

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name San Luis Obispo Carnegie Library

other names/site number San Luis Obispo County Historical Museum

2. Location

street & number 696 Monterey Street not for publication

city or town San Luis Obispo vicinity

state California code CA county San Luis Obispo code 079 zip code 93401

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.)

[Signature] 2/21/95
 Signature of certifying official/Title Date
California Office of Historic Preservation
 State of 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 certifying official/Title Date

 State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

- I hereby certify that the property is:
- 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): _____

for
[Signature] Signature of the Keeper Entered in the National Register Date of Action
Edson H. Beal 3/30/95

San Luis Obispo Carnegie Library
Name of Property

San Luis Obispo, CA
County and State

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	
<u>1</u>		buildings
		sites
	<u>1</u>	structures
		objects
<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	Total

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

California's Carnegie Libraries

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

Education: Library

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

Culture: Museum

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

Richardsonian Romanesque

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation granite

walls granite

sandstone

roof slate

other _____

Narrative Description

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

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

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

- 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 is 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.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

- ~~Architecture~~
- ~~Social History~~
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Period of Significance

~~1905 - 1945 (no exceptional significance)~~

Significant Dates

~~1905~~

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

~~Weeks, William H. (architect)~~

~~Maino, Theo (builder)~~

Narrative Statement of Significance

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

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:

~~San Luis Obispo Co. Museum~~

San Luis Obispo Carnegie Library
Name of Property

San Luis Obispo Co., CA
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property Less than one acre

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1

1	0
---	---

 Zone

7	1	2	4	6	0
---	---	---	---	---	---

 Easting

3	9	0	6	4	2	0
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

 Northing

2

--	--

 Zone

--	--	--	--	--	--

 Easting

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

 Northing

3

--	--

 Zone

--	--	--	--	--	--

 Easting

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

 Northing

4

--	--

 Zone

--	--	--	--	--	--

 Easting

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

 Northing

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.)

Present boundaries are historic boundaries.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Astrid J. Gallagher

organization _____ date October 12, 1994

street & number 37 El Mirador Ct. telephone (805) 549-9283

city or town San Luis Obispo state CA zip code 93401

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 the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name City of San Luis Obispo (Attn: Jeff Hook)

street & number 990 Palm St. telephone (805) 781-7176

city or town San Luis Obispo state CA zip code 93408

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 Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

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Carnegie Library-County Museum

San Luis Obispo National Park Service

RECEIVED

MAR 3 1986

INTERAGENCY RESOURCES DIVISION
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

Narrative Description

Summary

The San Luis Obispo Carnegie Library-County Museum building, designed by noted architect William H. Weeks, is an outstanding example of the Richardsonian Romanesque style. The building is complex, with a tall hipped roof above the rectangular mass of the building, visible from the front beyond two gable wings placed at right angles with a lower flat roofed portico projecting from their intersection. One story over a raised basement, the building is sited on a lot which slopes toward the front, adding the appearance of height to the gable wings. Two chimneys extend from the gable ends of the slate roof. The basement is faced with dark gray granite stone placed in ashlar fashion and topped with a granite courseline. The remainder of the building is red brick with trim of rough cut yellow sandstone for quoins, arches, lintels, and courselines below the windows and in the gable ends. In each gable end, elaborate ornamentation includes a gargoyle and encircles a small bull's eye window. The double hung sash windows are recessed, below a transom; fixed two-pane or fixed multi-pane basement windows are topped with a union jack motif. Two doors open from the basement. Granite stairs rise in two steep flights from the sidewalk to the portico entrance. There, two short stout polished gray granite columns reach to the granite courseline and support the round arch of yellow sandstone; the arch is replicated on the two sides of the portico, which had been extended in 1910, apparently by the architect. The exterior of the building is very well maintained.

A stone rubble wall constructed in the 1790's is located on the site, north of the Carnegie Library-County Museum. This massive cyclopean wall was part of the Mission complex, and believed to have once been dormitories for Franciscan monks.

The interior remains essentially intact as an excellent example of Mid-Victorian Parlor. The interior plan layout, as well as the finish are original and intact. The floor plan and layout follow the basic format of the Carnegie Library. The interior entry vestibule proceeds to a main, formal staircase leading to the library central core, which is the functional central axis of the library, emphasized by the original casework, volume and level of architectural detail. The auxiliary spaces, reading areas, reference materials and staff area all are accessed off the central

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Carnegie Library-County Museum

San Luis Obispo County, CA

core. The interior materials, finishes, assemblies, fixtures, casework, and cabinetry are as originally designed and constructed. Interiors are well maintained, and are original and dramatic examples of the period.

Only minor modifications have been made to the Carnegie Library-County Museum building since 1910. In 1967, the County Department Of Building seismically strengthened the entrance portico by adding reinforced concrete bond beams at the top of the walls, replacing deteriorated wood members at the roof line. This work was accomplished without disturbing any exterior or interior detailing of the building. In 1983 a 7 ft square portion of the back gallery was enclosed for an elevator to provide for future disabled access.

Exterior

The Carnegie Library-County Museum, designed by architect William H. Weeks, is an excellent example of the dominant architectural styles of the period. Materials quarried from local volcanoes combined with the craftsmanship of the last generation of great masons produced a library with unique architectural features that merit preservation. Terrace walls, foundations and basement walls are andesite dacite porphyry, a granite quarried from the west side of Bishop's Peak, the tallest volcanic peak of the ancient morros and dormant for the past 23 million years. This igneous volcanic rock is noted for low water absorption, high strength and durability. The Carnegie Library-County Museum is the only building in San Luis Obispo County combining Bishop's Peak granite with Los Berros sandstone.

The public is welcomed into the building through an elegant columned portico with archway voussiors of golden sandstone hewn from the local quarry in Los Berros. The entry columns are highly polished granite with Ionic capitals, decorated with Ionic volutes, often called ram's horn capitals. The entry portico has torus molding at the base of the portico columns. Corinthian capitals with small Ionic volutes flank the entry doors. Patrons ascend the traditional thirteen steps between the terrace and the first floor. A rain gutter is hidden inside the belt cornice at the entry portico.

Red brick walls are ornamented with sandstone quoins at each corner. The transomed, segmented windows have continuous sandstone lintels and sills. Sculpted cartouche window frames, referred to as bull's eye windows adorn each gable. The floral designs on the rake boards is typical of the Victorian period with elaborate leaf and floral designs joyfully sculpted into the stone. The playful use of human faces sculpted in high relief on the gable masonry is another Victorian embellishment,

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Carnegie Library-County Museum

San Luis Obispo County, CA

serving as a reminder that libraries, and now a museum are places of enlightenment, education and entertainment.

The slate roof has aged with grace and dignity. The main hip roof is intersected with two smaller gable roofs. Bargeboards are ornamented with floral designs and block modillion brackets embellish the cornice. Wood cornice moldings have a continuous foliated design pattern. Wood trim and finials decorate the ridge line.

Interior

The casework, cabinetry, and millwork are the most significant aspects of the interior. Custom woodwork is extensive as was typical of civic buildings of the period. Casework, including window and door casings, ceiling and base treatments, wainscoting and wall rails, soffits, cased openings, and intricate carved moldings are all intact and unaltered. Finally the original library checkout desk and librarian's workstation is in daily use today as an active part of the Carnegie Library-County Museum.

The interior is an exquisite example of a Mid-Victorian parlor. Wood columns are adorned with elegant Ionic volutes heralding the Neo-Classical revival. Column capitals are a composite design of the Corinthian and Ionic orders. The carved wood modillion scrolled brackets are highly detailed. Upper wall ornamentation include decorative foliated friezes. The entry foyer has a hexagonal mosaic tile floor and above the main entrance is a semicircular transom window with a wrought iron grill. The spacious rooms are decorated with plaster relief ceilings. Two lavish fireplaces served as the central heating system. Adornments include egg and dart designs, symbolizing life and death. A dumbwaiter served the functional needs of the building. The library represents a transition in the development of municipal utilities. It was illuminated by both gaslights and electric lighting. In 1912, electric lighting was installed throughout the facility. One of the original Diamond H brand rotary electrical switches was uncovered by museum staff in 1986. Original light fixtures remain and are in use at this time. The pendant type fixtures are fine examples of contextual lighting of the period. In 1956, the County initiated a capital improvements project, upgrading the entire electrical wiring system.

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San Luis Obispo Carnegie Library
San Luis Obispo Co., CA

National Register of Historic Places

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While the mission wall may be significant in its own right, it has been made a non-contributor for the purposes of this nomination. Since the nomination addresses the importance of the library only, the eligibility of the wall has not been adequately explained. That may take place in the future.

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Carnegie Library-County Museum

San Luis Obispo County, CA

Statement of Significance

Summary

The Carnegie Library-County Museum is important in San Luis Obispo under National Register Criterion A in the area of Social History for the association with library development in California, as exemplified by the community effort of San Luis Obispo during the years 1857-1905.

The Carnegie Library-County Museum is significant under National Register criterion C in the area of Architecture, as the building embodies the distinctive characteristics of the Richardsonian Romanesque style, one of three designed by master Architect William H. Weeks, of which two remain.

Criterion A

Incorporated in 1857, San Luis Obispo had several early but short-lived libraries: 1869 Sunday-school and 1871-2 and 1873 subscription, and 1874 Odd Fellows libraries. The campaign to build a public library began in 1892. San Luis Obispo *Tribune* editor Benjamin Brooks suggested organizing a subscription library. Early life members included prominent historian and editor Myron Angel; Phoebe Apperson Hearst (mother of William Randolph Hearst); land promoter Chauncey Hatch Phillips; John Michael Price, the founder of Pismo Beach; the Steele brothers of Edna, who had introduced dairy farming to the Central Coast in the late 1860's; viticulturist Pierre Dallidet, and many other important local families.

By 1894, the subscription group was able to lease space from the J.P. Andrews Banking Company. The library opened to the public on June 15 of that year.

The operation had its financial ups and downs, with funds being so low in December, 1894, that the library closed in the evening to save expenses. The proceeds from public entertainment, often held at the Pavilion at Monterey and Toro streets, were slated for the library, with some of the funds used for the purchase of books.

On September 16, 1897, the board of trustees agreed to transfer the property of the subscription library to the City of San Luis Obispo. The first years of public ownership were financially difficult because the pro rata share of taxes allowed for income was very small. Yet by the time of the fiscal year end report dated June 30,

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Carnegie Library-County Museum

San Luis Obispo County, CA

1904, some 12,487 volumes had been circulated to 17,653 visitors. The library had 4,403 bound volumes in its stacks.

In September 1902, the library board applied to Andrew Carnegie for a donation to erect a suitable and permanent building. In February, 1903, the board was notified that Carnegie had given the city \$10,000. The community built the library next to the San Luis Obispo Mission, on the northern slope of San Luis Creek on a site frequented by the Chumash Indians, and where in the early 1850's Captain John Wilson and his wife, Ramona Carrillo Pacheco de Wilson had built the first wood frame house of San Luis Obispo.

In October 1905, the new Carnegie Library designed by Watsonville architect William H. Weeks, and built by T. Maino Construction Co. at a cost of \$9,750, of local red bricks, Bishop's Peak granite, and Los Berros sandstone, opened to the public. Ninety Years ago William H. Weeks' design of the Carnegie Library was called a "handsome and commodious building," and served the community until 1955, when the need for additional space necessitated the construction of a larger building. Since 1956 the handsome Carnegie Library-County Museum still serves the community, providing insights into San Luis Obispo's colorful and varied past.

Criterion C

California architect William H. Weeks designed twenty one Carnegie libraries, which span the entire Carnegie period from 1902 to 1921 and demonstrate the chronological evolution of style over those years. For his first library commission, Santa Cruz, Weeks designed a building in the Richardson style. At \$20,000 it was one of the more expensive libraries he designed. Weeks' other two Romanesque libraries, in San Luis Obispo and Nevada City, were on a smaller scale but are notable for their use of natural stone in San Luis Obispo, and concrete block in Nevada City.

The Carnegie Library-County Museum is an excellent example of the dominant architectural styles of its period. William H. Weeks borrowed from the styles popular at the turn of the century including High-Victorian faces, Richardsonian Romanesque masonry, Beaux Arts classicism and Italianate quoins. The Chicago Columbian exhibition of 1893 had re-established the Neo-Classical style of Architecture for civic buildings and William H. Weeks was determined to use as many classical styles as possible.

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Carnegie Library-County Museum

San Luis Obispo County, CA

The use of stone arches, imposing well-crafted masonry and roofs with trim and finials were typical of this era and may be found in the architectural vocabulary of the master civic designers of this period, McKim, Mead & White. H.H. Richardson's use of multi-colored masonry with brick infill, massive arches, sculpted gables and continuous lintels were a strong influence on William H. Weeks' design of the Carnegie Library in San Luis Obispo.

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Carnegie Library-County Museum

San Luis Obispo County, CA

Bibliographical References

Articles and Monographs

- Hall-Patton, Mark; Notes, San Luis Obispo County Historical Museum, 1988.
- Historic Resources Survey Staff, City of San Luis Obispo; Historic Resources Inventory, June, 1983.
- Kortum, Lucy; California Carnegie Libraries, National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentaion Form, November, 1989, rev. April, 1990.
- Levin, Rodney R, AIA; Application for History and Archeology Grant, November, 1988.
- MacNair, William, Architect; Vignette of an Historic Building, August 31, 1994.
- Woodle, Timothy, Architect; Description of Interior, Carnegie Library of San Luis Obispo, September 21, 1994.

Periodicals

The *Telegram-Tribune*, February 1, 1986: Dan Krieger; Library opening was a big night for San Luis Obispo.

Other Documents

County of San Luis Obispo, Department of Buildings: Dixon, D.A.; Floor Plans San Luis Obispo Museum, February 17, 1966 and March 15, 1967.

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Carnegie Library-County Museum

San Luis Obispo County, CA

Geographical Data

Verbal Boundary Description

The nominated property, the Carnegie Library-County Museum is a two-story masonry structure with a half basement serving as the lower floor. It has an irregular shape of 2,190 sq. ft. and occupies a rectangular 80' X 114' site at the northwest corner of Monterey and North Broad Streets in the City of San Luis Obispo, CA. Floor plan attached.

Boundary Justification

The boundary for the nominated property is the legally recorded Parcel # 02-412-16, 18; County Records, San Luis Obispo County, CA.

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Carnegie Library-County Museum

San Luis Obispo County, CA

Additional Documentation

Maps

USGS map of San Luis Obispo, 7.5 series.

Vicinity map: Carnegie Library-County Museum, City of San Luis Obispo.

Floor plans, dated February 17, 1966.

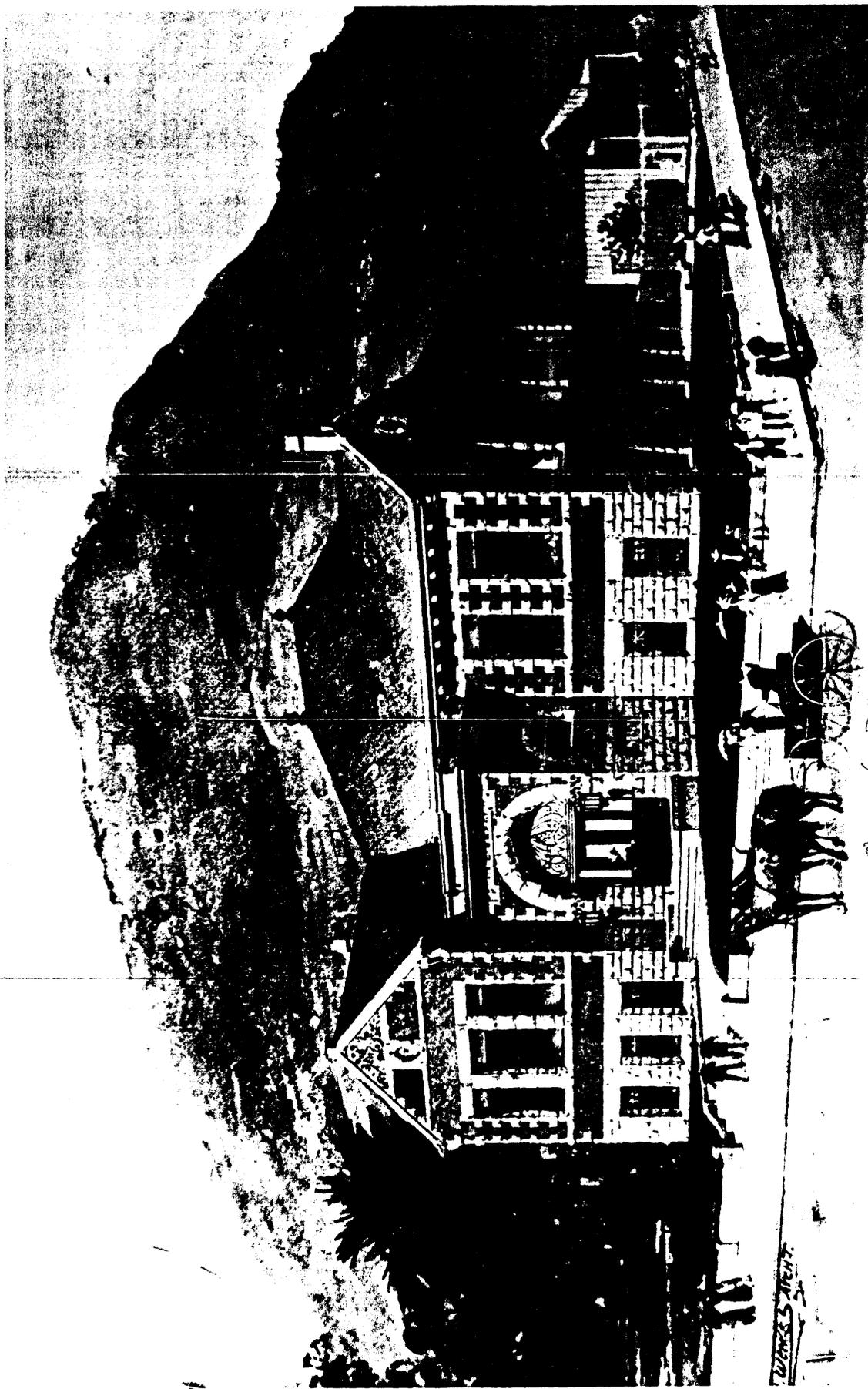
Photographs

Black and white: 3 1/2 x 5 inches. Photographs taken by J. Barron Wiley in September, 1994. Original negatives located in the Carnegie Library-County Museum.

1. Front facade, facing south.
2. Side facade, facing east, chimney, and embellishments in gable end.
3. Rear facade, facing north, old Mission dormitory wall at right in photo.
4. Side facade, facing west, multipaned basement windows.
5. Interior, facing south, upper part of entrance door.
6. Interior, facing east, original ceiling fixture, fireplace, and librarian's desk in lower foreground.
7. Interior, facing north, librarian's desk and cabinetry at right, original hanging light fixtures in upper part of photograph.
8. Interior, facing north, window detail and light fixtures.
9. Interior, facing west, interior wood column with Ionic and Corinthian capital.
10. Interior, facing west, fireplace in reading room.

Historic black and white photographs: photographer unknown, dates unknown, original photographs located in the Carnegie Library-County Museum Archives.

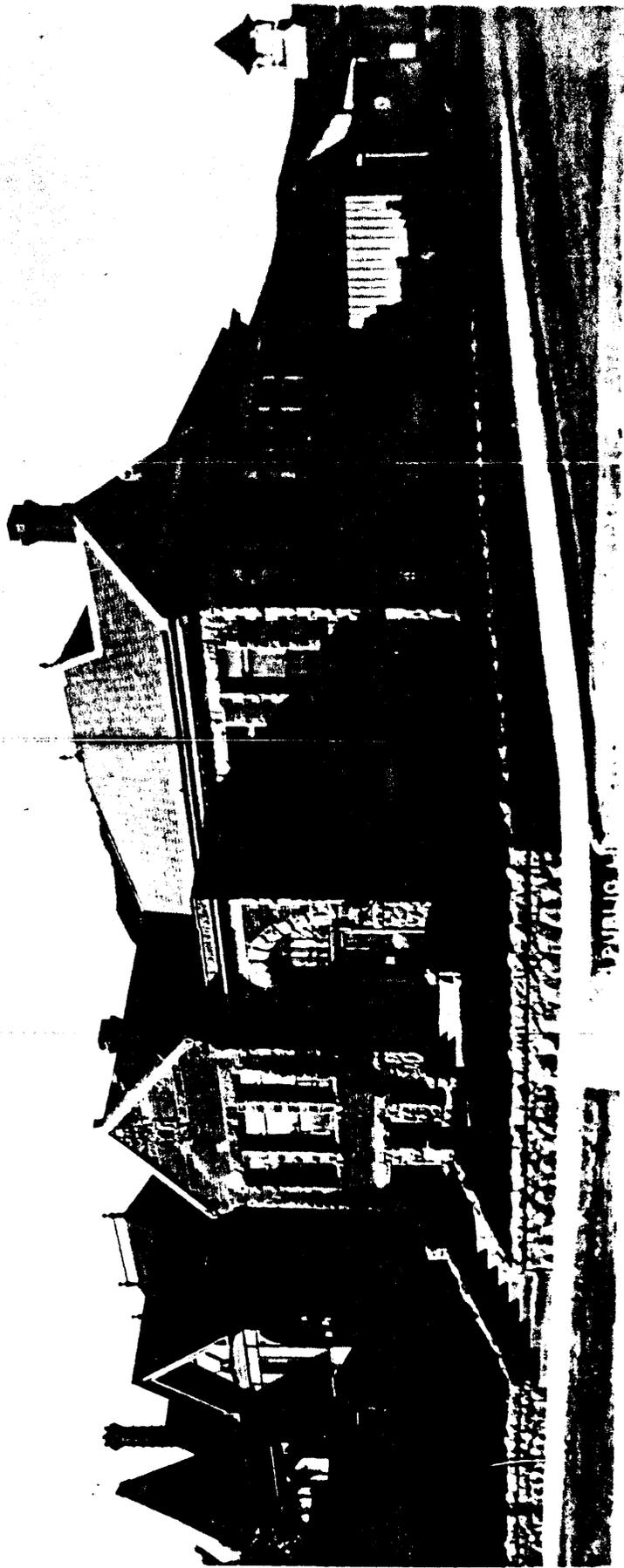
1. South facade, drawing by William Weeks.
2. South facade, just after construction.
3. South and east facades, with Mission dormitory wall visible.
4. South facade after addition of portico.
5. Interior, parlor, with fireplace at left, windows facing south.
6. Interior, parlor at rear to right, gallery to rear at left.



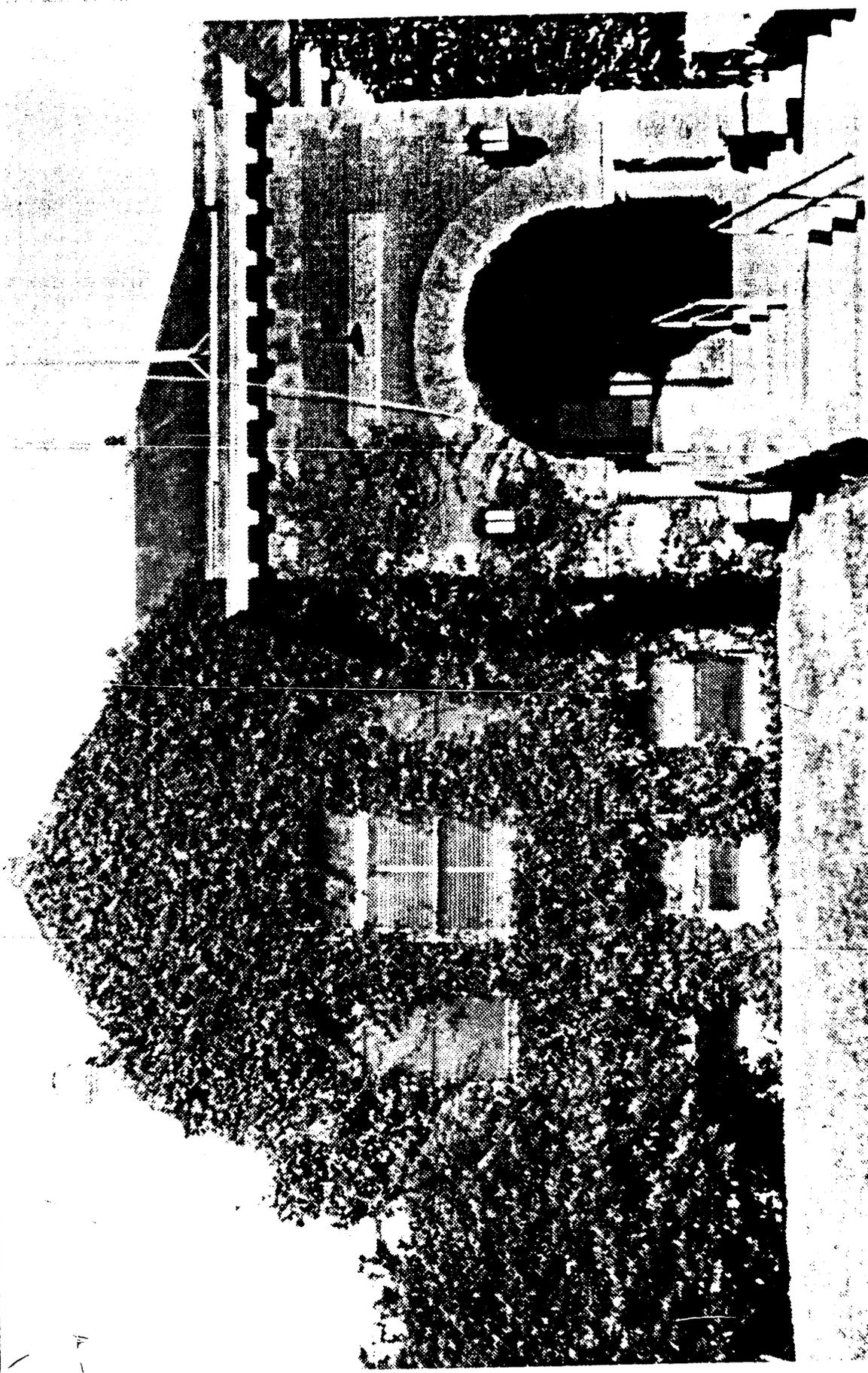
(#1) Carnegie Library - County Museum
San Luis Obispo County, CA



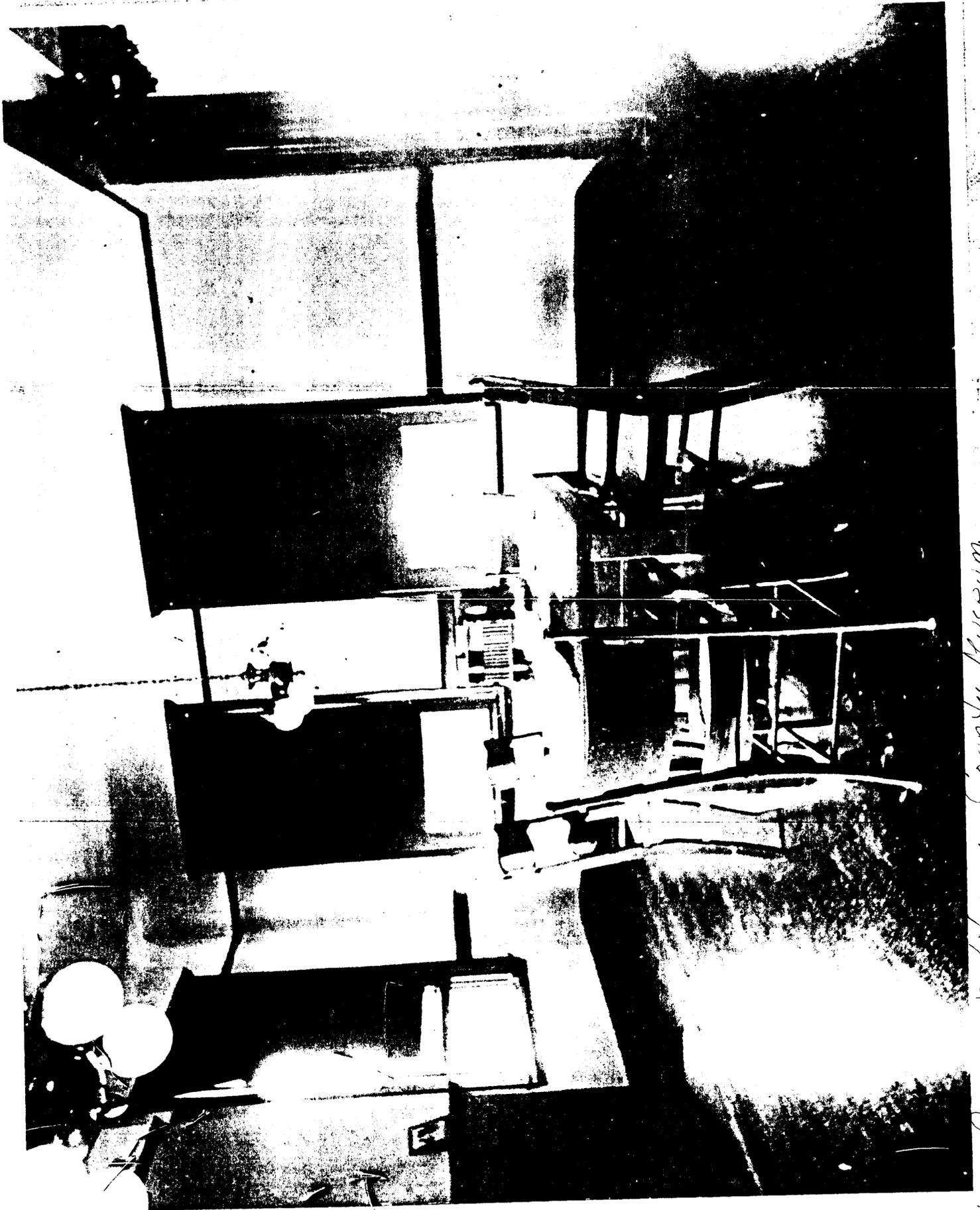
#2 Carnegie Library - County Museum
San Luis Obispo County, CA



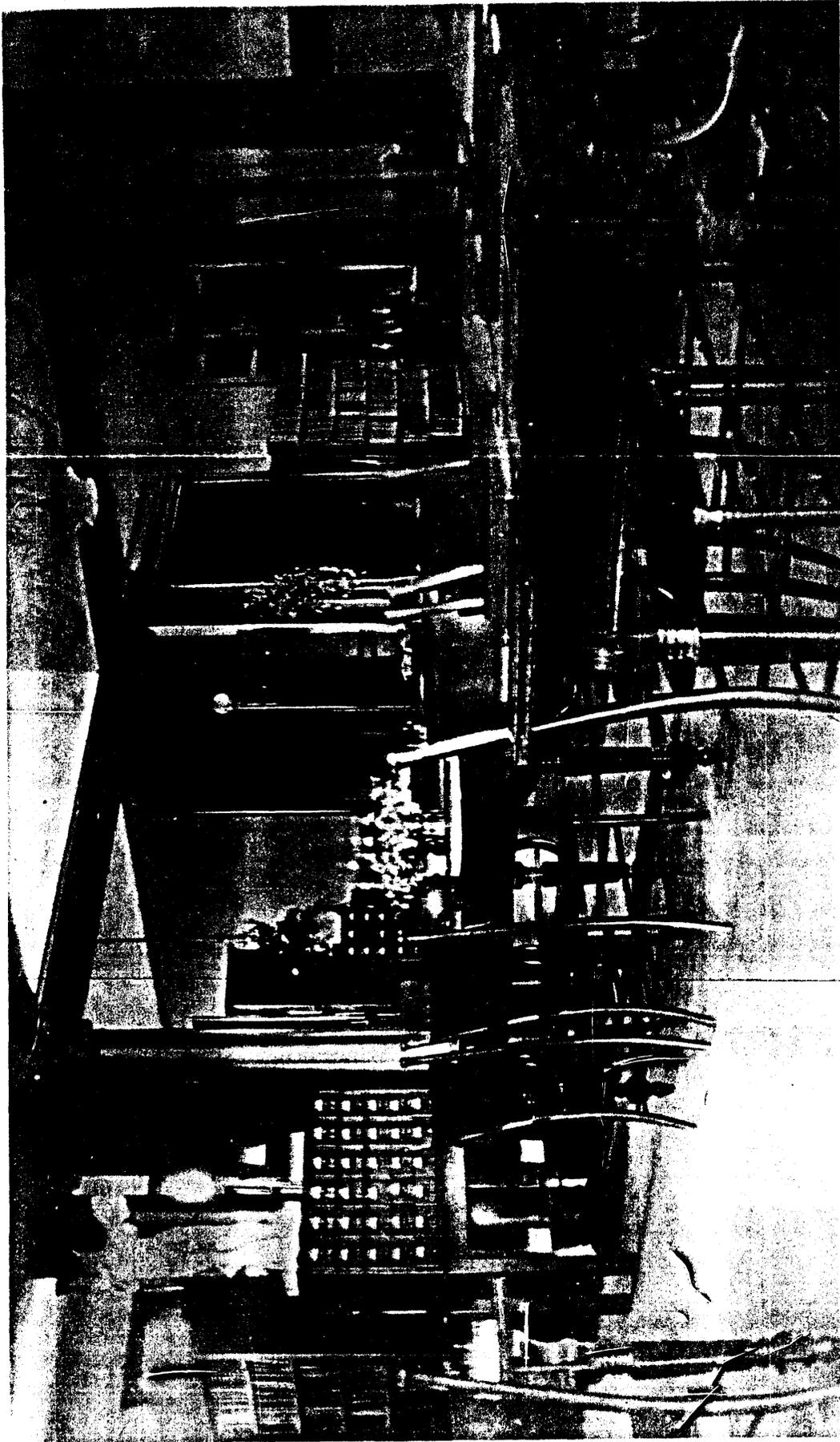
#3 Carnegie Library - County Museum
San Luis Obispo County, CA



#4 Carnegie Library - County Museum
San Luis Obispo County, CA



#5 Carnegie Library - County Museum
San Luis Obispo County, CA

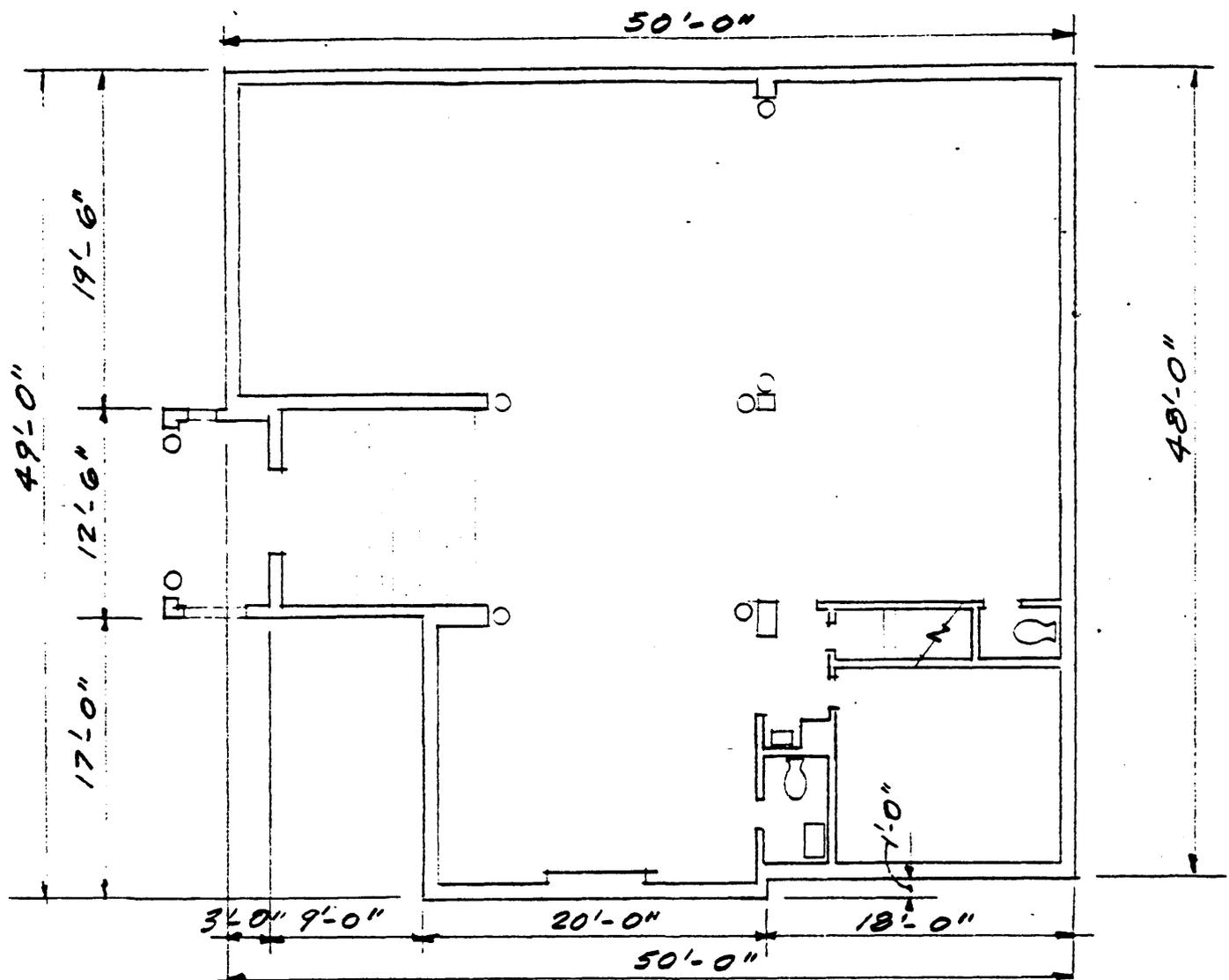


#6 Carnegie library - Colby Museum
San Luis Obispo County, CA

Drawn By D.L. DIXON
Checked By
Approved By

Job Title S.L.O. MUSEUM
Sheet Contents FIRST FLOOR PLAN

Sheet No. 2
Date 2/17/66
Job No.



FIRST FLOOR PLAN
SCALE: 1" = 10'
(FLOOR AREA = 2,190 S.F.)



File No. 54-87

Carnegie Library-County Museum

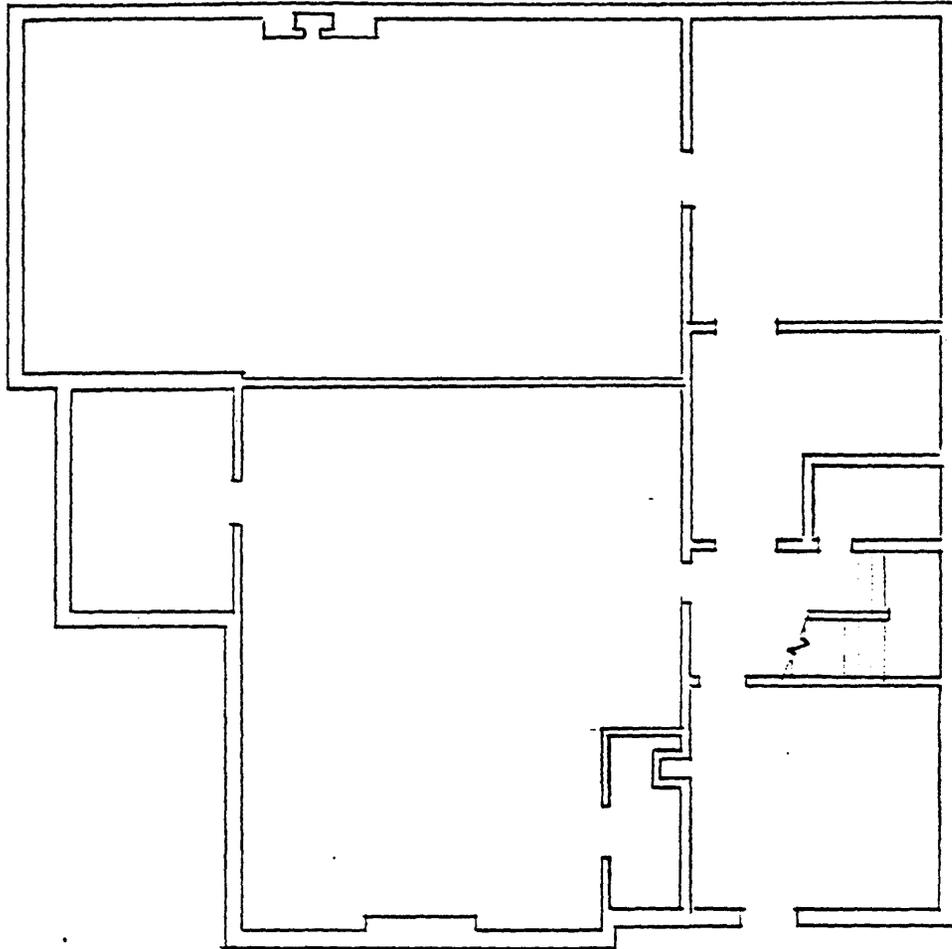
BUILDING NAME S.L.O. MUSEUM
San Luis Obispo County, CA

BUILDING NUMBER 54-87

Drawn By D.A. DIXON
Checked By _____
Approved By _____

Job Title S.L.O. MUSEUM
Sheet Contents BASEMENT FLOOR PLAN

Sheet No. 3
Date 2/17/06
Job No. _____



BASEMENT FLOOR PLAN
SCALE: 1"=10'
(FLOOR AREA: 2,190 S.F.)



Carnegie Library - County Museum

BUILDING NAME S.L.O. MUSEUM

San Luis Obispo County, CA

BUILDING NUMBER 54-87

1875