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At the time of construction the c was vermillion, which was not waterproof. As a result of rain and weather, pink streaks soon appeared on the white stone, and the stone absorbed the color. With the passage of time and continual weathering, the entire structure has acquired a rosy hue. The color has led many viewers to the mistaken conclusion that the building was made of pink Colorado sandstone.

7. DESCRIPTION

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The building measures approximately 90 feet long and 55 feet wide. The main entrance is through a massive arched opening on the south, above which a square clock tower rises almost five stories. Directly above the main entrance appear the words "High School" in raised letters and the date 1890 in carved stone insets. The clock tower originally had a four-sided pyramidal roof, which has been removed. Window openings in the tower have been boarded up and the clock openings are From study of old photographs it appears that no clocks were empty. ever installed and the clock openings remained boarded up from the outset until the tower roof was removed.

A second arched entry way is located on the east side. Except for one large arched opening east of the main entrance the window openings on the first floor are simple rectangles. Those on the second floor have flat-arched openings on the east part where offices and classrooms were originally located and large rectangular openings with separated transoms on the west portion, the original auditorium. Third floor openings are generally rectangular except for arched windows in the tower and on the east and west gable. Many of the window openings have been partially or completely closed with wood painted to match the stone.

The building's exterior displayssmany intricate patterns of carving, particularly on the south front. Above the main entrance on either side of the "High School" letters are carved stone animals heads, apparently lion heads. And above the third floor tower windows under the paired semicircular arches are two stone dragons. Intricate carved leaf decorations appear at a number of places between the windows of the first and second floors.

The wood-shingled hip roof has two intersecting gables on the south, two on the north and one on the east. Massive stone chimneys protrude above the roof line, two on the west, one near the center of the north side and a smaller one on the east side. There are decorative corbeling-like effects at the tops of the three larger chimneys. The proportions of the structure were well balanced.

The general appearance of the exterior is not greatly different from the original. The inside has deteriorated and has been altered over the years to meet the needs of the different occupants. An intersecting gable of all frame construction originally located just west of the tower formed an additional third floor room; that roof and room are gone.

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8.	SIGNIFICANCE			
	PERIOD (Check One or More as A	ppropriate)		
	Pre-Columbian	16th Century	18th Century	20th Century
	15th Century	17th Century	XX 19th Century	
÷	SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable	and Known) 1890		
	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Chec	k One or More as Appropriat	e)	
÷.	Abor iginal	🕱 Education	Political	Urban Planning
	Prehistoric	Engineering	Religion/Phi-	Other (Specify)
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	Conservation	Music	Transportation	
	STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE			

Construction of the old Arkansas City High School began in 1890 after the board of education on April 9 selected the plans prepared by Charles Sedgewick of Minneapolis, Minn. The cost of the building was estimated at \$29,000. The Arkansas City <u>Weekly Republican</u> <u>Traveler</u> stated, "The plans selected are very fine and will give Arkansas City the most handsome high school building in Kansas."

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The contractor for the project was Robert Baird, a well-known area builder from nearby Hackney. Excavation for the structure was almost completed by mid-July and the stonework was beginning. One stone mason who worked on the building was Joseph Bossi, a native of Milan, Italy, who had settled on a farm southeast of Arkansas City in 1871. His neighbor Antonio Buzzi, a native of Switzerland, was also a stone mason and the two had worked together on many local buildings. It is possible that Buzzi too worked on the high school. One tragedy occurred during the construction: a worker named scaffold broke as he and a second man were dressing stone near the top of the east side.

In April, 1891, the building was being roofed and the goal was to have part of it ready for the meeting of the county normal (teachers' institute) in late July. The Arkansas City High School was first used by students in the 1891-1892 term which opened September 7. Some accounts relate that the building was not completely finished inside until 1893 and that the final cost was close to \$38,000. Robert Baird, the contractor, reportedly went broke on this job and returned to farming; his expected profits were lost when he had to have the stone used in the basement recut and dressed the same as the outside walls.

The high school classes were held in the building until the fall of 1922 when a new and larger facility was put into use. For a number of years the old high school was used by the combined sixth grades of the city and was known as the Departmental Buildings Later it was used by the city's recreation commission, and presently it is used by the Cowley County Community College for carpentry classes. Various community groups have expressed an interest in the building's restoration and discussions of continuing uses have included a museum, a cultural arts center and a meeting site.

The old Arkansas City High School is an outstanding example of the stonecutter's art. The fine detail and workmanship evident on the exterior make it one of the city's architectural landmarks. The building is also significant to the educational development of Arkansas City, having served the community since 1890.

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- Rinehart, Mrs. Bennett, and others, <u>The Story of Ark City</u>, <u>Kansas</u> (Newton, Kan., Mennonite Press, 1970-1971), p. 228.
- (Additional information furnished the Historical Society by the Community College from annual school reports and interviews with individuals who formerly taught or attended high school in the old high school building.)

