illustrate the Cherokee Nation's history. Lectures and other educational activities also took place in the building over the years and continue today, even after a new, larger "annex" was created in 1978. The Tahlequah Carnegie Library continues to fulfill much of its original purpose, education of the youth and adult communities of the city.

The Tahlequah Carnegie Library maintains integrity of location, setting, design, materials, craftsmanship, feeling, and association from the 1907-1952 era and it is well able to visually convey its significance in the education history of Tahlequah, Oklahoma. The Tahlequah Carnegie Library is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criteria A, for its ability to represent the pattern of Tahlequah's education history.

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HISTORIC CONTEXT:

Tahlequah, Oklahoma, lay within an expanse of land called the Cherokee Nation. In addition to being the capital city of the Cherokee Nation, Tahlequah was an important service center in a growing agricultural area. Cotton farming and cattle raising were especially important economic activities. Oklahoma, in Cherokee County, became the capital of the Cherokee Nation in 1839. The town grew slowly, and by the time of the Civil War the Cherokees had built log and wood-frame government buildings in the center of town, with commercial buildings and residences scattered nearby. Most of the town was destroyed during the Civil War, but the government buildings were rebuilt, this time of brick.(1) The original capitol building was replaced with a new brick Italianate-style building, which became the Cherokee County Court House at 1907 statehood. No longer the court house, it still stands in the center of town. The Cherokee Supreme Court Building, built in 1844, burned in 1875, was built a block away at Keetoowah and Waters, and the 1874 National Jail stood at Choctaw and Waters.(2) In 1905-06 the Tahlequah Carnegie Library was constructed in a large park to the southwest of the government buildings.

In the late nineteenth century Tahlequah was a prosperous, growing community. A telephone system was installed in 1886, and railroad service was provided in 1902, connecting the capital city and the Cherokee Nation with markets and encouraging new businesses. Cherokees and also whites, some intermarried and some who were in the nation under tribal permit, lived in Tahlequah. By 1890 the population had reached 1,200, and ten years later 1,482 people called Tahlequah home. At 1907 statehood the number had risen to 1,916.(3) In addition to housing the tribal government, Tahlequah served as a trade and agricultural service center for Cherokee County and the surrounding region. The city received a federal charter in 1852.

By the turn of the century the town had all of the amenities for maintaining the economic, social, and educational life of a typical turn-of-the-century community: a bottling works, broom factory, two gins, a lumber yard, a granite works, and three newspapers. City services, as in most communities of the day, were demanded, and Tahlequah's leaders provided an electric light plant, a waterworks system, some "macadamized" streets, and a telephone exchange. Public education was also a priority, and a school system

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was nascent. A library was also in the works, and soon the Tahlequah Carnegie Library became the county's only public library, functioning from 1908 through the twentieth century.(4) At 1907 statehood, Tahlequah became county seat of Cherokee County.

EDUCATION CONTEXT:

Educational institutions had always been important within the Cherokee Nation, and residents of the capital city, Tahlequah, were no exception. A public school system for the Nation had been established in 1841, with a board of education and James M. Payne as superintendent.(5) Another important educational event was the construction of the Cherokee Male and Female Academies in Tahlequah in the 1850s. Growing from an initial 11 schools, by 1898 the Nation maintained 120.(6) The first "public" school in Tahlequah town opened in 1846 when Caleb Covell was appointed by the National Council to open a school. The first actual school in Tahlequah may date to 1845 when Anna Hoyt taught classes in 1845.(7)

A city school system was officially established c. 1905, serving a population of approximately 2,000. The first substantial schoolhouse came in 1906 with the construction of Tahlequah Free School on the location of an old Cherokee cemetery, which was moved before construction began. This school was renamed Sequoyah School and served for grades 1-8.(8) Around the turn of the century other schools also appeared, possibly because, as the *Cherokee Advocate* noted, Tahlequah "had more school children to its size than any town in Indian Territory."(9) The variety of educational opportunities included private subscription schools (at least one by 1898), Tahlequah Institute (a private boarding school for girls and day school for boys, opened 1895), Indian University (opened 1880 and later moved to Muskogee to become Bacone Indian School), and the Baptist Academy, completed and opened in 1904. The Baptist building was acquired by the city school system in 1907 and became Central High School.(10) The *Tahlequah Arrow* of February 24, 1906, noted that Tahlequah had three schools owned by the Cherokee government, a system of free public schools, and two private schools, one Presbyterian and one Baptist.(11) By the time of 1907 statehood the offspring of a population of nearly 1,500 was served by these institutions. In 1923 a new public high school was constructed at 215 N. Washington.(12)

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Development of educational institutions in Indian Territory and Oklahoma Territory coincided with the public library movement across the United States and in Oklahoma.(13) Across the region, as the population of the Twin Territories' increased and towns grew larger, middle-class institutions began to appear. Credit for establishing the territories' libraries generally goes to the local Women's Clubs, whose activities almost always included setting up local reading rooms and collecting books to furnish those facilities with material to lend. In this vein, the forty citizens of Tahlequah had set up an arrangement with the Western Library Association of Kansas City to have a subscription library sent to town, consisting of fifty books a month that were housed at a Tahlequah drug store.(14) The public library movement in Tahlequah, as elsewhere, was aided after 1900 by a library program established by famed steel magnate Andrew Carnegie, who knew the value of continuing education. The first public libraries in Oklahoma, built in Oklahoma City and Guthrie, Oklahoma Territory, were constructed with Carnegie grants.(15)

Having made his fortune in the steel industry, Andrew Carnegie retired at age 65 in 1900 and devoted his remaining years to philanthropy. In total, his Carnegie Corporation (trustee for much of his enormous fortune) provided more than \$41 million for 1,689 free public library buildings in 1,419 communities around the United States. Oklahoma communities received \$464,500 in 24 Carnegie grants between 1899 and 1916. The first two grants went to Oklahoma City and Guthrie, in 1899 and 1901, respectively. The smallest Oklahoma grant went to Ponca City, in 1908, for \$6,500, and the largest went to Oklahoma City, for \$60,000, and to Muskogee, in 1910, for \$60,000. Three Carnegie grants were made in 1903, the peak year of Carnegie awards, when 203 were made in the nation. That year, Chickasha, Ardmore, and El Reno received funding.(16) As Chickasha and El Reno were in Oklahoma Territory, Ardmore received the first Carnegie grant, in 1903, completed its building in 1905, and opened it in 1906, becoming the first Carnegie Library in Indian Territory.

The Tahlequah Carnegie Library was established as a direct result of the combined efforts of Cleo Thompson Reid, wife of James H. Reid , as well as

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Mrs. J. A. Lawrence and Mrs. James S. Stapler, as well as Mayor A. S. Wylie, and the Tahlequah Board of Trade. On January 30, 1905 Mrs. Reid wrote a "taxpayer's letter" to the Carnegie Foundation asking for a library and extolling the modern aspect of Tahlequah and its forward-looking citizens. She also described the educational facilities. Although Carnegie did not usually award grants to towns so small as Tahlequah, apparently he was persuaded by the fact that the town was capital of an American Indian nation. After an encouraging response from the Foundation, Mayor Wylie and the Board of Trade followed suit in March and April with resolutions and an application form. In these documents they applied applied for a Carnegie grant of \$10,000, which was awarded on May 1, 1905. One condition of every Carnegie grant was that a community must pledge an annual amount of 10 percent of the grant, from tax monies and not from endowment or gift, to maintain the library; therefore, the City of Tahlequah's pledge was for the amount of \$1,000.(17)

At that time the Carnegie Corporation did not require that a library be designed by an architect, and no stylistic criteria were attached to the building's appearance. The exterior was left to the judgment of local architects, who were supposed to design a building "reflecting local tastes" and one that would persist as a "landmark." As to the interior, however, strong suggestions were made for separate reading rooms and, in two-story models, a lecture hall in the basement or on the second floor. In the instance of the Tahlequah building some details appear to have been suggested (the Carnegie Foundation began drawing specific interior and exterior design criteria and applying them in 1908 and after).(18) Tahlequah city officials announced a competition for architects in the second week of June 1905. In July the firm of McCaw and Bellis, of Muskogee, was selected.(19) The original McCaw and Bellis plans "were too expensive to build," and between July and October the interior appointments were downscaled. The planned building had included a raised basement with windows above ground level, but this was scaled back to a simple basement, and a planned hip roof with large skylight was scaled back to a simple skylight in the center of a flat roof. According to the *Tahlequah Arrow*, "The reduction was made in the basement, heating, electric wiring, plumbing, and the rolling partitions." This may explain the

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lack of interior partitioning into reading rooms and the consequent use for meetings.(20)A construction contract, in the amount of \$8,572, went to William Alston, of Tahlequah, in October, and the brick and stone contract to A. D. Brown. The stone was obtained from Carthage, Missouri.(21) The building's exterior was to be a restrained version of Classical Revival sometimes called "Carnegie Classical" and was chiefly notable for a full-height, pedimented portico sheltering the main (east) entrance. Construction continued, and in early March 1906 the building was substantially completed. In mid-April the trustees accepted the building, though it lacked heat and books.(22)

Unfortunately, financial constraints and the failure of the city to appropriate the required maintenance funds made it impossible to open the facility to the public when it was completed. The project languished through the rest of 1906 and all of 1907. Nevertheless, the library concept received a good deal of support from local citizens, if not from local government at first. A drug store ran a contest during April and May that offered residents an opportunity to vote on the placement of a set of books that local merchants would donate. The contest ended in mid-May with the public library receiving 32,896 votes to the public schools' 16,386.(23) While it is not known that the books went to the library, the contest did much to raise public consciousness of the problem. A meeting held in early October at the library building resulted in reorganization of a library board, and their first task was to obtain furniture, appoint a librarian, and get books.(24) The Tahlequah Carnegie Library opened to the public with formal ceremonies on February 29, 1908. The festivities included an opening prayer, musical interludes by the Male Seminary orchestra and vocal soloists, an addresses by Col. R. B. Ross, chair of the trustees, and others, and a reception. The library was to be open 1 to 5 p.m. six days a week and 1 to 6 on Sundays.(25)

The benefit of this institution to the community became immediately apparent and grew through the years. The library opened with a small collection and a librarian. Books and other materials were donated by civic organizations and individual citizens, and by 1932 the facility housed 3,000 volumes and had a circulation of 1,700 volumes per month. By 1937 the efforts of local women's clubs and an Annual Book Day had added a thousand more books.

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In the 1930s, and perhaps even later, students from Tahlequah High School "interned" in library practice, for school credit. Users of the library's materials included students and faculty of the area's schools and Northeastern State University.(26) In its early years the library also served another important educational mission: It was home to a small "museum" of art and artifacts of the Cherokee Nation. Portraits and photos of the Cherokee chiefs adorned the interior walls until 1964. Twelve chairs that had been used in the Cherokee Senate were sent to the facility, as was the "chief's desk." In addition, a large iron safe, on display in the main room, contained a number of documents pertinent to the history of the Cherokee Nation. Librarians and teachers were able to use the "museum" to instruct students in the history of the Cherokees.(27) After World War I, a large mural was installed in the arched opening over the circulation desk. This art work, depicting the goddess of Liberty and two Native American soldiers, commemorated the involvement of Tahlequah men in the war (painting removed and reinstalled over the entrance to the 1978 library building).(28) To enhance the education of disadvantaged groups, librarian Essa Gladney established a branch of the library at the local "separate" school serving African American students, and the American Legion Auxiliary raised money to buy a collection to be circulated to rural schools.(29) Further, the large open space of the reading room proved excellent for holding meetings of various social and civic clubs over the 1930s through 1990s.(30) In these ways, the Tahlequah Carnegie Library vitally enriched the educational offerings of the community.

In Oklahoma, 24 Carnegie Libraries were constructed between 1899 and 1917. Of these, 17 still stand, in various states of alteration: Ardmore (1905; NR 00000620), Bartlesville (1915), Collinsville (1917), Cordell (1911; NR 89001966), Elk City (1915), El Reno (1905; NR 80003257), Frederick (1915), Guthrie (1901; NR 73001564), Hobart (1912; NR 80003267), Lawton (1922), Muskogee (1908), Perry (1909), Sapulpa (1918), Shawnee (1906), Tahlequah (1907), Wagoner (1913), and Woodward (1916). Of the 17, only 8 are still libraries: Collinsville, Elk City, El Reno, Frederick, Hobart, Sapulpa, Tahlequah, and Wagoner. The others serve as museums or offices, and one, the 1905 Ardmore Carnegie Library, as a meeting place for local garden clubs. (The razed buildings include Chickasha, Enid, McAlester, Miami, Oklahoma City, Ponca City, and Tulsa.)(31)

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In 1978 the city of Tahlequah constructed a larger library adjacent to the Tahlequah Carnegie Library but retained the original building as a meeting room. Restoration efforts came in the 1990s (see above, Description). The new building was opened in October 1978.(32) After that time, the Carnegie Library's book storage and circulation purpose gave way to its secondary use, as a place for lectures, reading groups, and book sales.

EDUCATION SIGNIFICANCE:

The Tahlequah Carnegie Library is significant because of the role it played as a free public library in the continuing education of the population of Tahlequah and the surrounding community. Evidence of its importance came repeatedly over its ninety-five-year history, as time after time citizens provided the impetus for its maintenance and for its preservation in spite of opportunity to tear it down and build a better building. The library also served another educational purpose: From its inception and for several years thereafter, it served as a museum for the Cherokee Nation, with artifacts, paintings, and document strategically placed in the reading rooms, serving as reminders of the tribe's heritage. The Tahlequah Carnegie Library was the second Carnegie grant in Indian Territory and the only grant given to a functioning Indian Nation capital. The building has housed the county's only public library during its life, 1907-2002.

The Tahlequah Carnegie Library compares well to other properties in Tahlequah, both in terms of rarity of architectural style and in education significance. The 1889 Cherokee Female Seminary, now on campus of NEOSU, is a Romanesque building that was also listed under Criterion A (NR 73001558). Another education-related property, the Indian University building, is of similar style but much less imposing than the library. This two-story, wood-frame 1880 Classical Revival building with a flat-roofed, full-height portico, is of modest residential character. It was placed on the National Register in 1976 (NR 76001557) under Criterion A. In comparison, The Tahlequah Carnegie Library is the town's largest representative of a Classical Revival-style, free public library that worked with the community's formal, public and private educational institutions.

The library maintains integrity of location, setting, design, materials,

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craftsmanship, feeling, and association and is well able to visually convey its significance in the education history of Tahlequah, Oklahoma. The Tahlequah Carnegie Library is eligible for the National Register of Historic places under Criterion A for its significance in the pattern of education history of Tahlequah, Oklahoma, 1907-1952.

ENDNOTES

1. "Historic/Architectural Survey of Tahlequah, Oklahoma," City of Tahlequah and Meacham Associates, 1997, State Historic Preservation Office, Oklahoma Historical Society, Oklahoma City, 3-8.
2. Ibid., 23-24, 31.
3. W. B. Richards, comp., *Oklahoma Red Book*, Vol. 2 (Oklahoma City: N.p., 1912), 467, 565.
4. *Tahlequah Arrow*, 24 February 1906.
5. Deborah L. Duvall, *The Cherokee Nation and Tahlequah* (Charleston, S.C.: Arcadia Publishing, 1999), 45.
6. *Daily Oklahoman* (Oklahoma City), 29 January 1928; E. Fields, "Schools of the Cherokee Nation [WPA]," Vertical File, Library Resources Division, Oklahoma Historical Society, Oklahoma City.
7. C. W. West, *Tahlequah and the Cherokee Nation, 1841-1941* (Muskogee, Okla.: Muskogee Publishing Co., 1978), 104.
8. Odie B. Faulk and Billy M. Jones, *Tahlequah, NSU, and the Cherokees* (Tahlequah: Northeastern State University, 1984), 104.
9. West, *Tahlequah and the Cherokee Nation*, 115.
10. Ibid., 39-40, 57, 61, 93, 98, 113; Faulk and Jones, *Tahlequah*, 111.
11. *Tahlequah Arrow*, 24 February 1906.

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12. Faulk and Jones, *Tahlequah*, 111.

13. Susan Allen, "Progressive Spirit: The Oklahoma and Indian Territory Federation of Women's Clubs," *The Chronicles of Oklahoma* 66 (Spring 1988): 4-21. George S. Bobinski, *Carnegie Libraries: Their History and Impact in American Public Library Development* (Chicago, Ill.: American Library Association, 1969), 17, 96, 135, 172, 209; Theodore Jones, *Carnegie Libraries Across America: A Public Legacy*. (New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1997), 23, 53, 103, 158.

14. Tahlequah Board of Trade to Carnegie Foundation, 27 February 1905, "Carnegie Library Papers," Microfilm, Archives, Northeastern Oklahoma State University, Tahlequah, Oklahoma.

15. Allen, "Progressive Spirit," 4-21.

16. Bobinski, *Carnegie Libraries*, 17, 135, 172, 209; Jones, *Carnegie Libraries Across America: A Public Legacy*, 23, 53, 103, 158.

17. Mrs. J. Reid to Andrew Carnegie, 30 January 1905, City Council Resolution 24 April 1905, "Carnegie Library Papers," Microfilm, Archives, Northeastern Oklahoma State University, Tahlequah, Oklahoma; *Tahlequah Arrow*, 29 April 1905, 6 May 1905.

18. Bobinski, *Carnegie Libraries*, 57ff.

19. *Tahlequah Arrow*, 6 May 1905, 1 July 1905.

20. Ibid., 7 October 1905.

21. Ibid.

22. Ibid., 3 March 1906.

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23. Ibid., 13 April, 20 April, 11 May 1907.
24. Ibid., 19 October 1907.
25. Ibid., 29 February 1908.
26. Essa Gladney. Letter, "To those who will read this letter in the year 2000," 11 June 1932, Carnegie Library File, Archive, Northeastern Oklahoma State University, Tahlequah, Oklahoma; Oklahoma Libraries Commission, *Oklahoma Libraries, 1900-1937* (Oklahoma City: Oklahoma Libraries Commission, 1937), 92-93; *Cherokee County Democrat*, 27 June 1930.
27. *Tahlequah Arrow*, 29 April 1953.
28. Gladney Letter, 11 June 1932; "Tahlequah Report [WPA]," 29 April 1935, Vertical File, Library Resources Division, Oklahoma Historical Society, Oklahoma City.
29. Gladney Letter, 11 June 1932.
30. Oklahoma Libraries Commission, *Oklahoma Libraries, 1900-1937* (Oklahoma City: Oklahoma Libraries Commission, 1937), 93.
31. Jones, *Carnegie Libraries Across America: A Public Legacy*, 108, 158, augmented by data derived by personal contact by Dianna Everett with the librarians at Tahlequah, Collinsville, Bartlesville, Frederick, and Lawton, 27 October 1999; dates in parentheses indicate date of completion, derived from *Oklahoma Libraries, 1900-1937*, 173, 240.
32. *Tahlequah Pictorial Press*, 19 October 1978.

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VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION:

The boundary of the property includes the east one-half (1/2) of Block 77, Original Town of Tahlequah, Oklahoma.

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION:

This is the location of the tax-exempt entity "Carnegie Library" as ascertained from the "Assessment Rolls of 1979-1982 and 1983-1986, Cherokee County," page 49, lines 29 and 30, Tax Assessor's Office, Tahlequah, Cherokee County, Oklahoma.