

DH0369624

DATA SHEET

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY
RECEIVED MAY 18 1976
DATE ENTERED AUG 19 1976

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC
Carnegie Library
AND/OR COMMON

LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER
B Avenue and 5th Street NOT FOR PUBLICATION
CITY, TOWN
Lawton VICINITY OF No. 4
STATE CODE COUNTY CODE
Oklahoma 40 Comanche 031

CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE	
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input checked="" 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	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OTHER: <u>Empty</u>

OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME
The City of Lawton
STREET & NUMBER
City Hall
CITY, TOWN STATE
Lawton VICINITY OF Oklahoma

LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Office of the County Clerk
STREET & NUMBER
Comanche County Courthouse
CITY, TOWN STATE
Lawton Oklahoma

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE
Special Carnegie County Survey
DATE
1975 FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL
DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS Oklahoma Historical Society
CITY, TOWN STATE
Oklahoma City Oklahoma

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION

EXCELLENT
 GOOD
 FAIR

DETERIORATED
 RUINS
 UNEXPOSED

CHECK ONE

UNALTERED
 ALTERED (added to)

CHECK ONE

ORIGINAL SITE
 MOVED DATE _____

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Designed by J. W. Smith, a local architect, Lawton's Carnegie Library is an example of the modified Federal style commonly used for public buildings of the day (1922). Set back some thirty feet from its corner lot at the northeast quadrant of the B Avenue and 5th Street intersection, the building was originally a 52-foot square with a basement and main floor nine feet above ground level.

The exterior is of buff-tan brick, manufactured in a local plant. Window trim and other ornamentation is of white limestone quarried and cut in the area. The main corner entrance faces southwest and is guarded by two large columns reminiscent of the French Renaissance style. Capitals are very simple and resemble the Tuscan style. The columns support a flat-roofed entry canopy and the ornamentation of the fascia also resembles the Tuscan. Fenestration is plain and typical of buildings of this area, reflecting the non-existence of air-conditioning systems. Cornices of the library are of galvanized metal resembling a style of ornamentation called dentils, as used in early Greek and Roman structures.

A forty-foot addition to the north end of the library was completed in 1943. Interior of the building has been remodeled several times over the years, but its basic elements remain. Air-conditioning has been installed. However, the original hot water radiator heating system is still in operation. Although the library is now unused and in need of a few repairs, it is basically in good condition.

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 type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES 1922 - 1973

BUILDER/ARCHITECT J. W. Smith
(Lawton architect)

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Lawton's Carnegie Library would seem to represent some kind of a record for municipal persistence. The city itself first appeared on the short grass prairie of Southwestern Oklahoma on August 6, 1901, with opening of the vast Kiowa-Comanche lands to white settlement. Less than a year later, on August 2, 1902, the first letter was sent eastward to Andrew Carnegie, Esq., asking for his help. An interesting example of cultural ambition on what is often thought of as the "raw frontier" (a wasteland interested primarily in guns, cowboys, and hostile Indians), this first solicitation letter is both brash and straight-forward.

Written by a member of the law firm of Smith and Moore, and addressed directly to Mr. Carnegie, it read in part: "This place . . . started one year ago . . . now a town of 8,000 . . . destined to be a leading town in this country . . . a city library is needed greatly." The drive had begun. And almost twenty years later -- on June 22, 1922 -- the library was finally dedicated . . . the last to be built in Oklahoma by the Carnegie Corporation, and thought to be one of the last in the United States.

The delay was caused by lingering doubts in both Lawton and New York. Many citizens of the new town, for example, wanted a library and were willing to work for it. The Federation of Women's Club established a free city library in 1904 - in a room of the Citizens State Bank. It was later moved to City Hall. And early in 1910 the city council authorized the city clerk to communicate with the Carnegie Corporation "to ascertain what conditions and terms a Carnegie library may be built in this city . . . the Chamber of Commerce would furnish the site . . ."

But many Lawtonians also had reservations. A proposal to accept \$20,000 from the corporation toward cost of the project was put to a vote of the electors in 1915 and a majority approved. However, one citizen, a Harry Buckingham, promptly wrote in to note that the count showed only 536 for, 481 against, "giving a majority of only 55 in 1017 votes. . . Many of us feel we cannot afford the increased cost . . ." Other citizens expressed doubts, as did a member of the Oklahoma Library Board. This prompted James Bertram, secretary of the Carnegie Corporation, to express some doubts of his own. In a letter to Stratton D. Brooks, president of the University of Oklahoma he noted:

"The situation is now that out of 16 library buildings (in Oklahoma) statistics from the communities concerned show that in the case of four, pledges have not been kept. An official application signed by the Lawton city commissioners was received and \$20,000 was promised March 31, 1916, for the erection of a library building. . . ."

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

-- Unpublished research material prepared by Audrey Routh for the Lawton Heritage Association (Box 311, Lawton, OK 73501), 1975

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY less than one acre

UTM REFERENCES

A	<u>174</u>	<u>555520</u>	<u>3829400</u>	B			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C				D			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Kent Ruth, Deputy

ORGANIZATION

Oklahoma Historical Society

STREET & NUMBER

Historical Building

CITY OR TOWN

Oklahoma City

DATE

January 1976

TELEPHONE

405/884-5456

STATE

Oklahoma

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

SHPO

DATE MAY 14 1976

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

8/19/76

ACTING DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST:

DATE

8-18-76

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8

PAGE 1

Carnegie Library

Developments make the project far from promising. . . .It does not appear wise to proceed . . . unless there is absolute assurance of the community doing what is called upon and required to pledge. . . .To be frank the ranking of Oklahoma (with Carnegie Corp.) will not bear a further strain."

President Brooks agreed that a delay might be in order. He insisted, however, "Lawton is a substantial and rapidly growing city. . . .I am confident it should ultimately have a substantial library . . ."

In April 1917 another municipal election was held. This time the vote was 633 to 480 in favor of the library. But then World War I caused another delay. All Carnegie Library grants ended Nov. 7, 1917. After the war, however, previous commitments were honored. And on Oct. 6, 1920, E. G. Warren, then chairman of the library building committee, wired the corporation: "Plans and specifications for Lawton library complete. Contract ready. Money provided in annual budget by city commissioners. Letter follows." The city was finally over the hump.

Lawton's Carnegie Library was dedicated June 22, 1922. For 51 years it served the Lawton public schools, Cameron University, the sprawling Fort Sill military institution near by, and much of Comanche County. It was in continuous use until Dec. 16, 1973, when its books and other materials were moved to a new \$1 million facility a block to the east. Though no longer needed for its original purpose, the Library is being proposed by preservationists for Town Meeting Hall status so that it might continue to serve the community in a variety of new ways. Active in the preservation drive are the Lawton Heritage Association, the Lawton-Fort Sill Art Council and other civic groups, along with many concerned individuals.