

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

For NPS use only

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

received **MAY 12 1987**

date entered **JUN 25 1987**

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

1. Name

historic Sterling Free Public (Carnegie) Library

and or common Same

2. Location

street & number 132 N. Broadway not for publication

city, town Sterling vicinity of

state Kansas code 20 county Rice code 159

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<u>N/A</u> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<u>N/A</u> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name City of Sterling

street & number City Hall

city, town Sterling vicinity of state Kansas 67579

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Rice County Clerk

street & number Rice County Courthouse

city, town Lyons state Kansas 67554

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title N/A has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date N/A federal state county local

depository for survey records N/A

city, town N/A state N/A

7. Description

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

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Sterling Free Public (Carnegie) Library (c. 1917) is located at 132 N. Broadway in Sterling, Rice County, Kansas (pop. 2,312). The one-story, brick, Jacobethan building stands on a corner lot one block north of Sterling's central business district. Its facade orientation is west. The original building measures approximately fifty-six feet from north to south and thirty-three feet from east to west. The 1982 rear addition measures fifty feet from east to west and thirty-four feet from north to south. The building retains its original function as a library.

The one-story, red brick building sits on a raised foundation with a limestone base. It is a rectangular structure with a cross gabled roof. Three bays comprise the facade, the original building is one bay deep, two bays comprise the building's rear, the addition is one bay deep. A gabled entry pavilion projects from the facade's center bay. A gabled roof addition projects from the building's rear, creating an ell-shaped structure. A small, pent roofed unit projects from the ell's center junction. A brick chimney rises from the addition's south roof slope.

A limestone belt course delineates the first floor level of the original building, this feature continues as a stylistic link on the addition. The original building retains its roof pantiles, compatible pantiles were used for the addition. The building's two original stepped gable ends and one new stepped gable end are capped with limestone or cast stone and incorporate limestone or cast stone corner blocks. This treatment is also evident on the building's projecting gable entry pavilion.

The projecting gable entry pavilion contains a large doorway with a quoined limestone surround. The original door treatment was replaced with a tinted glass and metal frame arrangement in 1979. A limestone frieze bearing the inscription "Public Library" surmounts the doorway. A diamond shaped limestone date tablet bearing the carving "1917" stands in the pavilion's gable. The tablet is delineated with a brick and limestone surround. Limestone capping and corner blocks conclude the pavilion's gable treatment. Stone steps lead up to the doorway, flanked by limestone capped brick abutments.

Identical window bays flank the pavilion. Three, 1/1 double hung windows surmounted by a narrow limestone entablature and underscored by a continuous sill form the first level fenestration. The windows appear to be new replacements.

The addition exhibits compatible fenestration. Three pairs of 1/1 double hung windows with limestone sills and lintels fenestrate the first level of the addition's northern elevation. Two pairs of the same window type fenestrate the addition's southern elevation. A door with steps pierces the eastern end of the southern elevation.

The interior of the original building maintains its overall floor plan and vestibule entrance with basement stair. The first floor ceiling in the original building was covered with dropped acoustic tiles in 1979. The original building's interior woodwork, such as the door and window surrounds, the staircase, and the vestibule door, is retained.

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nominated libraries maintain a high to moderate degree of architectural and structural integrity.

Industrialist Andrew Carnegie (1835-1919) and the Carnegie Corporation significantly influenced the development and expansion of public library systems worldwide. Between 1886 and 1921 Carnegie funds assisted in the construction of 1,681 city and 108 college libraries in the United States. As a region, the Mid-West, Kansas included, did not have a well established public library system until the Carnegie Program and ranks highest in the number of communities which obtained Carnegie Libraries nationwide. Out of the forty-six states to participate in the library building program, Kansas ranks approximately eleventh in the number of Carnegie Libraries built. For many Kansas communities, the Carnegie Library represented its first library building, providing an environment that all members of the community could share for the purposes of reading, learning, and education.

Eligibility for Carnegie Library funds rested on several factors. Firstly, the population of the community had to exceed 1,000; in Kansas this indicated at least a second class city status. This population requirement generally resulted in county seat communities applying for and receiving Carnegie Libraries. Some communities with populations less than 1,000 banded together with neighboring communities to achieve the 1,000 mark and applied for township libraries, as in the case of the Peabody and Canton Township libraries. In the case of college libraries this constraint may not have applied, although the four Kansas colleges to receive Carnegie libraries were located in cities which had populations in excess of 1,000 by 1900. Secondly, the applicant had to provide a site for the library. The sites tended to be one or two blocks outside of the community's main business district. Thirdly, the applicant had to provide an annual endowment for the maintenance and improvement of the library which amounted to at least ten percent of the initial grant from the Carnegie Corporation.

This last factor contributed to the ending of the Carnegie Library Building Program in 1917, although grants for books and other improvements continued for several more decades. An inherent problem for second class cities in Kansas was the .4 mill levy restriction for libraries, making it difficult for some communities to meet the annual ten percent maintenance appropriation solely through public dollars. In 1917 the Kansas State legislature increased the library levy to .5 mill for second and third class cities, an amendment which affected most of the communities in the State that had Carnegie Libraries. In 1916, large communities such as Topeka, Wichita, Hutchinson, and Leavenworth had library mill levies of 1.06, 1.2, 1.8, and 3.5 respectively. In Kansas, the average public library grant was \$12,000 and the average college library grant was \$37,000. These monies covered the cost of the building, the necessary furniture and fixtures, and the architects' fees.

Prior to 1910, the Carnegie Corporation did not provide design guidelines for the libraries that it funded and because the library was a relatively new building type, few architects and/or builders had experience with its design. Many of the early libraries were expensive examples of the Beaux Arts style with little focus on floor plan and space

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efficiency. In 1910, Carnegie's personal secretary James Bertram developed model specifications and floorplans for proposed libraries, entitling his work Notes on Library Buildings. The Notes on Library Buildings provided the first widely circulated guidelines for library design in this country.

Bertram wrote:

Small libraries should be pland (sic) so that one librarian can oversee the entire library from a central position.... The bilding (sic) should be devoted exclusively to: (main floor) housing of books and their issue for home use; comfortable accommodations for reading them by adults and children; (basement) lecture room; necessary accommodation for heating plant; also all conveniences for the library patrons and staff. Experience seems to sho (sic) that the best results for a small general library are obtained by adopting the one-story and basement rectangular type of bilding (sic), with a small vestibule entering into one large room sub-divided as required by means of bookcases.... The rear and side windows may be kept about six feet from the floor, to giv (sic) continuous wall space for shelving. A rear wing can be added for stack-room (when future need demands it) at a minimum expense, and without seriously interfering with the library servis (sic) during its construction. The site chosen should be such as to admit lite (sic) on all sides, and be large enuf (sic) to allow extension, if ever such should become necessary.

The thirty-six Carnegie Libraries built in Kansas after 1910 reflect Bertram's precedents, exhibiting high space utilization, and often including full basements, although the raised basement is a design element employed in the earlier libraries as well. Most of these one-story libraries exhibit a three bay, Neo-Classical facade with a projecting central pedimented entry pavilion and are one bay deep. The use of native limestone is evident in some of the libraries but the most common material combination is brick with a limestone foundation. While there is some tendency toward a vernacular interpretation to the design ornamentation of these libraries, the general approach verges on high style.

Correspondence between the Carnegie Corporation and the library boards from the Kansas communities that received Carnegie Libraries indicates that the designs for these libraries were carefully scrutinized by Bertram and in many cases, were resubmitted several times before meeting his requirements. Upon the completion of a library, the library board was instructed to send a full set of blueprints and elevations of the building to the Corporation. However, recent correspondence between the Kansas State Historical Society and the Carnegie Corporation reveals that the Corporation does not have blueprints of the Kansas libraries. The Corporation does have some library photographs but the collection is not inclusive.

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Three architects were particularly active in the design of Kansas Carnegie Libraries: George P. Washburn of Ottawa, Kansas designed nine, A. T. Simmons of Bloomington, Illinois designed six, and William Warren Rose of Kansas City, Kansas designed four. Washburn's libraries are primarily of the standard three-bay, Neo-Classical variety. His firm is credited with the Carnegie libraries in Burlington, Canton, Cherryvale, Columbus, Eureka, Halstead, Osawatomie, Ottawa, and Sterling. Simmons engaged in a more eclectic approach, designing libraries in Abilene, Chanute, Council Grove, Downs, Hays and Yates Center. Rose is credited with the classically inspired libraries in Argentine, Kansas City, Manhattan, and Newton. In Kansas, many Kansas based architects were commissioned to design Carnegie Libraries as well as architects from Illinois, Missouri, Nebraska, and Texas.

Today, many of the state's Carnegie Libraries are facing serious space shortages. The alternatives of adding on or vacating both present preservation problems. Additions to these libraries must be such that the building's original character is not altered. Vacating the library for a larger facility leaves the problem of an empty building, in some communities county historical societies have inherited the empty Carnegie Library. In any event, when these buildings are no longer recognized from a design standpoint as Carnegie Libraries, their architectural significance ceases.

9. Major Bibliographical References

See attached sheet.

10. Geographical Data

Acreege of nominated property Less than 1 acre

Quadrangle name Sterling

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UTM References

A

1	5	5	6	9	4	6	0	4	2	2	8	3	0	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 The nominated property stands on Lots 182, 184, 186, 188 on Broadway in Sterling, Kansas. The rectangular tract is bounded to the west by Braodway, to the north by Jefferson, and to the east and south by adjacent property lines.

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 Martha Gray Hagedorn, Architectural Historian

organization Kansas State Historical Society date April 15, 1987

street & number 120 West 10th Street telephone 913-296-5264

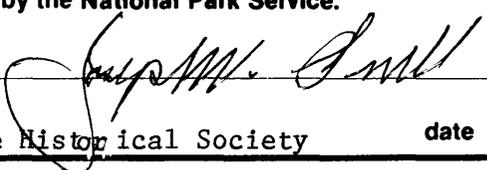
city or town Topeka state Kansas 66612

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

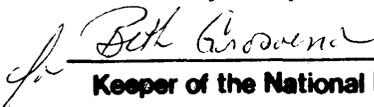
As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature 

title Executive Director, Kansas State Historical Society date April 15, 1987

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

 date 6/25/87
Keeper of the National Register

Attest: _____ date _____

Chief of Registration

