

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER
LISTED

NOV 15 2005

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A) Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-9000a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

Historic name Protection High School

Other name/site number South Central Middle School and Elementary

2. Location

Street & number 210 S. Jefferson ☐ not for publication

City or town Protection ☐ vicinity

State Kansas Code KS County Comanche Code 033 Zip code 67127

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this ☒ 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 ☒ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant ☐ nationally ☒ statewide ☐ locally. (☐ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Christy Davis 10/6/05
Signature of certifying official/Title Date
Kansas State Historical Society

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 official /Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

- ☐ 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:)

Historic Public Schools of Kansas
Protection High School, Comanche County, Kansas

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
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
2	4	buildings
		sites
	1	structures
		objects
2	5	total

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

**Number of contributing resources previously listed
in the National Register**
0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter Categories from instructions)

EDUCATION: School

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

EDUCATION: School

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

LATE 19th and 20th CENTURY REVIVALS:
Late Gothic Revival

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

Foundation: Concrete

Walls: Brick

Roof: Clay Tile

Other: Stone Detailing

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

Historic Public Schools of Kansas
Protection High School, Comanche County, Kansas

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "X" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register)

- ☒ **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 likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)
Property is:

- ☐ **A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- ☐ **B** removed from its original location.
- ☐ **C** a birthplace or 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

Narrative Statement of Significance

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

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

EDUCATION

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

1930 - 1955

Significant Dates

1930

1950

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

Routledge & Hertz, Architects; Geo. O. Corlett, Contractor

Hibbs & Robinson, Architect; Jenson & Ridge, Contractor –
1950 Grade School Addition

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

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

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- ☐ 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: _____

Historic Public Schools of Kansas
Protection High School, Comanche County, Kansas

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property: Approximately 10

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	1	4	4	5	7	2	9	7	4	1	1	6	9	7	3	3																	
Zone	Easting								Northing								Zone	Easting								Northing							
2																	4																

☐ 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 Brenda R. Spencer

Organization Preservation Planning and Design Date 13 May, 2005

Street & number 10150 Onaga Road Telephone 785-456-9857

City or town Wamego State Kansas Zip code 66547

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional items

(Check with SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

name USD 300 Comanche County

street & number P.O. Box 721, 600 N. Leavenworth telephone 620-582-2181

city or town Coldwater state KS zip code 67029

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16) U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reduction Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503

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**Historic Public Schools of Kansas
Protection High School, Comanche County, Kansas**

Narrative Description

Protection High School, constructed in 1930, is a two-story red brick building with a clay tile intersecting hip roof. The building is a T-shaped plan with classrooms forming a "U" shape around the rear central gymnasium. A grand ornamental entrance is centrally located and one-story projecting bays define the end wings on the front facade. The school is an excellent representative of Collegiate Gothic architecture which emerged as the predominant style of school construction in the period following World War I. The main entrance is framed by stone quoined, round pilasters with ogee (gothic) arched stone surrounds on the brick parapet above the upper windows, both common characteristics of the Collegiate Gothic style. Three individual windows are located over three recessed doorways at the stone central entry bay; these door and window openings have ogee arched surrounds. The school retains the original 6/3 double-hung wood windows and the original arched transoms at the front entrance.

The Protection Grade School, a one-story brick structure was constructed north of the High School in 1950. This school was connected to the High School at the northeast corner off the gymnasium; the schools shared the high school gymnasium and grade school cafeteria. The grade school is a simple, modified-rectangular plan. Modern in its lack of ornament and simplicity of form, the one-story building has a flat roof and retains its original multi-pane steel windows. Originally, the two schools appeared to be free-standing from the front (connected at the rear); in 1983, a contemporary glass corridor was constructed to connect the two structures on the front facade and provide a new common entrance to both buildings.

Protection High School was constructed in 1930, designed by Hutchinson architects Routledge & Hertz. The Grade School, constructed in 1950, was designed by Wichita's architects Hibbs & Robinson. Both schools are representative of each architect's body of work, and reflect the period in which they were built.

Site

The Protection schools are located on S. Jefferson two blocks north of Highway 160 and two blocks southeast of Protection's central business district. This site has served as the location of Protection schools since the first public school was built there in 1887. A high school was officially established in 1912 and a two-story red brick Progressive Era High School constructed in 1913. Two large frame buildings (1887 & 1907) on the same site, served as the grade school. One of the two frame buildings was removed for the construction of the new high school in 1930 and the other (on the northeast corner) was removed in the past 25 years. The 1913 high school, located northeast of the existing school, became the grade school when the existing high school was constructed in 1930. This school was removed with the construction of the existing grade school in 1950. A new gym, music room and shop were built on the south end and rear of the high school in 1959. The building took its current form in 1983 when the rear shop was expanded and the new common entrance was built between the two schools on the front (west) side.

The schools face west, fronting S. Jefferson Street, and are setback from the street. The curb is recessed to provide perpendicular parking along the street in front of the school. A concrete sidewalk runs along curb in front of the schools and walks extend to each of the three school entrances and the gym entrance on the south end. Large mature trees are located along the perimeter sidewalk and a small lawn spans between the sidewalk and school buildings.

A playground is located in the rear including a paved basketball court. There are two metal storage buildings at the rear of the high school and two buildings (concessions and storage) south of the school. A gravel parking lot is located south of the school. The stadium is located south of the parking lot with bleachers on the north and south sides. An additional parking lot is located on the west side of Jefferson Street across from the stadium and parking lot.

Exterior

Protection High School was built in 1930 as a free-standing building southwest of the 1913 school. The school is a two-story red brick structure with a concrete foundation. It has an intersecting truncated hip roof with the original red clay tile in place. The top, flat portion of the roof is built-up composition roofing. A central gymnasium projects from the rear of the building forming a T-shaped plan.

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**Historic Public Schools of Kansas
Protection High School, Comanche County, Kansas**

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The front facade is comprised of five bays and faces west. The outer bays or end wings project slightly from the building facade, as does the central entry bay. Brick pilasters frame the gabled end wings, each with a one-story projecting bay. The projecting bays have a brick base, five double-hung windows with arched stone surrounds, and a stepped brick parapet with a stone cap. Bays two and four comprise the main body of the front facade. Three pairs of 6/3 double-hung wood windows are located on each floor of these bays. The windows have stone sills and vertical brick stretcher course lintels. The windows are original, the only alteration being the addition of window air-conditioning units in some locations.

The stone central entry bay is finely detailed providing the primary ornament on the red brick building. Hexagonal brick pilasters with stone quoining and a stone base frame the central entry bay. A simple stone cornice forms a horizontal band below and above the second-floor windows. The pilasters extend above the eave of the clay tile roof and are capped with three small spires, each with a round ball at the top. A brick parapet spans between the pilasters above the upper windows on which a stone surround frames three ogee arched panels. Carved rosettes and fluted dome caps are located on the parapet cap between the arches. Coursed ashlar stone surrounds frame three arched doorways on the ground floor and three arched windows on the upper floor. "High School" is inscribed in a stone panel over the entrance. The entrance is comprised of three individual arched, recessed doorways. The original five-light arched transoms are in place; the original three horizontal light over two panel wood doors have previously been replaced. The existing wood doors have three vertical lights.

The south facade is comprised of five bays framed by massive brick pilasters on each end. The outer two bays have a pair of windows on each floor; the center three bays have a set of three windows per floor. The windows are the original 6/3 double-hung wood windows. Aluminum storms are in place on the south facade. Basement access is provided on the south facade, a single door flanked by a multi-paned steel window on each side. The 1959 gymnasium addition connects to the original school at the east end bay of the south facade.

The east (rear) facade was originally symmetrical, comprised of five distinct parts: gabled end wings, a narrow entry bay flanking the central gymnasium, and the central gymnasium. The gabled end wings are solid brick walls. The entry bays were originally a single door and flanking window with multi-light transoms, on the first and second floors on each side of the gymnasium. The north entry bay was altered with the addition of the grade school in 1950 and the south entry bay was altered with the addition of the 1959 new gymnasium. The upper floor exits and steel fire escapes are extant; the lower exits obscured by the former additions. The rear of the gymnasium is divided into four equal bays by brick pilasters with beveled stone caps. There are two multi-pane steel windows per floor in each bay.

The north facade is similar to the south facade but the end wing extends further on the north end than on the south. The north facade is comprised of six bays, also framed by massive brick pilasters on each end. It was originally symmetrical with the exception of the west end of the ground floor where large paneled doors provided access into the shop. With the exception of the west end ground floor, the end bays had a pair of windows on each floor while the center four bays had a set of three windows on each floor. The original doors into the shop have been infilled although a shadow is evident. The construction of the new entry/corridor connection between the two buildings in 1983 obscures the east four ground-level bays. The remainder of the north facade is in near original condition. The original 6/3 double-hung wood windows are in place and aluminum storm windows have been installed on the upper windows.

Protection Grade School Addition- Exterior

Protection Grade School was constructed in 1950 as an addition off the north end of high school. It is a one-story red brick structure with a flat roof that has a simple stone cap. The design of the school reflected the Modern Movement in architecture, exemplified by its horizontal form, simple rectangular massing and general lack of ornament. The front (west) facade is comprised of three sections: the central main body of the school and recessed end wings, forming a U-shaped plan. The entrance is located on the north end wing, a pair of double doors with a glass block panel on the right. Raised slightly above grade, the entry is accessed by two steps with a concrete landing. The doors and glass block are framed by a concrete overhang with a tapered support. Three square stone panels are inset in the brick to the left of the entrance. Three classrooms are located in the north end wing. The main body of the building is defined by four sets of windows, outlined by a simple stone band. The sets of windows are comprised of four horizontal-paned metal windows with operable hopper panels. The cafeteria is located in the south end wing, recessed like the entry on the north. The

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front (west) facade of the south end wing is now obscured by the 1983 enclosed entry. The rear (east) facade of the main body of the school is nearly identical to the front with four sets of four windows. There are individual horizontal-paned metal windows on each of the end wings. All of the windows are original but the doors are contemporary replacements. Window air-conditioning units are in place in some rear windows.

Exterior Alterations

The first major expansion following construction of the Grade School in 1950 was the addition of a shop, music room, and new gymnasium in 1959. This addition was constructed off of the southeast corner of the high school. It was a simple one-story brick structure with a flat roof. The gymnasium had a low-pitched gable roof and horizontal metal windows just below the roof line on the south facade. A one-story entry foyer is located on the west side of the gym and a one-story locker room is located on the east side of the gym. The gymnasium entry foyer extends off of the east end of the south facade of the school; the music room and shop are located east of the original south end wing. The shop was expanded to the east in the 1983 addition, clearly distinguished by brick color.

Construction of the grade school in 1950 and the 1959 gym addition did result in modification of the rear entrances to the original school (located on each side of the rear gymnasium). A door and flanking window were removed at the ground floor on both sides and the fire escapes modified on the second floor to provide egress over the one-story additions. A new ground floor entrance was installed at the rear of the north end wing, providing access to the kitchen and cafeteria, as well as the original high school corridor.

In 1983, improvements to the high school included an expansion of the 1959 shop, addition and remodeling of administrative offices, and the new entrance connecting the two schools on the west (front) facade. The connection is a one-story brick and glass enclosure that extends from the north facade of the high school and encloses a corridor in front of the grade school cafeteria. This enclosure became the new main entrance to both schools. Although obviously altering circulation patterns, the original entrances were retained on both the High School and Grade School. The "connection" involved little modification of either original structure.

The only major exterior alterations are the two additions described above, both off secondary facades with little impact on the original structures. The schools retain significant historic fabric; these are two of the few remaining public schools with original windows intact. The wood windows and the clay tile roof on the high school do show signs of wear and are in need of maintenance and/or repair. Overall, the exterior of both the high school and grade school are remarkably intact; the original design and character is clearly maintained.

Interior

Despite its Collegiate Gothic exterior, the plan of Protection High School was typical of schools designed in the Progressive Era. A double loaded corridor forms a U-shape around the central rear gymnasium and provides access to classrooms around the perimeter of the building. The corridors terminate at the rear entrances on each side of the gymnasium. Open stairways are located at each end on the west side of the gymnasium, flanking the enclosed stage. There is an enclosed foyer at the main central entrance on the west facade. The original pair of multi-light wood doors and multi-light sidelights and transom is extant. Administrative offices were located inside the front entrance to the south. The floor plan is slightly asymmetrical as the right end wing extends east further than the south end wing. On the ground floor, the manual training shop was located in the north end wing, the domestic science room in the south end wing. Boys' and girls' restrooms were located at the east end of the north and south wings while three classrooms were located along the west side of the ground floor. On the second floor, three classrooms were located in the north and south end wings. A large study hall spanned the west side of the building on the second floor. The school was constructed with a partial basement, a fuel room and boiler room located in the south end wing accessed from the interior and exterior.

Although there have been changes in the use of interior spaces resulting in some alteration of interior partition walls, significant interior finishes and features remain intact. Like many schools of this era, the corridors feature terrazzo flooring with a concrete base. The plaster walls are extant but the original ceilings obscured by suspended acoustic tile. The corridors also feature multi-pane steel clerestory windows. Many of the original interior doors are also extant; the doors are three-light over a louvered panel wood doors. The original stairways are in place although carpet has been installed

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on the stair treads and risers. The original cast-iron newel posts and railings are extant. Carpeting has been installed in most classrooms. Classrooms ceilings vary including suspended ceilings, applied acoustic tile, and plaster. Most classrooms retain original features such as chalk boards. The original interior window surrounds including brick sills and wood trim is also in place (painted in most locations).

The original central gymnasium is in place although it has been remodeled. The original curved wood stage is in place on the west side of the gym. The gymnasium was designed for a basketball court but proved to be inadequate. There was limited floor seating and narrow balconies on the north, east, and south sides. A new gym was built on the south side of the school in 1959. Following its construction, the original gym was remodeled. The floor seating was removed as was the wood gym floor (vinyl installed). Balcony access from the second floor corridor was closed but the balconies were retained. The original multi-pane steel windows remain in place. This space is still used for vocal music.

Protection Grade School Addition – Interior

The grade school is a U-shaped plan with recessed end wings on the north and south. The corridor is L-shaped running north-south and extending east in the north wing to access classrooms in the northeast corner. The school was originally connected to the high school by a corridor at the rear of the kitchen/cafeteria. In the 1983 remodeling, the main north-south corridor was extended to connect with the high school.

Protection Grade School is a typical 1950 modern school. The one-story structure has relatively low ceilings with the original applied acoustic tile and original light fixtures in the corridors. The corridors and cafeteria have VAT flooring while carpet has been installed in most classrooms. Glazed block wainscoting is in place in the corridors and cafeteria while all other walls are plaster. Two-light clerestory windows are extant in the corridor but the glass has been replaced by wood panels. The original three-light wood interior doors are in place as are the original horizontal metal windows with operable hopper panels. The windows have plaster surrounds and glazed tile sills. Suspended ceilings have been installed in most classrooms. The classrooms do retain original trim and features such as chalk boards.

Interior Alterations

Protection Grade School was constructed in 1950. Although the building almost appeared to be free-standing, north of the 1930 high school, it was connected to the high school at the rear of the north end wing. The high school was built without a kitchen or cafeteria. The old high school on the same site continued to be used as a grade school after the new high school was building in 1930. High school students ate lunch in the old high school until it was torn down for the construction of the new grade school in 1950. The 1930 high school and 1950 grade school were designed to share the high school auditorium/gymnasium and the grade school kitchen and cafeteria, accessed through a corridor off the rear of the grade school cafeteria to the rear of the north end wing of the high school.

The 1959 expansion involved the addition of the new gym on the south end of the original school, as well as a new music room, rest rooms, and an industrial arts shop off the east end of the original south end wing. The expansion was designed by Woods & Starr Architects of Hays. The gym has a low-pitched gable roof with exposed wood beams on the ceiling. The gym has a wood floor and glazed block wainscoting. Retractable wood bleachers provide seating on the north and south sides of the new gym. A one-story entry foyer is located on the west end of the gym, extending from the east end of the south facade of the original school. A one-story locker room is located along the east side of the gym. The music room and shop addition did result in some modification of the interior of the original school. The original girls' restroom was removed to allow connection to the new gym lobby. New restrooms were provided off the gym lobby and on the west side of the original school. The location of the original shop in the northwest corner was remodeled to accommodate the science laboratory where the original exterior doorway on the west end of the north facade was infilled.

As noted under "Exterior", the construction of the grade school in 1950 and the expansion in 1956 did result in modification of the original rear entrances where the corridor terminated on each side of the gymnasium. The U-shaped corridor is however, maintained; it now connects with a corridor to the music room and shop, and gym lobby on the south end, and the kitchen and cafeteria on the north.

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The final interior alteration occurred in a 1983 remodeling project designed by Mann & Co. of Hutchinson. This project involved an expansion of the 1959 shop (to the east), and the connection of the two schools on the west (front) facade. This "connection" included some new construction for administrative offices in the small void between the two schools. The connection serves as the new main entrance to both schools with administrative offices located across from the new entrance. This project did result in minor modification of original partition walls. The original corridor was extended through the science laboratory (original shop) in the northwest corner, to connect to the new corridor/entrance in front of the grade school cafeteria. The east end of the original shop was converted to offices. The former boys' restroom was removed and converted to a classroom.

Despite former interior modifications, the high school retains significant original features and finishes and maintains the original circulation pattern with the corridor around the rear gymnasium. With the exception of addition of the connection to the high school, the interior of the grade school is in near original condition. The grade school retains its original primary corridor configuration, original ceiling height in the corridor, and original features and finishes included the original corridor light fixtures. The interiors of both schools clearly portray the original design and character.

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Protection High School, Comanche County, Kansas

Narrative Statement of Significance

Protection High School is nominated to the National Register under the multiple property documentation form, *Historic Public Schools of Kansas*. The school is significant on a state and local level under Criterion A as the public school in Protection, an important component in the development and survival of the small rural community in southwest Kansas. The school is also significant under Criterion C as a representative of a Late Gothic Revival educational structure and work of Hutchinson architects Routledge and Hertz.

The 1930 high school is a two-story red brick school that has a grand central entrance and projecting bays on the end wings with stone detailing typical of Collegiate Gothic structures. The high school has an intersecting truncated hip roof that retains its original red clay tile and is one of the few public schools that maintains its original double-hung wood windows. Protection Grade School was constructed north of the High School in 1950, a one-story red brick structure with horizontal bands of metal windows. The school's simple form with a flat roof and lack of ornament is characteristic of schools built in the Modern Movement. The high school and grade school were inextricably linked by design with students sharing the high school auditorium and the grade school cafeteria. Protection High School and the Grade School addition are clearly representative of the period in which they were built. The high school now functions as South Central Middle School and the Grade School continues to function as the Elementary School. The Protection High School is an excellent representative of the Town High School property type and meets the registration requirements set forth in the multiple property submission.

The Town of Protection

Located on the Atchison, Topeka, and Santa Fe rail line, Protection is a rural community situated between Bluff and Calvary creeks in northwest Comanche County. Comanche County is located in the tier of counties along the Oklahoma boarder. Protection is approximately 120 southwest of Wichita and 45 miles southeast of Dodge City.

Settlers first arrived in Comanche County in the early 1870s. The County was politically organized in 1873. By the fall of 1884, the number of legal residents in the county had topped 600, the threshold for state recognition. Coldwater, centrally located (15 miles northeast of Protection), was selected as the permanent county seat in April of 1885. The county experienced tremendous early growth, reaching a population of 5,000 by 1886. Ten years later, the population had dropped to 1269 but rebounded to its peak population of 5302 in 1920. By 1980, the county population had been reduced by half and stands at just fewer than 2,000 today.¹

New arrivals to the area settled near Protection in early 1884. The town site was located by the Protection Town Company in June and the post office established in August the same year. There is significant debate regarding the source of the town's name. Consensus seems to be that it most likely linked to the protective tariff, a hot issue in the 1884 presidential campaign. Republican candidate James Blaine favored the tariff but was defeated by Grover Cleveland, a Democrat who favored free trade. Protection was settled by staunch Republicans who reportedly supported the tariff.²

Red Bluff, a new town along Bluff Creek a mile and a half northwest of Protection, had also been established in 1884. Elbridge Phelps, a newspaperman from Missouri, arrived in Protection in early 1885. Phelps partnered with Protection resident, Herb Ross, to establish the town's first newspaper – *The Protection Echo*. The newspaper is credited with planting the idea that the towns of Protection and Red Bluff unite to form a single, thriving town rather than competing for local residents and businesses. The Red Bluff Town Company prevailed, becoming the charter for Protection and the Protection townsite was chosen as the best location for the new town.³

Protection's townsite was surveyed in March of 1885. East/west streets, paralleling Main, were named for trees; north/south streets were named after presidents. The primary business district was laid out at the intersection of Main Street and Broadway. The newly consolidated town experienced a major boom in 1885, growing from a town of three frame buildings and eighteen residents to more than sixty structures by early 1886.

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The town's population exceeded three hundred by 1890 but dropped to less than 100 again in the 1890s as the area suffered from drought and the opening of land in Oklahoma. The town rebounded after the turn of the century. Protection was incorporated in January of 1908 with a population just over 200. By this time, Protection's business district spanned from Main Street, along Broadway north to the railroad. The town was well established and experienced major improvements in the next two decades. A power plant and electrical system was installed in 1911. Following previous short-lived attempts, the Protection Telephone Company was also founded in 1911. The town's water system was established in 1914, and curb and gutters were installed along Broadway in 1915. Basic city services were completed with the construction of a sewer system in 1920 and street lights in 1929. Protection experienced rapid growth reaching its peak population of 1,145 in 1918. Sixty years later, in 1980, the population of Protection was 695; today it is approximately 550. The town maintains an active business district that offers basic goods and services. The schools are an important part of the community and a center of social activity.⁴

Protection Schools

The first public building constructed in Protection was a two-story city hall located on the northwest corner of Broadway and Main; *The Protection Echo*, moved into the upper floor of this building in mid-1884.⁵ The first school taught in Protection began on June 1, 1885 and was located on the first floor of this building. It was a subscription school taught by Mr. E.C. Clayton and had nineteen students. The first public school instruction occurred that fall in the same building. A new frame public schoolhouse was built in 1887 on the current school grounds with an enrollment of 52 pupils.⁶

District No. 15, including Protection and surrounding rural areas, was organized in 1895. In 1907, a two-room frame school house was built in the northeast part of the current school site.⁷ This building was enlarged to five rooms in 1908.⁸ The district grew rapidly with the population of the town. A high school was organized in 1909 with eight students enrolled. The first brick school in Protection was a two-story structure completed in 1913 at a cost of \$25,000 on the same site.⁹ This school housed the newly accredited high school and some elementary classes.¹⁰

Protection High School was formally organized in 1913 under the Barnes Act (1907 Kansas law that authorized a county mill levy for the establishment of a high school); the high school received state accreditation the same year.¹¹ Three students comprised the first graduating class in 1913.

The first school consolidation in Protection occurred in 1922 when several rural districts consolidated with Protection.¹² By 1928, the school population exceeded 400 and the existing facilities were overcrowded. In 1929, the high school had an enrollment of 165 students and the grade school, 259 students. These conditions prompted construction of the existing high school.

Protection High School (1930) -

The June 5th edition of *The Protection Post* featured the architect's rendering of the new high school to be built in Protection. The caption read, "Protection's new \$100,000 high school...Modern in every appointment." The school was designed by Hutchinson architect's Routledge and Hertz and Geo. O. Corlett & Co. was the general contractor. It is nearly identical in design to the Leoti High School, built in 1925 and designed by the same architects. Protection High School was completed in the fall of 1930; the official building dedication was held Friday, October 10, 1930.

Like most modern school plans of the era, the new Protection school featured classrooms designed for specific uses. The Vocational Agriculture Shop was located in north wing on the ground floor, Domestic Science in the south wing. The second floor featured a large study hall. A combined gymnasium and auditorium included comfortable seats that could be tucked away under the stage for basket ball and athletics. The school also featured private lockers for students and class bells controlled by an electric clock.

With the opening of the new high school, the former high school became the grade school. High School students still went to lunch in the old building as the new one was constructed without a kitchen or cafeteria.

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Additions (1950, 1959 and 1983) –

Beginning in 1946, several rural districts in the western third of the county disorganized and joined Protection.¹³ In 1950, a new grade school and lunchroom was constructed north of the 1930 high school. The modern one-story school was designed by Wichita architects, Hibbs & Robinson; Jenson & Ridge, Inc. were the contractors. The school was connected to the high school through a corridor behind the cafeteria/kitchen. High school students continued to use the grade school cafeteria and grade school students used the high school auditorium/gymnasium.

In 1959, the high school was expanded to the southeast with the construction of a new gymnasium, music room and shop. The addition was designed by Woods & Starr Architects of Hays; McBride & Dehmer were the contractor. The last major alteration of the two school occurred in 1983. The improvements included expansion of the 1959 industrial arts shop and construction of new administrative offices connecting the two schools and providing a new shared main entrance. Mann & Co. of Hutchinson were architects for the 1983 project.

Additional consolidation with other rural districts in the county occurred through the state-mandated consolidation in 1966. Wilmore High, in the northeast corner of the county, closed in the 1960s but Protection and Coldwater retained separate schools. Thirty years later, with declining enrollment, the Coldwater and Protection schools were consolidated. The last class graduated from Protection High School in 1999. All students now attend high school in Coldwater while students in grades kindergarten through 8, remain in Protection. The Protection schools function as two schools – South Central Elementary School and South Central Middle School, with shared administration.

Summary

The public schools in Protection have all been located on the current site, two blocks southwest of the central business district. Protection High School was constructed in 1930, built to alleviate overcrowded conditions in the Town's first (1913) brick high school. The former then became the grade school and served that function until the existing grade school was constructed in 1950. The high school is an excellent example of Collegiate Gothic, which emerged as the dominant architectural style of public school sin the period following World War I. The ornate stone detailing, stone quoining, and clay tile hip roof are all dominant characteristics typical of the Collegiate Gothic style. The design of the high school did reflect modern school design with the inclusion of classrooms designed for specific uses; Protection High School had classrooms designed for Vocational Agriculture/Industrial Arts and Domestic Science. The school was also designed with a combined auditorium/gymnasium and a large study hall, in addition to the regular class rooms.

Protection Grade School was constructed north of the high school in 1950, replacing the former (1913) high school building. The Grade School is characteristic of the Modern Movement in design of public schools reflecting modern construction techniques and simplicity in design and form. The one-story brick structure has a flat roof and little ornamentation. The horizontal form is distinguished by horizontal bands of metal windows and the entrance at one end of the building.

Protection High School is an excellent example of the work of Hutchinson architects Routledge and Hertz. Harry R. Routledge and Henry Potter Hertz partnered for only a short time, from 1925 – 1932; yet during that period, they were responsible for the design of no less than six county courthouses and numerous public schools in Kansas. They designed the county courthouses in Comanche, Edwards, Finney, Gray, Hodgeman, and Sherman counties, and public schools in Sylvia, Longford, Protection, Leoti, and Winona. The Protection school is nearly identical to the Leoti school designed in 1925 (these are the only known Collegiate Gothic structures designed by the duo). Their body of work reflects a variety of architectural styles.

Protection Grade School was designed by Wichita Architects Hibbs and Robinson. The firm designed a number of schools in south central and southwest Kansas including Adams Elementary in Wichita, Herndon High School and Elementary, Remington Elementary in Potwin, Kepley Middle School in Ulysses, Johnson Elementary, Hudson Elementary, Bucklin Grade School, Kismet Elementary, and Protection Grade School, all in a four year period spanning from 1948 – 1952. The schools are all representative of the Modern Movement in architecture defined by their simplicity of form and sparse ornament.

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Protection High School maintains integrity of location, design, setting, materials, and association. The school retains the general characteristics of the property type including: its original site and setting, the original building form, the original roof form, the exterior brick and pattern of window and door openings, original ornamentation in the brick and stone detailing, and the interior corridor configuration.

The school retains a high degree of integrity on both the interior and exterior. It is one of the few remaining public schools that retain its original double-hung wood windows, and its original clay tile roof. The additions are off secondary facades and do not significantly affect the building form as viewed from the primary facade. The interior has undergone some modification of interior partition walls but the primary corridor configuration has been maintained. The modifications to the school are within the parameters defined in the multiple property submission and do not sufficiently impact the integrity of the building as to make it ineligible for listing. Significant interior features and finishes include plaster walls, terrazzo floors, cast-iron stair railings, and original interior doors and wood trim.

Protection High School is nominated for listing on the National Register of Historic Places under the multiple property documentation form, *Historic Public Schools of Kansas* as a representative of the Town High School property type. Protection Grade School is included in the nomination as an addition to the High School that has gained significance in its own right. The school is a traditional example of the property type as the second public high school built to serve all community residents, and continues to serve as a public school today (Middle School and Elementary). The structure is also significant as a representative of Collegiate Gothic educational structures, and the work of Hutchinson architects Routledge and Hertz.

¹ Comanche County Historical Society, Comanche County History, (Dallas: Taylor Publishing Company, 1981) 8-21.

² Comanche County History, 104.

³ David Webb, Protection Paragraphs – A Scrapbook of Historical Highlights, (Protection: Comanche Press, 1984) no page numbers.

⁴ Comanche County History, 104 – 113.

⁵ Protection Paragraphs, no page numbers.

⁶ Comanche County History, 158.

⁷ According to Comanche County History, this building was still in use in 1980. It is not currently in place on the site therefore, must have been removed in the past twenty-five years.

⁸ Comanche County History, 158.

⁹ "Educational Facilities Mark Community Growth," The Protection Post, March 21, 1929.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ 50th Anniversary Edition, The Protection Panther (high school yearbook), 1966. No page numbers.

¹² Comanche County History, 159.

¹³ Comanche County History, 159.

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Wood & Staff Architects. "Protection High School Addition." (Original design documents and specifications obtained from South Central Middle School) October, 1959.

Note: Much of the information on the history of the school was obtained through an interview with local historian, David Webb (March 29, 2005 in Protection). The original design documents and specifications for the construction of the schools and subsequent alterations were provided by the South Central Middle School in Protection.

Geographical Data

Verbal Boundary Description – TR SE ¼ S3 T33 R22 COM 761' S of Center of SEC 3, TH E600', N100', W600' to POB.

Boundary Justification – The site is comprised of the original site set aside for school use when the first public school building was constructed in Protection in 1887. The site is clearly defined by geographic features; it encompasses the schools, out buildings, the rear playground and stadium and parking area south of the school.

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Additional Documentation

Maps

USGS map attached

Figure 1 – Site Plan Sketch (Spencer, 2005)

Historic Views

Figure 2 – Historic view of early Protection schools on same site, 1923

Figure 3 – Architect Rendering of Protection High School by Routledge & Hertz Architects, 1929.

Figure 4 – Historic view of Protection High School, 1939 by Carpentry Studio
(provided by Kansas State Historical Society)

Figure 5 – Original Design Documents, Protection High School, Routledge & Hertz, 1929.

Photographs

Protection High School
Comanche County, Kansas

Photos were taken by Brenda Spencer March 29-30, 2005. KSHS holds the original negatives.

#	Description of View [direction of camera]
1	Front (west) facade [east]
2	Detail of front main entrance [east]
3	Detail of original 6/3 double-hung wood windows on front (west) facade [east]
4	Front (west) and south facades [northeast]
5	View of High School with Grade School addition on north end and gym addition on south end [northeast]
6	View of 1959 South addition (gymnasium, music room and shop, and 1983 shop expansion [northwest]
7	Rear view of High School [southwest]
8	Front (west) and north facades of Grade School addition [southeast]
9	1983 "Connection" (west/front facade) of High School and Grade School [east]
10	Front (west) facade of Grade School addition [southeast]
11	Entry foyer [southwest]
12	Typical second floor corridor [north]
13	Twin stairways flanking rear gym (ground floor) [northeast]
14	Twin stairways flanking rear gym (second floor) [southwest]
15	Entrance to classroom at northwest corner of second floor [northwest]
16	Science laboratory (original shop) in northwest corner of ground floor [north]
17	Home Economics classroom on south end of ground floor [west]
18	Typical ground floor window (west/front facade) [west]
19	Original rear gymnasium [northeast]
20	Stage at west end of original rear gym [north]
21	Original multi-pane steel windows on east facade of original gymnasium [east]
22	South Addition – gym foyer [southwest]
23	1959 Gym addition at south end of original high school [southeast]
24	1983 "Connection" between High School and 1950 Grade School on north (new main entrance) [north]
25	Typical corridor in Grade School addition [north]
26	Original horizontal steel windows in Grade School addition [south]
27	Typical classroom in Grade School addition [southeast]

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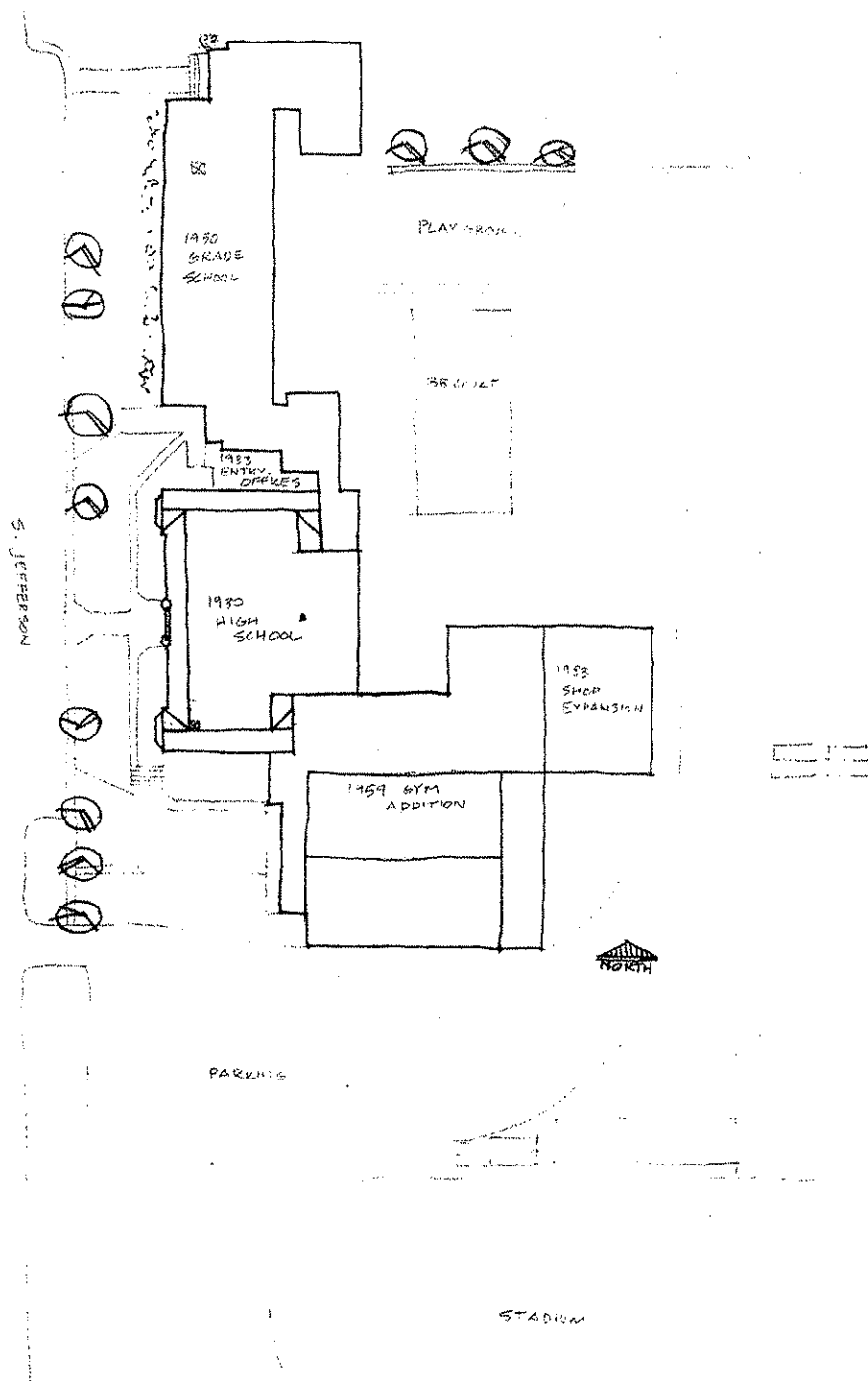


Figure 1 – Site Sketch Plan (Spencer, 2005)

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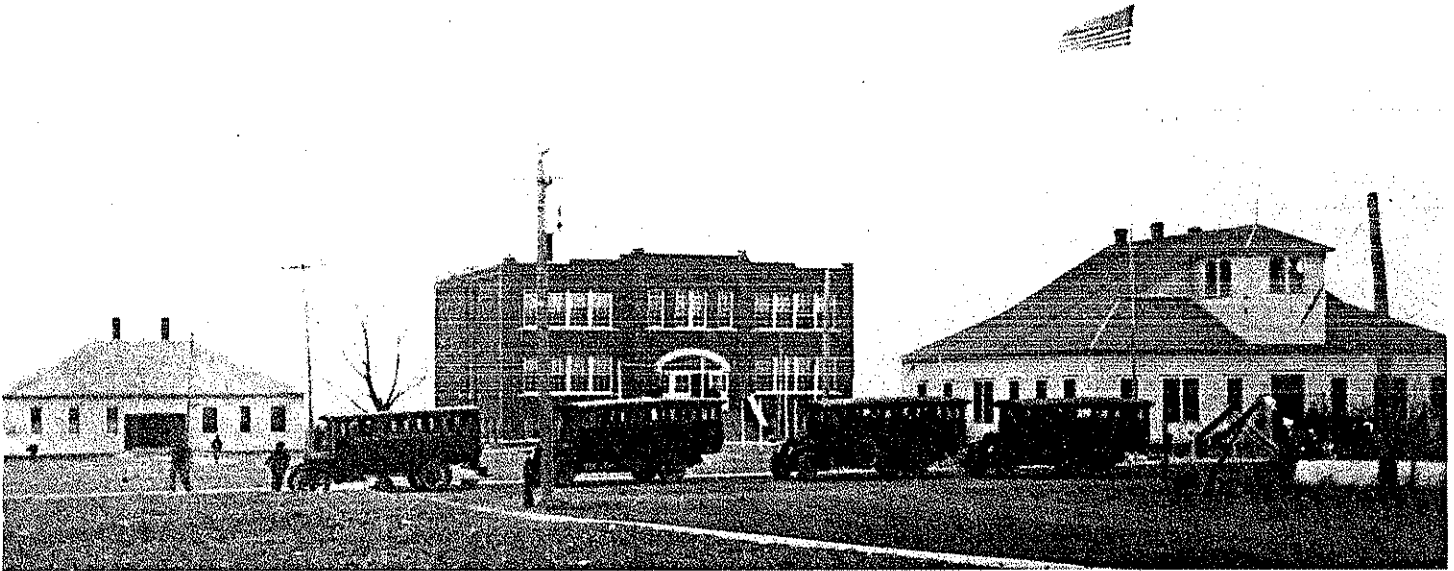


Figure 2 – Former Protection Schools on existing school grounds, 1923
Photo published in *Comanche County History*, 1981
Source: Local historian David Web (Protection)

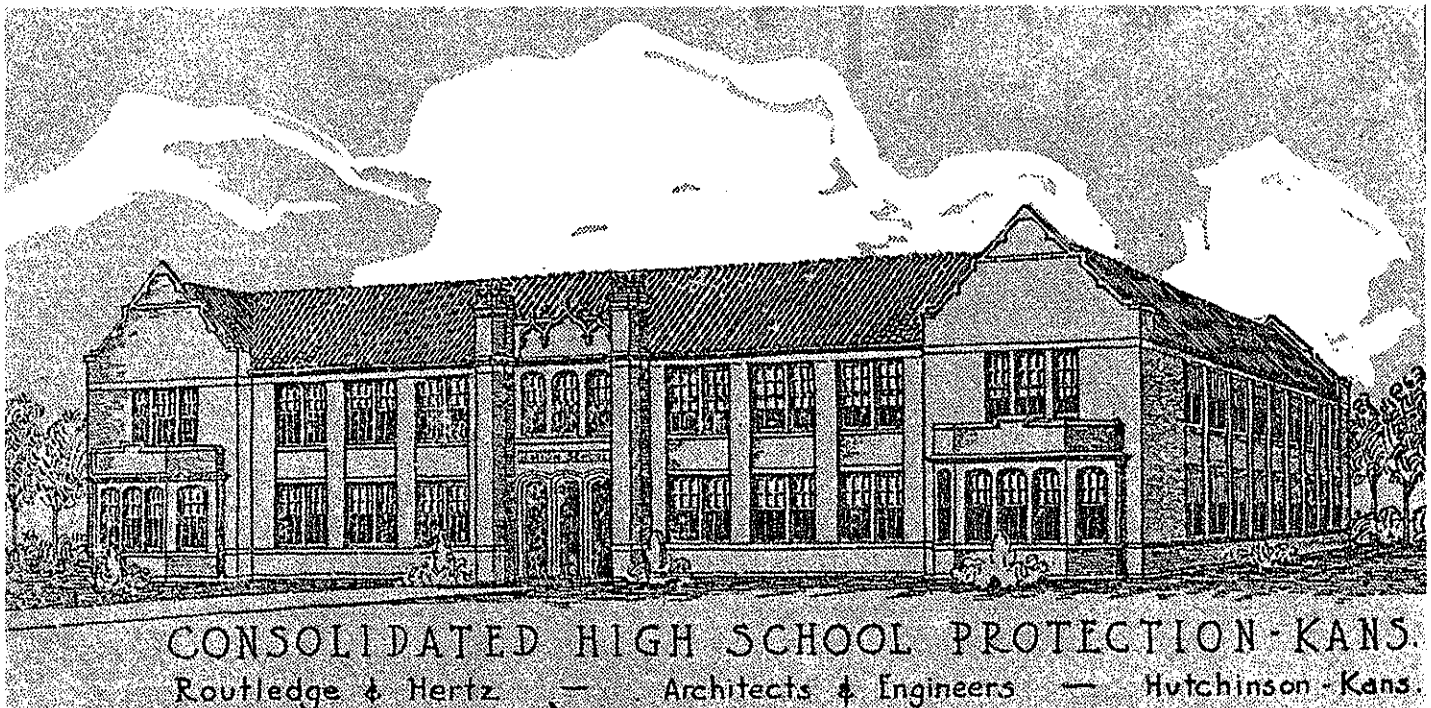


Figure 3 – Architect's Rendering for Protection High School
Routledge & Hertz Architects, October, 1929
Source: 1930 Protection Panther (high school yearbook)

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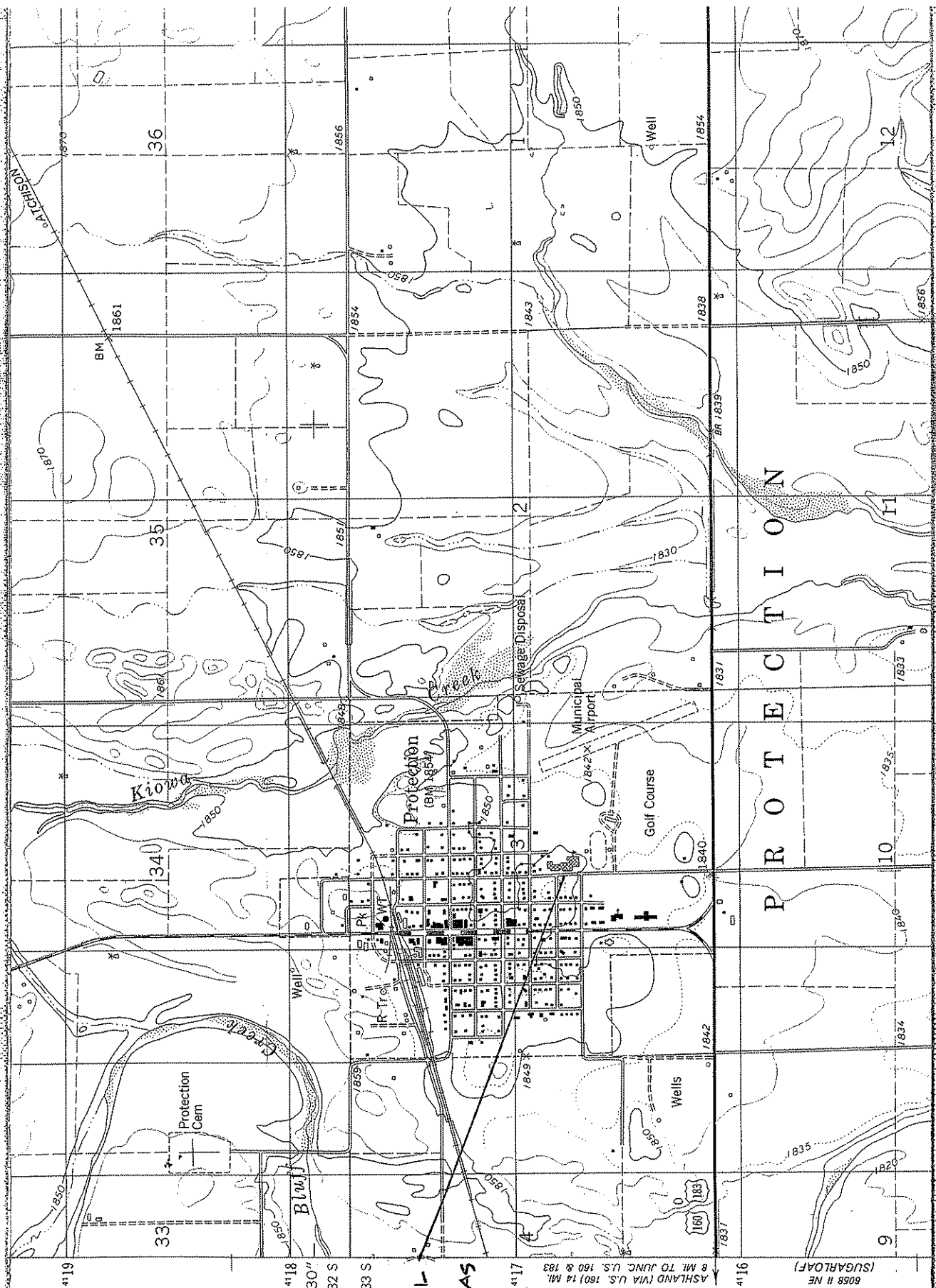
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Figure 4 – Protection High School, 1939, Carpentry
(1913 former High School on left)
Source: Kansas State Historical Society, Comanche County Photos

Figure 5 – (following pages) Original Design Documents for Protection High School
Routledge & Hertz Architects, October, 1929
Source: South Central Middle School, Protection



PROTECTION
HIGH SCHOOL
COMANCHE
COUNTY, KANSAS
BTM 20NE 14
457297 E
4116973 N

6058 II NE
(SUGARLOAF)

ASHLAND (VIA U.S. 160) 14 MI.
8 MI. TO JUNC. U.S. 160 & 183