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NPS Form 10-900
(7-81)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form

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

For NPS use only
received
date entered

1. Name

historic Carnegie Libraries of Washington State

and/or common

2. Location

street & number See Inventory Forms ___ not for publication

city, town ___ vicinity of ~~congressional district~~

state code county code

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
n/a district	___ public	X occupied	___ agriculture	X museum
n/a building(s)	___ private	___ unoccupied	___ commercial	___ park
n/a structure	X both	X work in progress	X educational	___ private residence
n/a site	**Public Acquisition**	**Accessible**	___ entertainment	___ religious
n/a object	___ in process	X yes: restricted	X government	___ scientific
Thematic Group	___ being considered n/a	___ yes: unrestricted	___ industrial	___ transportation
		___ no	___ military	X other:

4. Owner of Property

name Multiple Ownership

street & number

city, town ___ vicinity of state

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. See Inventory Forms

street & number

city, town state

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Survey of Carnegie Libraries in Washington State has this property been determined eligible? n/a yes n/a no

date 1981 ___ federal X state ___ county ___ local

depository for survey records Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation

city, town Olympia state Washington 98504

Properties Included in Other Inventories:

Listed in the State Inventory of Cultural Resources --

Auburn (King County)
Burlington (Skagit County)
Clarkston (Asotin County)
Goldendale (Klickitat County)
Hoquiam (Grays Harbor County)
Olympia (Thurston County)
Ritzville (Adams County)
Seattle - Fremont (King County)
Seattle - Green Lake (King County)
Seattle - Queen Anne (King County)
Seattle - University (King County)
Seattle - West Seattle (King County)
South Bend (Pacific County)
Spokane - Heath (Spokane County)
Spokane - East Side (Spokane County)
Spokane - North Monroe (Spokane County)
Vancouver (Clark County)
Wenatchee (Chelan County)

Listed in the State Register of Historic Places --

Pasco (Franklin County)

Properties Already Listed in the National Register:

Individual Entries --

Anacortes (Skagit County, 1977)
Seattle - Ballard (King County, 1979)
Edmonds (Snohomish County, 1973)
Everett (Snohomish County, 1975)
Walla Walla (Walla Walla County, 1974)

District Entries --

Bellingham - Fairhaven (Whatcom County, Fairhaven Historic District, 1977)
Seattle - Columbia (King County, Columbia City Historic District, 1980)
Spokane - Main (Spokane County, Riverside Historic District, 1976)
Port Townsend (Jefferson County, Port Townsend Historic District, 1976)

[Note: The Snohomish Library is included in the Snohomish Historic District, but is not considered a contributing property in the district and is not included in this nomination.]

Properties Determined Eligible for the National Register:

None

7. Description

See inventory forms for this information.

Condition		Check one	Check one
___ excellent	___ deteriorated	___ unaltered	___ original site
___ good	___ ruins	___ altered	___ moved date _____
___ fair	___ unexposed		

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The buildings in the nomination share the fact that all were once public libraries constructed with funds provided by the great industrialist and philanthropist, Andrew Carnegie. They are the best preserved examples of this state's share in a library-building program that embraced the entire English-speaking world.

It is widely thought that Carnegie libraries represent a distinct genre in America's stock of historic buildings, and the study made in connection with this nomination tends to confirm that perception. The typical Carnegie library in Washington State is a two-story building, with the first floor a daylight basement. Brick is the most common material, although some are stucco. The building is rectangular, with an impressive flight of stairs leading from ground level to the second floor. The main entry is located in the middle of the longer side, and there are often additional stairs inside the building. The entry may thus be half way between the first and second floors. Matching pairs of outdoor lamps often flank the stairs or the main door. Roof styles vary, but low hip roofs are the most common. Fenestration is symmetrically arranged on both sides of the entry. The main public area inside is on the second floor and is a single large room with windows on all sides. The windows on the sides and in the back are often high enough to allow for the placement of bookcases underneath them. These characteristics are listed in Table #5 under a photograph of a building embodying all of them.

The project of surveying and documenting Washington's Carnegie Libraries was carried out by James H. Vandermeer, an historian employed by the Washington State Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation. The methodology used in making the survey was relatively straightforward. The standard history of the program, Bobinski's Carnegie Libraries, lists all the cities receiving grants in alphabetical order by the name of the city. Picking out Washington cities was a simple, if tedious, exercise. A comprehensive list of cities receiving grants was then compiled, and existing inventory records, clipping files, and other sources of information on each city were consulted. Local librarians gave help over the telephone. All this made it possible to piece together the current status of most of the libraries without travel. Then visits were made to the sites for photographs and additional research.

The criterion used for selecting which libraries would be nominated to the National Register was integrity, or simply how well the building's original appearance has been preserved. Other aspects of significance such as architectural style or historic associations, were not considered extensively for each individual property. Instead, it was assumed that any Carnegie library is eligible unless its original appearance has been altered or otherwise compromised. Several factors form the basis for this assumption. First, all Carnegie libraries are well over firty years old. Second, each has been important in the history of the community it serves, often as the central focus of intellectual and social activity. Third, people commonly feel an emotional attachment for their Carnegie library. These buildings have played an important part in many lives from childhood to old age. No other kind of public building evokes quite the same sentiment. Moreover, there is the historical association with Andrew Carnegie, a man whose place in history is assured. It is true that he never visited any of Washington's libraries. His only connection is that he paid for them, approving with no more than a nod expenditures in wholesale lots involving dozens of buildings. Nonetheless, Carnegie's name and portrait turn up

everywhere, and an association between the building and the man is manifestly felt. Finally, the buildings are tangible reminders of a tradition of philanthropy on a grand scale which is distinctly American. Ford, Rockefeller, and Guggenheim left impressive works in a few places, but Carnegie's sturdy little monuments are all most Washington cities and towns have to show for the largess of America's moguls. All these factors lead to the conclusion that no well-preserved Carnegie library should be excluded from the National Register. However, "preserved" is the key word. Small, unobtrusive additions and slight alterations were not considered as disqualifying, but major changes were. Ironically, this caused five buildings still in use as libraries to be excluded, while many others, abandoned for their original purpose, have been included. Of the 33 remaining buildings, 28 are included and five are not. The specific reason for not including the five are as follows:

Chehalis: altered beyond recognition as an historic building
Port Angeles: modern addition covers all of principal facade
Centralia: modern addition covers part of principal facade
Snohomish: modern addition covers part of principal facade
Tacoma: modern addition to the side dominates original structure.

A list showing the registration status of all existing Carnegie libraries is given in Item 6, Representation in Existing Surveys.

List of Tables

#1 Carnegie Libraries of Washington State - Grant Amount by County

#2 Carnegie Libraries of Washington State - By Amount of Grant

#3 Carnegie Libraries of Washington State - By Present Use

#4 Carnegie Libraries of Washington State - By Architect

#5 Characteristics of a Typical Carnegie Library

#6 The Floor Plan Most Often Used for Carnegie Libraries of Washington State

CARNEGIE LIBRARIES OF WASHINGTON STATE
Grant Amount by County

Table #1

ADAMS	
Ritzville	$ 10,500
ASOTIN	
Clarkston	10,000
BENTON	
Prosser*	5,000
CHELAN	
Wenatchee	10,000
CLALLAM	
Port Angeles	12,500
CLARK	
Vancouver	10,000
FRANKLIN	
Pasco	10,000
GRAYS HARBOR	
Aberdeen*	15,000
Hoquiam	20,000
JEFFERSON	
Port Townsend	12,500
KING	
Auburn	9,000
Renton*	10,000
Seattle:	
Central*	220,000
Ballard	15,000
Columbia	35,000
Fremont	35,000
Green Lake	35,000
Queen Anne	35,000
University	35,000
West Seattle	35,000
KLICKITAT	
Goldendale	8,000
KITTITAS	
Ellensburg*	10,000
LEWIS	
Centralia	$ 15,000
Chehalis	10,000
PACIFIC	
South Bend	10,000
PIERCE	
Puyallup*	12,500
Tacoma	75,000
SKAGIT	
Anacortes	10,000
Burlington	5,000
Sedro Woolley*	10,000
SNOHOMISH	
Edmonds	5,000
Everett	25,000
Snohomish	10,000
SPOKANE	
Spokane:	
Main	85,000
East Side	17,500
Heath	35,000
North Monroe	17,500
THURSTON	
Olympia	25,000
WALLA WALLA	
Walla Walla	25,000
WHATCOM	
Bellingham:	
Main*	20,000
Fairhaven	16,000
YAKIMA	
Sunnyside*	5,000
Yakima*	15,000
	$1,046,000

* indicates that building has been razed

Table #2

CARNEGIE LIBRARIES OF WASHINGTON STATE
By Amount of Grant

Seattle-Central*	220,000	Port Angeles	12,500
		Port Townsend	12,500
Spokane-Main	85,000	Puyallup*	12,500
Tacoma	75,000	Ritzville	10,500
Seattle-Columbia	35,000	Anacortes	10,000
Seattle-Fremont	35,000	Chehalis	10,000
Seattle-Green Lake	35,000	Clarkston	10,000
Seattle-Queen Anne	35,000	Ellensburg*	10,000
Seattle-University	35,000	Pasco	10,000
Seattle-West Seattle	35,000	Renton*	10,000
Spokane-Heath	35,000	Sedro-Woolley*	10,000
		Snohomish	10,000
Everett	25,000	South Bend	10,000
Olympia	25,000	Vancouver	10,000
Walla Walla	25,000	Wenatchee	10,000
Hoquiam	20,000	Auburn	9,000
Bellingham-Main*	20,000		
		Goldendale	8,000
Spokane-East Side	17,500		
Spokane-North Monroe	17,500	Burlington	5,000
		Edmonds	5,000
Bellingham-Fairhaven	16,000	Prosser*	5,000
		Sunnyside*	5,000
Aberdeen*	15,000		
Centralia	15,000		
Seattle-Ballard	15,000		
Yakima*	15,000		$1,046,000

* indicates that building has been razed

Table #3

CARNEGIE LIBRARIES OF WASHINGTON STATE
By Present Use
August 1981

Libraries, essentially unaltered 13

Bellingham-Fairhaven Branch
Clarkston
Goldendale
Hoquiam
Port Townsend
Ritzville
Seattle-Columbia Branch
Seattle-Fremont Branch
Seattle-Green Lake Branch
Seattle-Queen Anne Branch
Seattle-University Branch
Seattle-West Seattle Branch
South Bend

Libraries, altered or with large additions 5

Chehalis
Centralia
Port Angeles
Snohomish
Tacoma

Mobile Library Service Center 1

Spokane-Heath Branch

Museums 4

Anacortes
Edmonds
Pasco
Vancouver

Offices, Public 2

Wenatchee
Everett

Offices, Private 2

Spokane-Main Branch
Spokane-East Side Branch

Antique Store 1

Seattle-Ballard Branch

Art Center and Gallery 1

Walla Walla

Dance Instruction Studio 1

Auburn

Private School 1

Burlington

Restaurant and Cocktail Lounge 1

Olympia

VFW Hall and Bingo Parlor 1

Spokane-North Monroe Branch

Razed 10

Aberdeen
Bellingham-Main Branch
Ellensburg
Prosser
Puyallup
Renton
Seattle-Central Branch
Sedro Woolley
Sunnyside
Yakima

Table #4

CARNEGIE LIBRARIES OF WASHINGTON STATE
By Architect

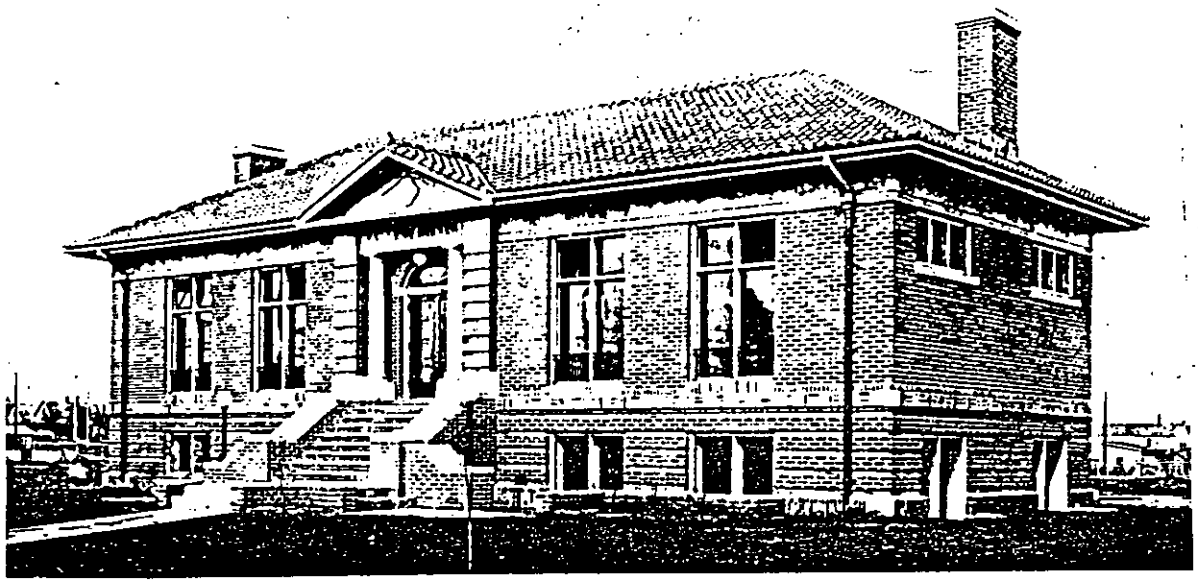
Architect	Library
Baker, Frank L. (See Blackwell & Baker)	
Bebb, Charles (See Bebb & Mendel)	
Bebb & Mendel (Seattle)	Yakima*
Bigger & Warner (Seattle	Snohomish
Blackwell, James E. (See Blackwell & Baker)	
Blackwell & Baker (Seattle)	Wenatchee
	Olympia
	Burlington
Claude, Louis W. (See Claude & Starck)	
Claude & Starck (Madison, Wisc.)	Hoquiam
Cote, Joseph (See Somervell & Cote)	
Cox, William (See Piper & Cox)	
deNeuf, Emil (See Heide & deNeuf)	
Doyle, Arthur E. (See Doyle & Patterson)	
Doyle & Patterson (Portland)	Goldendale
Elliot, Charles N. (See Elliot & West)	
Elliot & West (Seattle)	Bellingham-Fairhaven
Grinnold, Harold H. (Seattle)	Pasco (?)
	Port Angeles
	Port Townsend
	Renton*
Held, Albert (Spokane)	Spokane-East Side
	Spokane-North Monroe
Hensill, Y.D.	Chehalis
Heide, August F. (See Heide & deNeuf)	
Heide & deNeuf (Everett & Seattle)	Everett
Huntington, Daniel (Seattle)	Seattle-Fremont
Irwin, S.C. (Seattle)	Ellensburg*
Jardine, Kent & Jardine (New York)	Tacoma
Kaufman, William (See Nichols & Kaufman)	
Lee Alfred (Bellingham)	Bellingham-Main*
Myers, David J.	Auburn
Nichols, Dennis (See Nichols & Kaufman)	
Nichols & Kaufman	Vancouver
Mendel, Louis L. (See Bebb & Mendel)	
Osterman, Henry (Walla Walla)	Walla Walla
Paterson, W.B. (See Doyle & Patterson)	
Piper, F. Stanley (See Piper & Cox)	
Piper & Cox (Bellingham)	Anacortes

Table #4 (continued)

Architect	Library
Preusse, Herman (See Preusse & Zittel)	
Preusse & Zittel (Spokane) (See also Zittel, Julius)	Spokane-Main
Ryan, Henderson (Seattle)	Ritzville
Somervell, W. Marbury (See Somervell & Cote and Somervell & Thomas)	Seattle-Ballard
Somervell & Cote (Seattle)	Seattle-Green Lake Seattle-University Seattle-West Seattle
Somervell & Thomas (Seattle)	Seattle-Columbia
Starck, Edward F. (See Claude & Starck)	Seattle-Queen Anne
Thomas, Harlan (See Somervell & Thomas)	
Vernon, Watson (Aberdeen)	Centralia
Walsh, James T. (Portland)	South Bend
Ward, H.D.	Edmonds
Weber, P.J. (Chicago)	Seattle-Central*
West, Thomas L. (See Elliot & West)	
Wilson, C. Lewis (Centralia)	Pasco (?)
Wohleb, Joseph (Olympia)	Olympia (associate architect)
Zittel, Julius (Spokane) (See also Preusse & Zittel)	Spokane-Heath
Unknown	Aberdeen* Clarkston Prosser* Puyallup* Sedro Woolley* Sunnyside*

* indicates that building has been razed
(?)indicates that sources disagree

Table #5

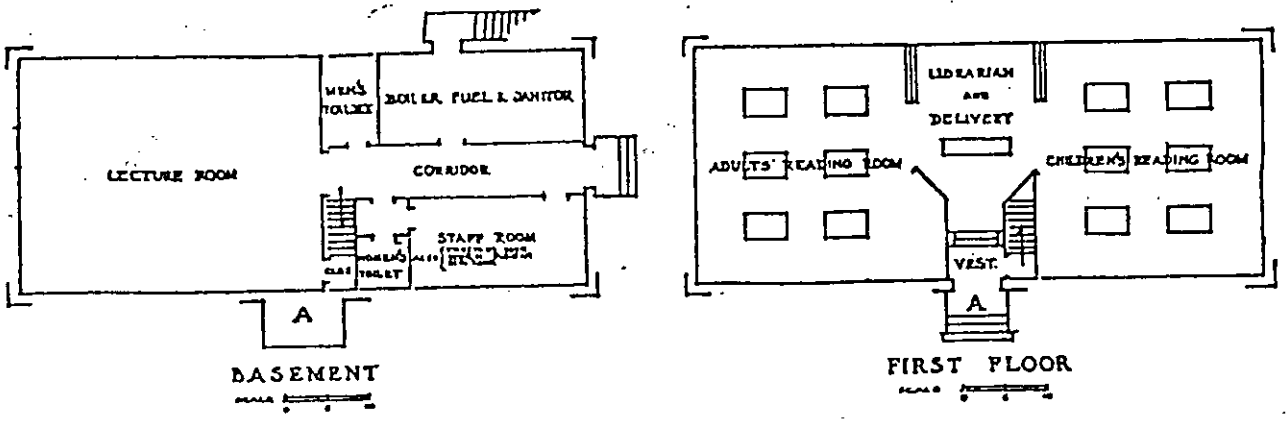


Spokane-East Side Branch

CHARACTERISTICS OF A TYPICAL CARNEGIE LIBRARY

1. Rectangular plan
2. One story above a daylight basement
3. Brick exterior
4. Hip roof
5. Principal entrance in center of longer side
6. Lamps flanking entrance
7. Exterior stairs leading from ground level to main public area
8. Elements of Classical architecture, such as pediments, columns, and cornices
9. Symmetrical arrangement of windows
10. Large windows in front, smaller windows on sides and in back

Table #6



THE FLOOR PLAN MOST OFTEN USED FOR
CARNEGIE LIBRARIES OF WASHINGTON STATE

Source: Bertram, James. Notes on Library Bildings. New York: Carnegie Corporation, 1911. as reproduced in Bobinski, George S. Carnegie Libraries: Their History and Impact on American Public Library Development. Chicago: American Library Association, 1969.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
___ prehistoric	___ archeology-prehistoric	___ community planning	___ landscape architecture	___ religion
___ 1400–1499	___ archeology-historic	___ conservation	___ law	___ science
___ 1500–1599	___ agriculture	___ economics	___ literature	___ sculpture
___ 1600–1699	_X_ architecture	_X_ education	___ military	_X_ social/ humanitarian
___ 1700–1799	___ art	___ engineering	___ music	___ theater
___ 1800–1899	___ commerce	___ exploration/settlement	___ philosophy	___ transportation
_X_ 1900–	___ communications	___ industry	___ politics/government	___ other (specify)
		___ invention		

Specific dates **Builder/Architect**

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANCE:

These buildings are all well-preserved examples of libraries built with grants from the great iron and steel magnate, Andrew Carnegie. They are significant because of their association with Carnegie and with the tradition of philanthropy of which he was the pre-eminent exemplar. They are also important in the history of the communities they served, often as the central focus of intellectual and social activity. Finally, these buildings are examples of a distinct genre of early-twentieth century architecture, and in many locales the Carnegie library is one of the few reminders left from that period.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND AND ANALYSIS:

Born in 1835, Andrew Carnegie came to the United States from Scotland at the age of twelve and settled with his family in Pittsburgh. The family was poor, and Andrew, as early as his teens, was their major breadwinner. One of his early jobs was that of telegraph delivery boy, and in this role he impressed an executive of the Pennsylvania Railroad. Rewarded with a railroad job, Andrew rose rapidly in the expanding business and became an important and wealthy executive himself. He became involved in various business, including companies making bridges and sleeping cars, but decided fairly early to concentrate on iron and steel. He maintained absolute control over his company's stock and was thus able to withhold dividends in prosperous years. When hard times came, he had the cash to buy out his competitors at bargain rates.

He was also careful about costs and was a good manager and judge of men. His company became the largest in the United States. Although his philanthropy began much earlier, it accelerated after 1901 when he sold his company to a group of investors organized by J.P. Morgan. It was the largest component of U.S. Steel, still America's biggest producer. Although not an evil or greedy man, Carnegie's image was tarnished by a tragic strike at his Homestead, Pennsylvania plant in 1892 in which 18 were killed. His remarkable generosity, however, subsequently made him America's best-loved multimillionaire. He died in 1919.

Carnegie's first charitable contribution was to his hometown in Scotland for a library. His philanthropies eventually consumed most of his wealth, and at his death, after making benefactions totalling $350 million, he left his heirs a relatively modest $10 million. Carnegie made many contributions to colleges and universities, built the Peace Palace at The Hague, and tried to simplify English spelling. His best known gifts, however, were the 2,509 libraries throughout the English-speaking world constructed with grants totalling $56 million.

The cities and towns of Washington state participated fully in Carnegie's library program. Of the 1,412 Carnegie libraries built in the United States, 43 were in

Washington. This placed the state fourteenth in terms of the number of buildings received. It was well behind Indiana with 164 and California with 142, but far ahead of West Virginia, which got three, and Nevada, one. In terms of per capital appropriations, Washington ranked fourth among the states. At $66.90 per 100 inhabitants, Washington was behind Wyoming ($114.20), Indiana ($77.50), and Colorado ($72.40), but much luckier than West Virginia ($4.70), and Virginia ($3.20).

Contrary to common belief, Carnegie did not start the tradition of free public libraries in the United States, but his gifts had the effect of accelerating their development. This is exactly what he hoped would happen. To make a full assessment of the influence his gifts had in Washington state would require a study of all libraries, both Carnegie and non-Carnegie. The history of those in this study, however, suggests that his influence was profound. Most library systems benefiting from his grants were, at best, tenuous affairs with volunteers and occupying borrowed quarters. After the Carnegie grants were made, permanent, publicly-financed systems emerged. This development is attributable not only to the fact that public officials responded to the incentive offered by Carnegie, but also to the fact that local philanthropists followed his example.

Carnegie took an active interest in the library program, but the details were handled by his secretary, James Bertram. Bertram made grants routinely, and no city willing to meet his conditions was turned down. One of his rules was that a grant would be made only to a city government, not to any other entity, and only upon formal application signed by the mayor. The requirement was intended to make the program administratively manageable. Otherwise, Bertram might have become involved in local disputes and other such difficulties. There were exceptions, however. The Olympia library was built with funds conditioned on support by both the city and county. Another was Clarkston, where the taxing unit receiving the grant was the school district, rather than the city. The reason an exception was made for Clarkston provides a good illustration of Carnegie's open-handed generosity. Cities were required to pledge that they would appropriate 10% of the construction costs each year for operation of the library. The City of Clarkston figured the most it could manage was $500 per year, so the cost of their library would have to held down to $5,000. Bertram suggested they take $10,000 instead, and made an exception to the rule to make it feasible for them to do so.

In addition to the requirement that they pledge operating costs, cities receiving grants had to have clear title to the land. Selecting a site and paying for it was sometimes a difficult hurdle. Occasionally, as with Spokane's branch libraries, it was a matter of serious local contention. Bertram did not have any rules on where the library should be built and did not interfere with the decision of local officials. Many of the sites in Washington seem to be a few blocks away from the historic central business district. This conforms to a national pattern observed by Bobinski, who thinks it might be explained by lower real estate prices on the outskirts. Some, such as Centralia, Chehalis, and Wenatchee, are located in city parks, and others, such as Burlington and Clarkston, were built on property owned by the local school district. Sometimes a local philanthropist contributed the

land. In the cases of Auburn, Snohomish, and Vancouver, the local philanthropist conditioned his gift on use of the land for a library. When Auburn moved out of their Carnegie library and tried to sell it, the building and land reverted to the family of the original contributor. Except for the fact that a small library is maintained in the Vancouver building, which is now a museum, the same could happen there. Port Angeles was given their site by the county, which had previously received it from the Federal government. Before title could be cleared, Congress had to take time out in 1917 from wartime legislation to pass a special act allowing the county to give the land to the city. Finally, many of the sites were acquired with money collected in fund raising campaigns.

Washington cities responded enthusiastically to Carnegie's offer of free libraries, and the record that remains is largely one of deep appreciation and admiration for the little white-haired Scotsman. However, the process was not always free of rancor. Some opposition to accepting Carnegie grants centered on the requirement that funding for maintenance be pledged by the city. There was also opposition by labor unions. Although he was in Scotland at the time of the Homestead Strike, Carnegie did not completely escape opprobrium for that terrible event. The sentiments of organized labor were vividly expressed in the following bitter poem, which was published by a local newspaper when the Hoquiam City Council decided to apply to Carnegie for a grant.

Ye libraries of Carnegie
How defiantly ye stand,
Monuments to the evil day
When bloody Mammon ruled the land.

Your stately walls men may admire
But He whom lucre cannot blind
Has marked you for His Sodom fire
Where perish all you sin-stained kind.

The entire library program was administerd by Bertram and one assistant. It is amazing that so much was accomplished with so little centralized bureaucratic control. But Bertram's letters sometimes have a harried tone, and he could be slow. After sending a meticulously prepared application, Hoquaim waited a year and then sent an exquisitely polite inquiry. Bertram responded promptly with a form letter advising them that Mr. Carnegie would be pleased to give the city a new library building. However, Bertram was not always so slow. The largest grant in the state was approved in one week. After fire destroyed the Seattle library, Bertram responded immediately by offering the city a grant which was eventually increased to $220,000.

Up to 1908, cities needed only to pledge continuing support for library operations and prove ownership of the land. Beginning in that year, however, Bertram required that cities submit architectural drawings to him for approval, and after 1911 grant

recipients and their architects had to consider the suggestions and sample layouts in a book by Bertram entitled Notes on Library Buildings. This book reflected the thinking of the leading architects of the time on library design. It recommended against elaborate entrances and excessive space for library staff use. It specifically suggested a basement 9' - 10' high and four feet below natural grade and a second level 12' - 15' high. The most commonly adopted of the suggested plans called for a main floor with an adult reading area on one side, a children's area on the other, and the librarian's desk between the two (see Table #6). The front door was located in the middle, opposite the librarian. The implementation of these suggestions is clearly evident in Washington's Carnegie libraries, a prepondenance of which were built between 1908 and 1918. This was the period in which Bertram exerted the greatest control over design. And he did more than rubber-stamp his approval. He rejected the first two designs sent by Centralia. Using some of Carnegie's simplified spellings, he sent the following rather rude letter with one rejection:

> "...the plans...in no way interpret the ideas exprest in Notes on Library Bilding. A school-boy could do that better than the plans show. If the architect's object had been how to waste space instead of how to economize it, he could not have succeeded better.... If the Architect cannot make a better attempt at interpreting the Notes on Library Bilding, I shall be pleased to put you in communication with architects who have shown their ability to do so."

Over the course of the program Bertram became increasingly exacting. By 1918, when Port Angeles was seeking approval, he twice rejected plans drawn by an architect with three other Carnegie libraries already to his credit. Bertram's influence on basic design was obviously important, but many of the similarities among these buildings are probably attributable simply to the tastes of the times and contemporary ideas about library design. Those built before 1908 show many of the same characteristics as those built later.

The high ceilings and the second-level public areas suggested by Bertram result in spacious interior rooms with splendid natural lighting and ventilation. It is hard to argue against these qualities, but a logical consequence of such an arrangement was the need for a flight of stairs from the street. The stairs have caused dissatisfaction among many over the design of these buildings. This feature is a serious problem for the aged and the handicapped, and librarians worry about how to accommodate this segment of their clientele. The stairs, in fact, are commonly regarded as the identifying characteristic of a Carnegie library. It is thought by some, though not supported by any evidence, that Carnegie felt anybody who wanted to read ought to be willing to climb a few stairs. It is true that he thought of the users of these libraries as ambitious young people, and they would presumably not be troubled by a few stairs. And it is also true that he expressed his indifference to the problem of inconvenient locations by observing that a person ought to be willing to walk a few blocks to get a book. Some say there is symbolism in the flight of stairs, as in "thirteen steps to wisdom." No uniformity in the number of steps in Washington Carnegie libraries was noted, however.

Although Bertram insisted on the implementation of his ideas about basic design, he did not try to influence style, except to hope that it would be dignified. Perhaps this explains to some extent the frequent use of Classical architectural elements in these buildings, but it is not true that stylistic similarities are the result of dictates by Bertram and Carnegie. A couple of matters of style, however, may be indirectly related to Carnegie's involvement.

A large majority of the existing Carnegie libraries are brick. This is probably explained by the fact that they were intended to be permanent public buildings. However, it may not have escaped the notice of city officials that brick, while more expensive in terms of construction costs, is less expensive than other materials in terms of maintenance and that, while construction costs were paid by Andrew Carnegie, maintenance costs were paid by the city. None are wood, even in communities where the lumber industry was the mainstay of the economy. A handful are stucco, and the three big-city libraries made extensive use of Tenino sandstone.

There is one stylistic element that some architects may have used to symbolically relate their buildings to Carnegie. This is a square window with muntins connecting the corners. These are found in Anacortes, Olympia, Centralia and Walla Walla, and variations appear in a few other places. It is said that the muntins represent the Cross of St. Andrew. One of the twelve Apostles, St. Andrew was probably crucified in Greece. A medieval tradition holds that a Greek monk took his relics to Scotland, and St. Andrew thus became the Patron Saint of Scotland. A Rennaissance tradition says his crucifixion occurred on a X-shaped cross called a "saltire" or "decussate." Since Carnegie was both Scottish and named Andrew, the X-shaped cross would be a symbolic way to relate the building and the man.

Even though Carnegie libraries share many common design features, similar massing is not a unifying characteristic. This is probably attributable to the fact that grant amounts varied widely, and much more moneywas available for some than for others. Table #2 lists the libraries by the grant amount. The most common grant amount was $10,000, and the buildings financed with these grants generally give one similar feeling about mass and interior space.

What the future holds for Washington's Carnegie libraries is unclear. There appears to be a widespread appreciation of their historic character and a desire to preserve it. And the pace of demolition seems to have slowed. Bellingham-Main was the first to go. It was demolished in 1951. Seattle-Central was razed in 1957. Yakima went in 1958. In the 1960's, six were razed. Since then, there has been only one, and that was in 1972. As of August 1981, no additional demolitions appear to be imminent.

Carnegie libraries have been found unsatisfactory most often because they were too small. There were also complaints about a lack of parking and too many stairs. Library officials in Washington have tried a variety of solutions, none of which has been without drawbacks. One answer has been to tear down the old one and build a new one in its place. This has the advantage of maintaining service in the traditional location, but library users must contend with a period of confusion during the process. It also eliminates a part of the city's heritage. Another answer, which has been adopted more often, is to build a new library somewhere else and leave

the old one to its fate. Sometimes this means demolition of the historic building, but in most cases Washingtonians have successfully adapted these buildings to other uses. Four are museums, and four are or soon will be office buildings. One each is an antique store, an art gallery, a dance studio, a private school, a restaurant, and a VFW hall. Table #2 gives the details.

Rather than build a new library, some communities have built additions to their existing Carnegie library. Sometimes this has been done without seriously changing the architectural character of the building, as in Olympia and Vancouver. However, the extra space gained in both cases was still not enough, and neither is still a library. Huge additions provide the needed space, but tend to radically change the building. In Port Angeles, Centralia, and Snohomish, these additions have been placed over at least part of the principal facade. This has the advantage of eliminating the stairs for access to at least part of the library, but it badly alters the historic appearance. Tacoma placed its addition to the side and closed off the main entrance to the historic building. The old entrance now has a forlorn look, as does that of Spokane-Heath, which has also been closed off.

Elimination of the stairs has also been an objective in some projects. Port Townsend has a long ramp in the rear. In the case of Spokane-Heath, Olympia, and Chehalis, the stairs were eliminated by converting the basement to the main public area. The disadvantage is that the resulting interior space was not as attractive or comfortable as the original. Except in major renovations, no library has added an elevator.

Librarians in unaltered Carnegie buildings face many of the same problems that have caused alterations to be made elsewhere. If an addition is built in the back, there will still be the stairs. If a handicapped entrance is provided in a new wing, the library must have enough staff to watch two exits. Sometimes the only available space for an addition is in the library's front yard. Preserving the historic character of these buildings is something just about everybody wants to do, but librarians also want to provide the best possible service to their communities. That is hard to do if space is inadequate and if the aged, handicapped, and infirm are faced with the insuperable obstacle of a long flight of stairs. Each situation is different, but library officials in all cases face the dilemma of wanting to maintain the historic integrity of these buildings while giving the community the best possible library service.

In spite of these difficulties, a surprising large number of Carnegie libraries have survived without major changes in their historic architectural character. That this should be so seems good evidence of the affection people feel for these venerable public buildings.

GENERAL HISTORY OF THE SEATTLE PUBLIC LIBRARY
AND ITS BUILDINGS

There was a library association in Seattle as early as 1868, but the real history of the Seattle Public Library started in 1888 with the formation of the Ladies' Library Association, an organization created to promote the idea of a library and receive contributions from local citizens. A new charter adopted by the voters in 1890 made library service a function of city government, and the city then took over the association's collection.

Seattle's library was housed in a series of buildings, moving to the Yesler Mansion in 1898. This forty-room building had ample space, but it was destroyed by fire in 1901. The editor of the Seattle Post-Intelligencer immediately telegraphed Andrew Carnegie, and a grant was arranged only five days after the fire. Until a new building could be constructed, the library was housed in the building formerly used by the Territorial University. The site for the new library was purchased by the city at a cost of $100,000. Designed by a Chicago architect, P.J. Weber, the building was an impressive edifice of gray Tenino sandstone with huge attached columns and great arched windows. It was completed in 1906, and served the city until it was razed in 1957. The present Central library occupies the same site.

The cost of the library was $272,000, of which Carnegie paid $220,000. In 1908 he promised $105,000 more for three branch libraries, and grants for additional branches followed. In all, Carnegie gave $430,000 to the city of Seattle and $15,000 to the city of Ballard, which subsequently became part of Seattle. Local philanthropists also made substantial contributions, and considerable public funds were also used in the construction of Seattle's libraries.

The first branch library in Seattle was established in the Fremont district in 1903, and others were soon opened in other neighborhoods. The first permanent branch buildings were the University, Green Lake and West Seattle branches, all of which were financed by Carnegie. They opened in 1910. These early branches were designed by the firm of Somervell and Cote, two men who originally came to Seattle to supervise construction of St. James Cathedral for their employer, a New York architect. In addition to three Carnegie-financed branch libraries, they designed one other early branch library in Seattle. The partnership lasted from 1905 to 1910. Both men subsequently designed many fine homes, and Somervell was associated with Harlan P. Thomas in designing two more of Seattle's branch libraries. Thomas also had a distinguished career, being the designer of the Sorrento Hotel and other important buildings and serving as the Director of the School of Architecture at the University of Washington for many years. Other Seattle libraries were designed by Henderson Ryan and Daniel Huntington.

9. Major Bibliographical References

See continuation sheet Item number 9, Page 1.

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property See inventory forms for all geographic data.

Quadrangle name _____ Quadrangle scale _____

UMT References

A	Zone	Easting	Northing	B	Zone	Easting	Northing
C				D			
E				F			
G				H			

Verbal boundary description and justification

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	n/a	code	county	code
state	n/a	code	county	code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title James H. Vandermeer, Historian

organization Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation date

street & number 111 West 21st Avenue telephone (206) 753-4011

city or town Olympia, state Washington 98504

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

___ national ___ state X 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 date

For NPS use only

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

date

Keeper of the National Register

Attest: date

Chief of Registration

Major Bibliographical References

(Almost 80 sources were consulted in the preparation of this nomination, and for reasons of brevity, it is not desirable to list such an extensive collection of works. The complete bibliography is available at the Washington State Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation.)

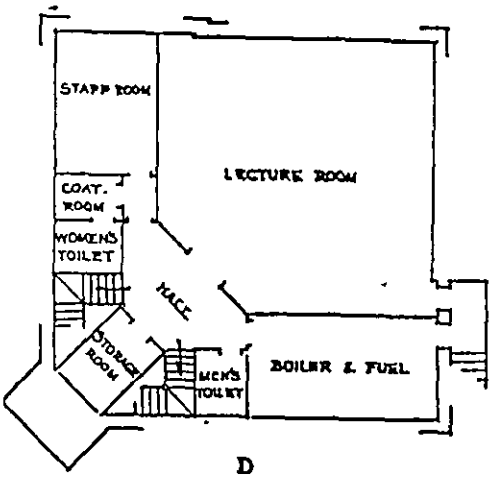
Bobinski, George A. Carnegie Libraries: Their History and Impact on American Public Library Development. Chicago: American Library Association, 1969.

Epstein, Jesse and Tucker, William. "The Library System of the State of Washington: Its Growth, Its Workings, and Its Future." Typed ms dated 1941 in the possession of the Washington State Library, Olympia.

Smith, Charles W. "Early Library Development in Washington." Washington Historical Quarterly, Vol. 17, No. 4, (October, 1926), pp. 246-258.

CARNEGIE LIBRARY TYPES

D



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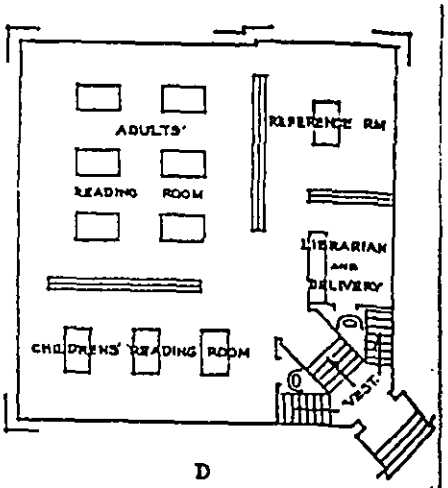
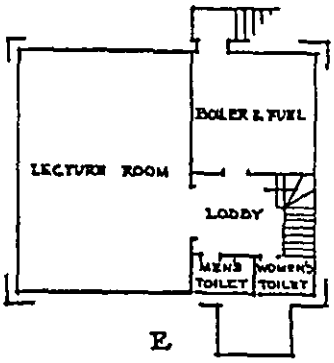


D

FIRST FLOOR

E



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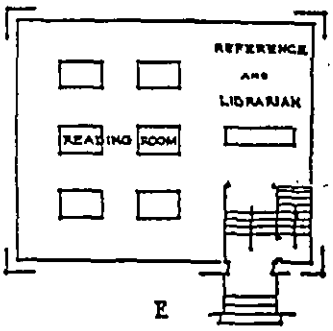
BASEMENT



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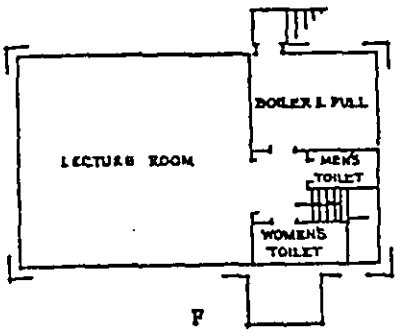
FIRST FLOOR

F



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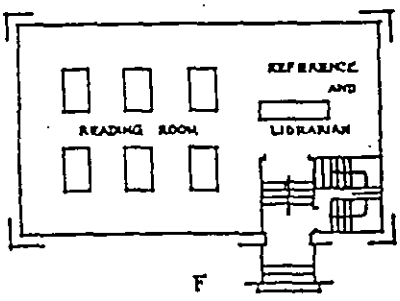
BASEMENT

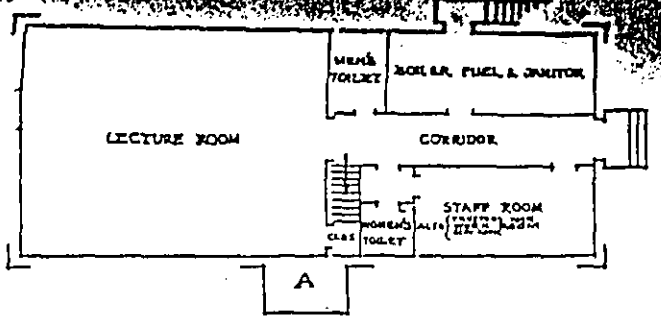


F

FIRST FLOOR

CARNEGIE LIBRARY TYPES

A



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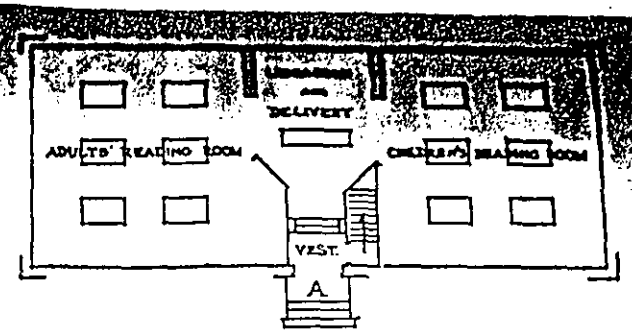

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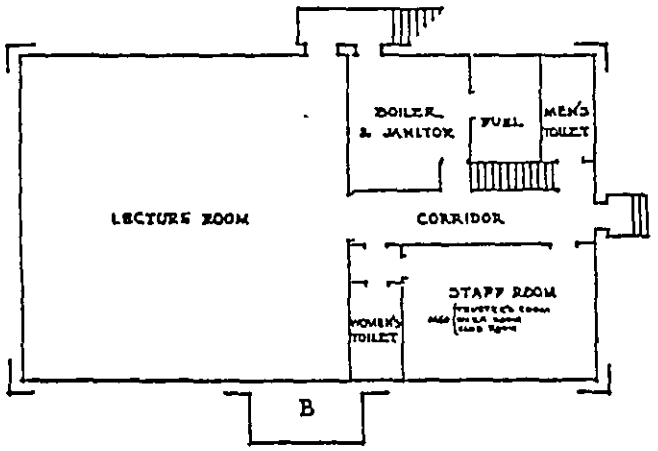

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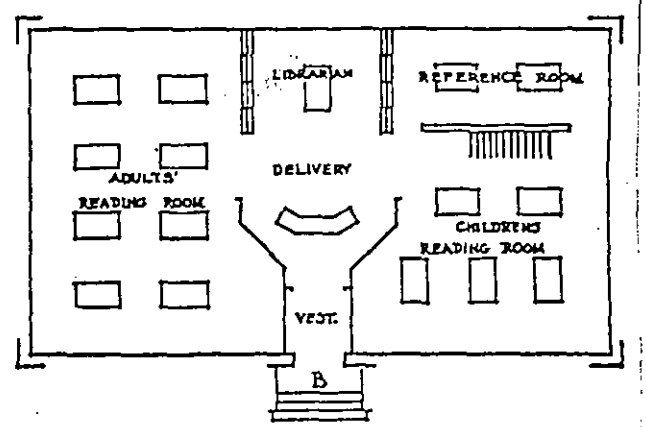
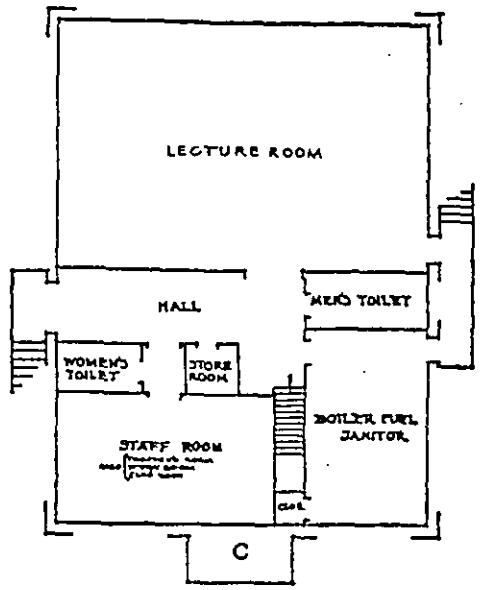


FIRST FLOOR

C



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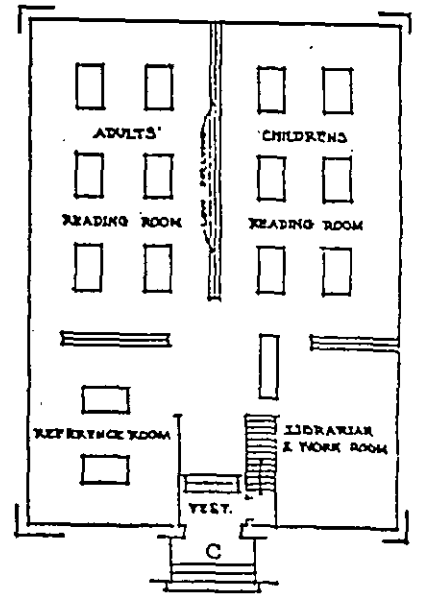
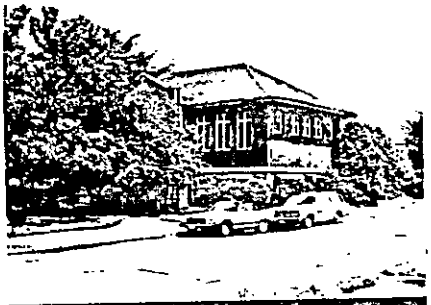


FIRST FLOOR

Inventory Forms and Photographs

Anacortes
Auburn
Bellingham-Fairhaven
Burlington
Clarkston
Edmonds
Everett
Goldendale
Hoquiam
Olympia
Pasco
Port Townsend
Ritzville
Seattle: Ballard Branch
Columbia Branch
Fremont Branch
Green Lake Branch
Queen Anne Branch
University Branch
West Seattle Branch
General History of the Seattle Public Library and its Buildings
South Bend
Spokane: Main Library
East Side Branch
Heath Branch
North Monroe Branch
Vancouver
Walla Walla
Wenatchee

CARNEGIE LIBRARIES OF WASHINGTON STATE: AUBURN
Photos taken by J. H. Vandermeer, June 1981



03-1
SW view

03-2
Detail of
W facade

03-3
Detail of
W facade

03-4
Detail of
W facade

03-5
SE view

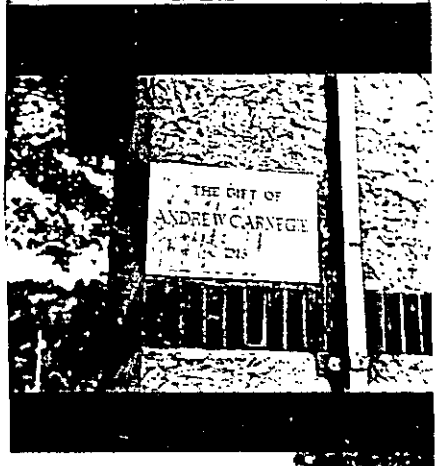
03-6
S view

03-7
Detail of
E facade

CARNEGIE LIBRARIES OF WASHINGTON STATE: BURLINGTON
Photos taken by Lisa Soderberg, July 1981

06-1
View from the S

06-2
View from the S



06-3
Detail of S facade

06-4
View from the N

06-5
View from the E

CARNEGIE LIBRARIES OF WASHINGTON STATE: CLARKSTON
Photos taken by J. H. Vandermeer, June 1981

09-1
W view

09-2
W view

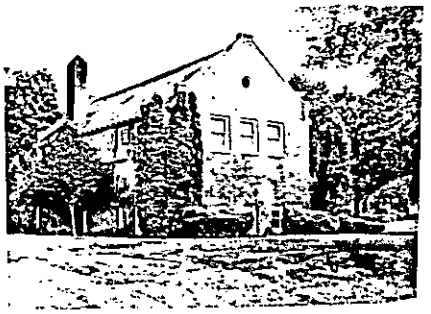
CARNEGIE LIBRARIES OF WASHINGTON STATE: GOLDENDALE
Photos taken by J. H. Vandermeer, June 1981

13-1
SW view

13-2
SE view

13-3
W view

13-4
S view

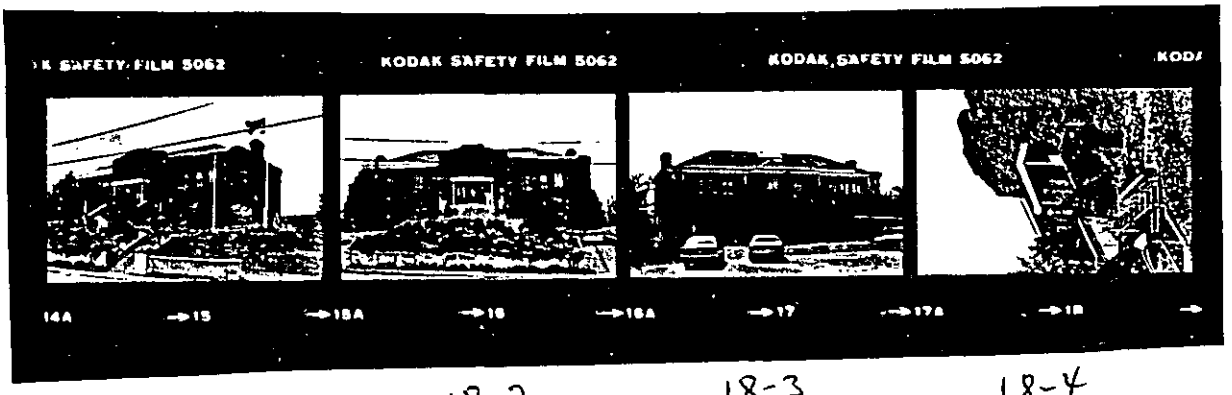


13-5
W view

13-6
SE view

CARNEGIE LIBRARIES OF WASHINGTON STATE: PORT TOWNSEND
Photos by Stephen A. Mathison, July 1981

18-1 View from the SE
18-2 View from the S
18-3 View from the N
18-4 Detail of S Facade

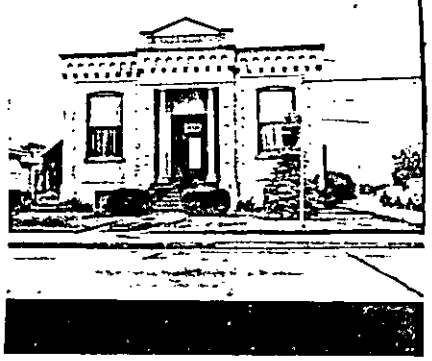


18-1 18-2 18-3 18-4

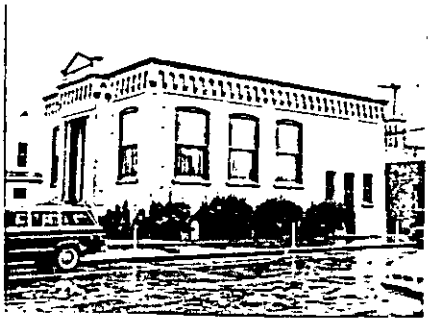
CARNEGIE LIBRARIES OF WASHINGTON STATE: RITZVILLE
Photos taken by J. H. Vandermeer, June 1981

22-1
SW View

22-2
SW View



22-3
SW View

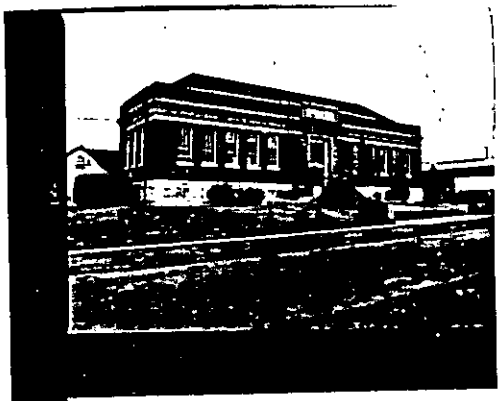


22-4
W View

22-5
W View

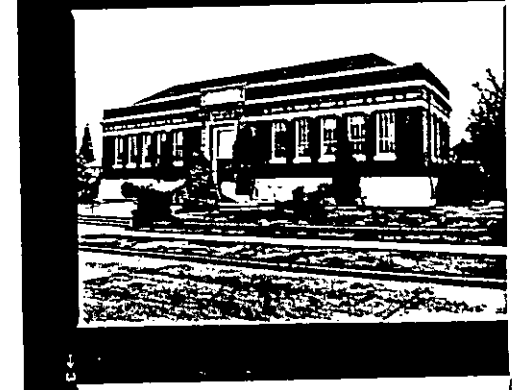
22-6
SW View

CARNEGIE LIBRARIES OF WASHINGTON STATE: SEATTLE- West Seattle Branch
Photos taken by James H. Vandermeer, July 1981

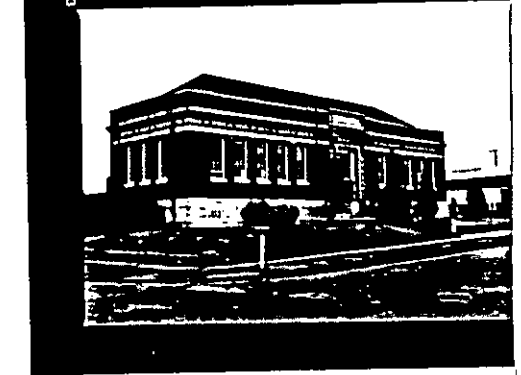


30-1
View from the NW

30-2
View from the W

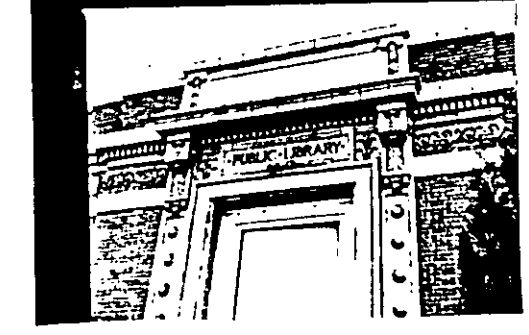


30-3
View from the SW



30-4
View from the NW

ordered
8/7



30-5
Detail of W facade

CARNEGIE LIBRARIES OF WASHINGTON STATE: SEATTLE- Green Lake Branch
Photos taken by James H. Vandermeer, July 1981

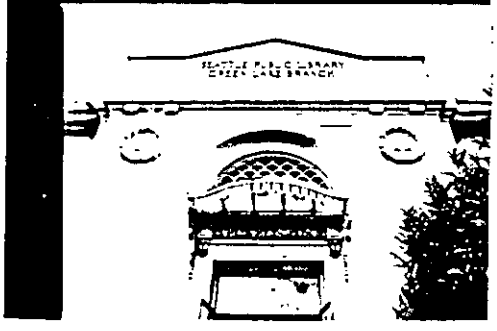
27-1
View from the SW

ordered 8/7

27-2
View from the SW

27-3
View from the S

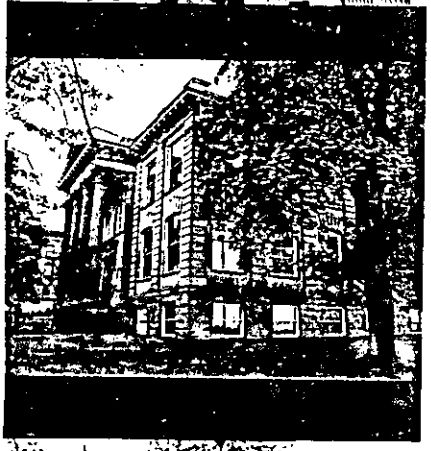
27-4
View from the S



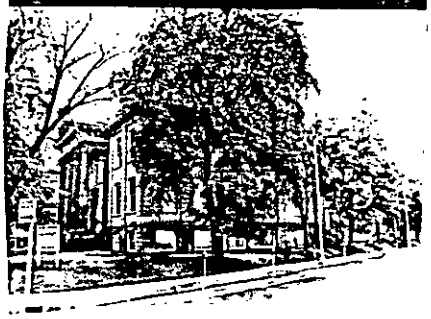
27-5
Detail of entrance
on S facade

CARNEGIE LIBRARIES OF WASHINGTON STATE: SPOKANE-Main
Photos taken by J. H. Vandermeer, June 1981

34-1
Detail of
E facade



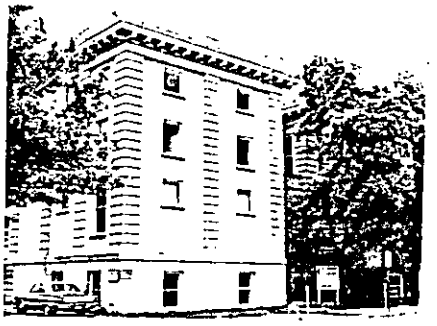
34-2
NE view



34-3
NE view

34-4
SE view

34-5
W view

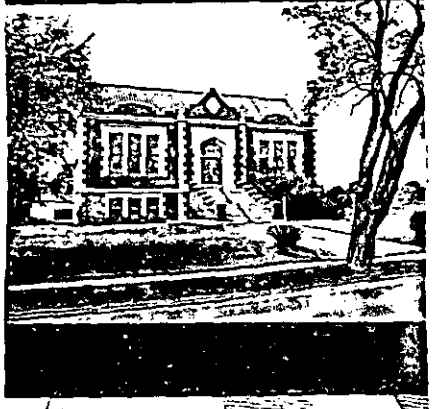


34-6
S view

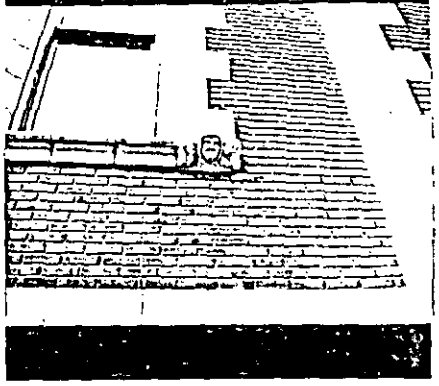
34-7
E view

CARNEGIE LIBRARIES OF WASHINGTON STATE: SPOKANE-Heath
Photos taken by J. H. Vandermeer, June 1981

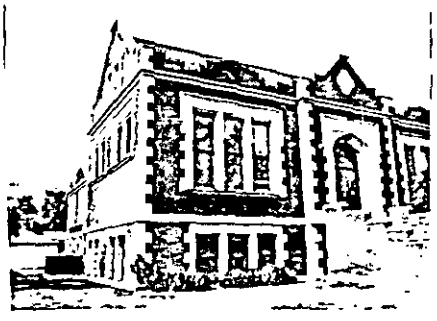
35-1
S view



35-2
S view



35-3
Detail of window surround, South facade.



35-4
SW view

CARNEGIE LIBRARIES OF WASHINGTON STATE: SPOKANE-East Side
Photos taken by J. H. Vandermeer, June 1981

36-1
SW view

36-2
SW view

36-3
W view

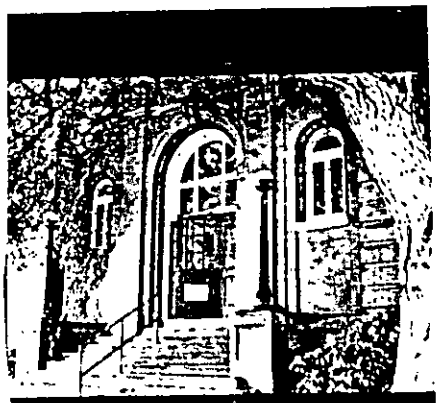
CARNEGIE LIBRARIES OF WASHINGTON STATE: SPOKANE-North Monroe
Photos taken by J. H. Vandermeer, June 1981

37-1
N View

37-2
W view

CARNEGIE LIBRARIES OF WASHINGTON STATE: VANCOUVER
Photos taken by J. H. Vandermeer, June 1981

40-1
NE view



40-2
Detail of
E facade

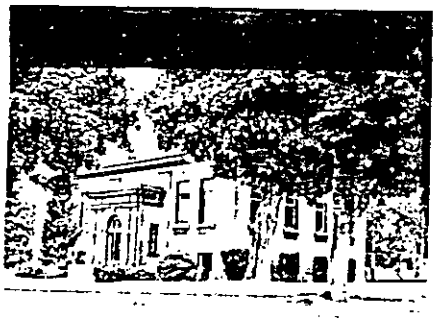
ordered
1 + 2
8/6

40-3
Detail of
E facade

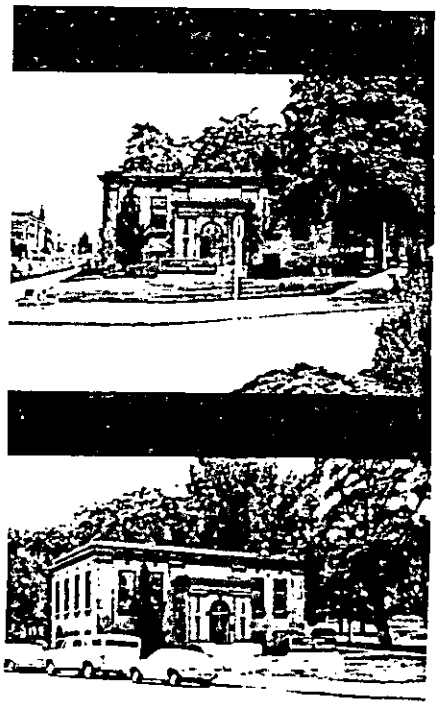
40-4
Detail of
E facade

CARNEGIE LIBRARIES OF WASHINGTON STATE: WENATCHEE
Photos taken by J. H. Vandermeer, June 1981

42-1
NE View



42-2
N view



42-3
NW view

42-4
W View