

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

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

For NPS use only

received **MAY 23 1988**  
date entered

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

**1. Name**

historic Gilroy Free Library

and/or common Carnegie Library Building (Gilroy Historical Museum)

**2. Location**

street & number 195 Fifth Street n/a not for publication

city, town Gilroy n/a vicinity of

state California code 06 county Santa Clara code 085

**3. Classification**

<b>Category</b>	<b>Ownership</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Present Use</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> n/a	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> other:

**4. Owner of Property**

name City of Gilroy

street & number 7351 Rosanna Street

city, town Gilroy n/a vicinity of state California 95020

**5. Location of Legal Description**

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Santa Clara County Recorder's Office

street & number 70 W. Hedding Street

city, town San Jose state California

**6. Representation in Existing Surveys**

title Santa Clara County Heritage Resource Inventory has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date 1981 (still as yet unpublished)  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records Santa Clara County Planning Dept., Heritage Resource Inventory Office, 70 W. Hedding Street

city, town San Jose state California

## 7. Description

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

### Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Carnegie Library building in Gilroy is a 1-1/2 story structure, designed by prominent California architect William Weeks, in Classical Revival styling, but according also to the loose specifications established by Andrew Carnegie himself. The building was constructed in 1909 with funds obtained from the Carnegie endowment. Its plan is roughly four-square (55' by 46'), extending symmetrically outward from an octagonal rotunda, which communicates to each of the three main upper level rooms. Located centrally on the southern (Fifth Street) facade is a monumental staircase and entranceway, through which one passes by a vestibule directly into the rotunda. The main floor is elevated above grade over a basement. Integrity is generally high; alterations are minor and are confined primarily to the interior.

The building is constructed of reinforced concrete; the exterior of the upper level is faced with Monterey buff pressed brick with stone quoins at the corners. The wood used throughout the building is kiln-dried Oregon pine. Exterior of the basement level is plastered and painted above grade. Exterior wood trim is painted and includes a single row of dentils which encircle the building just below the eave line.

The tar and gravel roof is flat; it is concealed behind an encircling parapet wall. The gable roof of the pediment over the vestibule is covered with California black slate. Centered in the interior rotunda is a Foderer's patented skylight of galvanized iron glazed with 1/4" skylight corrugated glass surrounded by a false-hipped roof. A brass chandelier is suspended from the center of the skylight.

All entrance steps, landings, were originally terrazzo, but were replaced by concrete in the fall of 1937, by contractor George Renz, due to damage. The plans and specifications for the new concrete steps were drawn up by William Weeks. The entrance pediment is supported by two pairs of redwood tuscan columns, decorated with egg and dart molding around their capitals. Behind these are two pairs of pilasters, rendered in the same manner. They flank a semi-circular stone arch, which encloses the exterior vestibule. This vestibule has a patterned tile floor, composed of 3/4" tiles. It has an outside border of black, two tiles wide, a line of red tiles with a running Grecian key, and an inside border of green, one tile wide. This pattern surrounds a center composed entirely of white tiles. The entrance door sill is marble. The side walls of the vestibule are paneled on a base of Verde Antique marble. The double entrance doors have beveled plate glass and brass kick plates, and plate glass sidelights.

The upper floor rotunda communicates directly with three large rooms through archways. On the east is the gallery room, originally the book room. On the southwest corner is the present research room, originally the reading room, which features a fireplace on the north wall. The hearth and mantel are made of green 6" tiles, topped with an imposing Oregon pine mantelpiece supported by carved brackets. In the northwest corner is a smaller exhibit room, once the children's book room. This room has a door in its northeast corner leading into the stairhall.

## 8. Significance

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

**Specific dates** 1909-1938 **Builder/Architect** H. J. Woods/William H. Weeks

### Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Gilroy Free Library was built in 1909-10, one of 142 Carnegie library grants awarded in California. It served as the community library until 1975. It is a notable local example of monumental Neo-Classical Revival styling, considered appropriate for civic buildings of the period. It was designed by the noted California architect William H. Weeks.

At the end of the 19th century, California joined the movement to establish separate library buildings to house community book collections. By then, libraries had come to be viewed as a panacea for such social problems as drunkenness and prostitution. Women's clubs and groups such as the YMCA were instrumental in promoting library buildings for the benefit of the community. After the turn of the century, Andrew Carnegie emerged as the major benefactor of public libraries in America and abroad.

Carnegie had been born in Scotland in 1835 and had risen "from rags to riches" in America through shrewd investments in railroads, oil, and steel. Retiring at age 66, Carnegie devoted the latter years of his life to philanthropy -- library grants being one of his most important activities. His first library donation was made to Dunfermline, Scotland, his home town. His first United States grant came in 1886 to Alleghany City, Pennsylvania. At the turn of the century, the Carnegie Library donation program expanded greatly, providing funds for buildings, but relying on the communities to raise endowments for maintenance.

As a state, California was fortunate to receive the second largest number of libraries in the United States under the Carnegie program. San Diego was the first California city to receive a grant, in 1899, followed by Oakland and Alameda in the same year. In 1905, California received 12 awards, the most for any year under the program. In all, 122 California communities received Carnegie grants from 1899 until the end of the program in 1917. These grants resulted in the construction of 142 library buildings in the state. In 1967, more than one third of these had been demolished, and it is likely many more have gone in the twenty-odd years since then.

The local citizens of Gilroy gave generously of their time and talents to create the town's first free public library, secure a Carnegie grant, and oversee the building of one of this city's best known and memorable landmarks. Located in one of the oldest neighborhoods in Gilroy, this public structure was constructed on a former tennis court donated by Caroline Hoxett, a local benefactress, when subscription funds proved to be too little. The Gilroy Free Library was opened in the building on July 27, 1910. The library occupied the main floor of the building until 1975 when it moved to a new

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

See attached.

# 10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property 0.14 acre

Quadrangle name Gilroy

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

**UTM References**

A 

1	0	6	2	7	1	7	0	4	0	9	6	4	9	0
Zone		Easting				Northing								

B 

Zone		Easting				Northing								

C 

Zone		Easting				Northing								

D 

Zone		Easting				Northing								

E 

Zone		Easting				Northing								

F 

Zone		Easting				Northing								

G 

Zone		Easting				Northing								

H 

Zone		Easting				Northing								

**Verbal boundary description and justification**

Building occupies its original 75' x 80' lot at the northeast corner of Fifth and Church Streets. Assessor's Parcel Number: 799-06-31.

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

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

# 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Patricia L. Snar, Asst. Director

organization Gilroy Historical Museum date (OHP revision, April 1988) 3 September 1987

street & number 195 Fifth Street telephone (408) 847-2685

city or town Gilroy state California 95020

# 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national  state  local

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

State Historic Preservation Officer signature Kathryn Guetter date 5/10/88

**For NPS use only**  
 I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register  
 Keeper of the National Register [Signature] date 6-23-88  
 Attest:  
 Chief of Registration

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

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section number   6   Page   1  

---

REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS (continued)

Historic Building Survey and Study  
City of Gilroy, Planning Department  
June 1980   x   local  
Records at Planning Department  
City of Gilroy  
7351 Rosanna Street  
Gilroy, California

Copy at Gilroy Historical Museum, 195 Fifth Street, Gilroy

California State Historic Resources Inventory  
Survey in progress   x   state  
Records will be housed at  
State Office of Historic Preservation  
P.O. Box 942896  
Sacramento, California 94296-0001

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

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 7 Page 1

---

All floors on the main level are Oregon pine; they were originally overlaid with linoleum and then carpeted in 1975. The building was fitted with both electric and gas lighting fixtures. The "bare bulb" fixtures were changed to fluorescent lights in 1946; fluorescent fixtures in the gallery room were replaced with track lighting in 1975. All interior walls are lath and plaster. A vinyl covering was placed on the upper floor walls in 1975 because of severe deterioration of the plaster. A 2-1/4" picture moulding was used in all rooms and halls on the upper level and in the stairhall to the lower level. All hardware is satin-finished brass.

The stairs are built of Oregon pine. Both the stairhall and the hallway on the lower floor have tongue-and-groove wainscoting four feet high. The stairs descend to a landing at the grade level where there is an exterior door. Four feet below this landing is a hallway which extends east-west. At its western end, immediately below the stairway, is a door to the receiving room, which now houses the historical library of the museum. The receiving room was used to prepare newly acquired books for library use. The lower floor was extensively remodeled in 1957, but the rooms still retain tongue-and-groove wainscoting three feet high.

Some water damage to the walls and floor of the lower level has been sustained due to a faulty drain outside the exterior door, which was corrected in 1985. Core samples were taken in 1985 on the south wall to check for concrete deterioration. This revealed that the concrete mixture was still structurally sound with little signs of deterioration. However, seepage does remain a problem. As a temporary solution, the exterior watering fixtures around the base of the building have been turned off permanently, and removal of the shrubs and trees next to the building is anticipated shortly. Some exterior window framing was replaced in 1978 due to deterioration. All windows on the lower floor at grade level have been fitted with wrought iron bars for security purposes.

Resource Count -- 1 contributing building.

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

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 8 Page 1

---

location at Sixth and Rosanna Streets. The Gilroy Historical Museum was formally established by the City of Gilroy in 1963 and until 1976 was housed in the basement community room. Since 1976, the museum has had use of the entire building for its collections and programs.

This well known and memorable Gilroy landmark was built by Hiram Woods of Watsonville. Designed by William H. Weeks, an outstanding California architect, the building was the first of five Weeks' libraries to use this style and proportions.

Weeks was born on January 18, 1864 at Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island. His family came to the United States when he was a young boy and settled first in Kansas and then in Denver, Colorado. Young William helped his father in his building business and then took his architectural training at the Berger Institute in Denver. In 1891, William Weeks married Maggie Haymaker, and they moved to Washington State but soon relocated to California. Weeks established himself in the Oakland area, designing several school buildings. He then received a contract for the Watsonville High School and relocated to that town where he opened an office. During the 1890s, he designed numerous homes in Watsonville and the surrounding area. In 1905, the Weeks architectural firm of nearly thirty employees opened an office in San Francisco and was a primary force in the rebuilding of that city after the 1906 earthquake.

By 1907, Weeks was becoming known for his library designs and much sought after for such in Northern and Central California. Between the years 1904 to 1920, he designed sixteen Carnegie libraries in addition to the McHenry Memorial Library in Modesto. These libraries varied in style, from the Richardsonian Romanesque of the San Luis Obispo Library to the Mission Revival of Woodland and Monterey. There seems to have been no evolution from one style to another as the various architectural styles are represented during the entire period of Weeks' activity in library design. The Neo-Classical Revival style was very popular for Carnegie libraries as it was employed by many other architects as well. The Gilroy Carnegie Library is thus probably not a prototype in Weeks' library designs, although it may be considered the basis of his work in this style. Of the four Neo-Classical libraries built after this one, two are identical and two are similar. The significance of the Gilroy library does not appear to be in any originality of design, but rather as a nice example of Weeks' work on a small-scale community building.

Weeks was a prolific architect known primarily for his designs of educational institutions -- schools and libraries. By 1915, his firm had more than 1,000 buildings to its credit. Weeks retired from active practice in 1930 and died at his home in San Francisco on April 29, 1936.

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

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 8 Page 2

---

Symmetry and careful ordering of the parts of this building as well as its general sense of mass and volume contribute to its distinction as a cultural center in the community. The half basement substantially raises the structure from the ground giving the building an elevated position and excellent proportions. The symmetrical fenestration, conservative rooflines, and the pediment and classical columns of the entrance portico make the library a locally notable example of Neo-Classical styling. This structure of monumental style and conservative proportions has remained a nucleus for the intellectual growth of this community through the visual gravity of its design and its continued use as an institution of culture and enlightenment. The building was identified as eligible for National Register listing in the historical and architectural survey of Santa Clara County conducted in 1981.

The period of significance has arbitrarily been ended at 1938, fifty years ago, although the library continued to serve the community until 1975. Exceptional significance is not apparent.



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

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section number   9   Page   1  

---

Bobinski, George S., Carnegie Libraries, 1969.

Gilroy Advocate, 1868 to 1946.

Gilroy Evening Dispatch, 1925 to present.

Gilroy Library Board Minutes, 1906 to present.

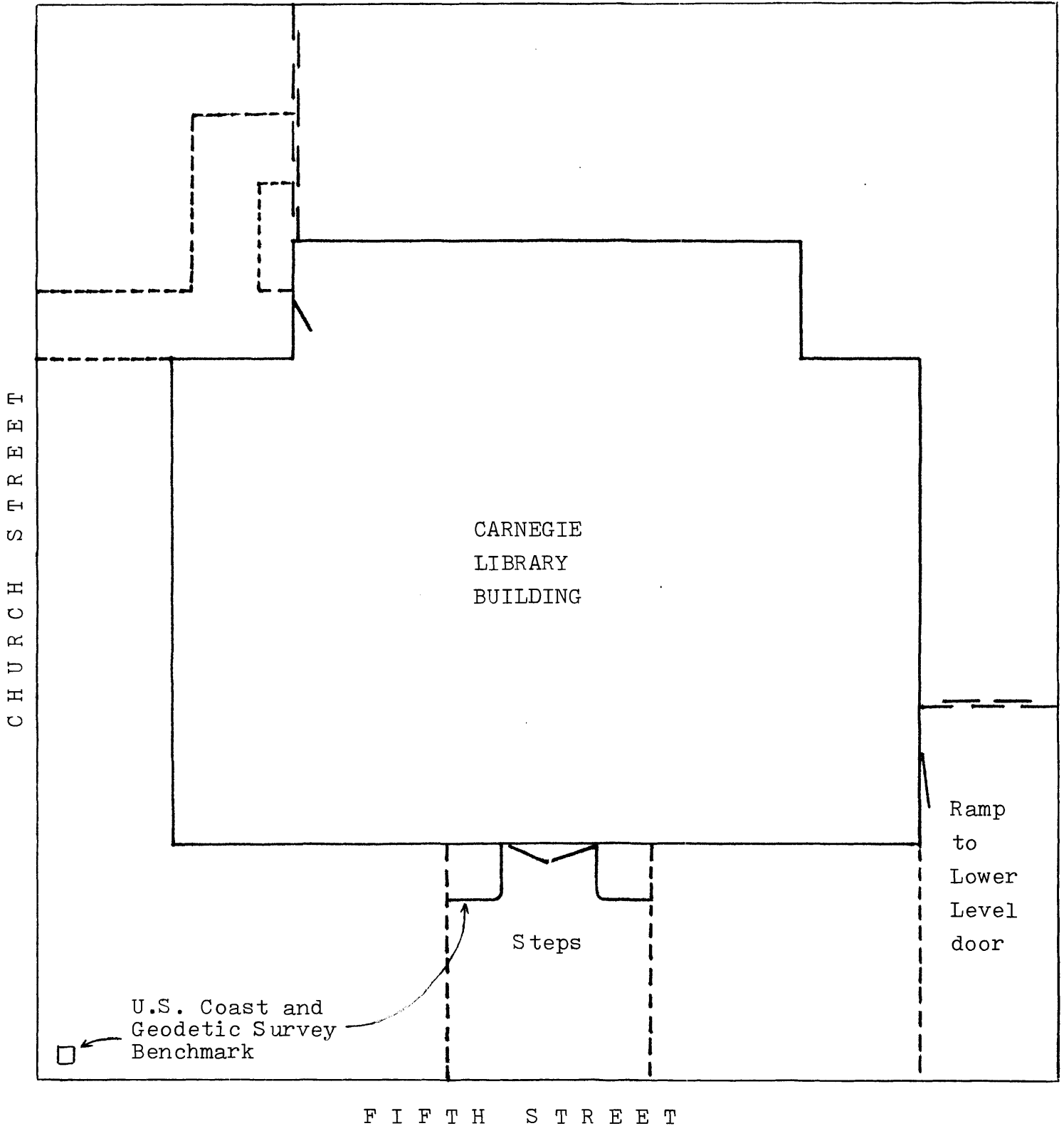
Gilroy Tax Assessment Rolls, 1870 through 1946.

Lewis, Betty, W. H. Weeks, Architect, 1985.

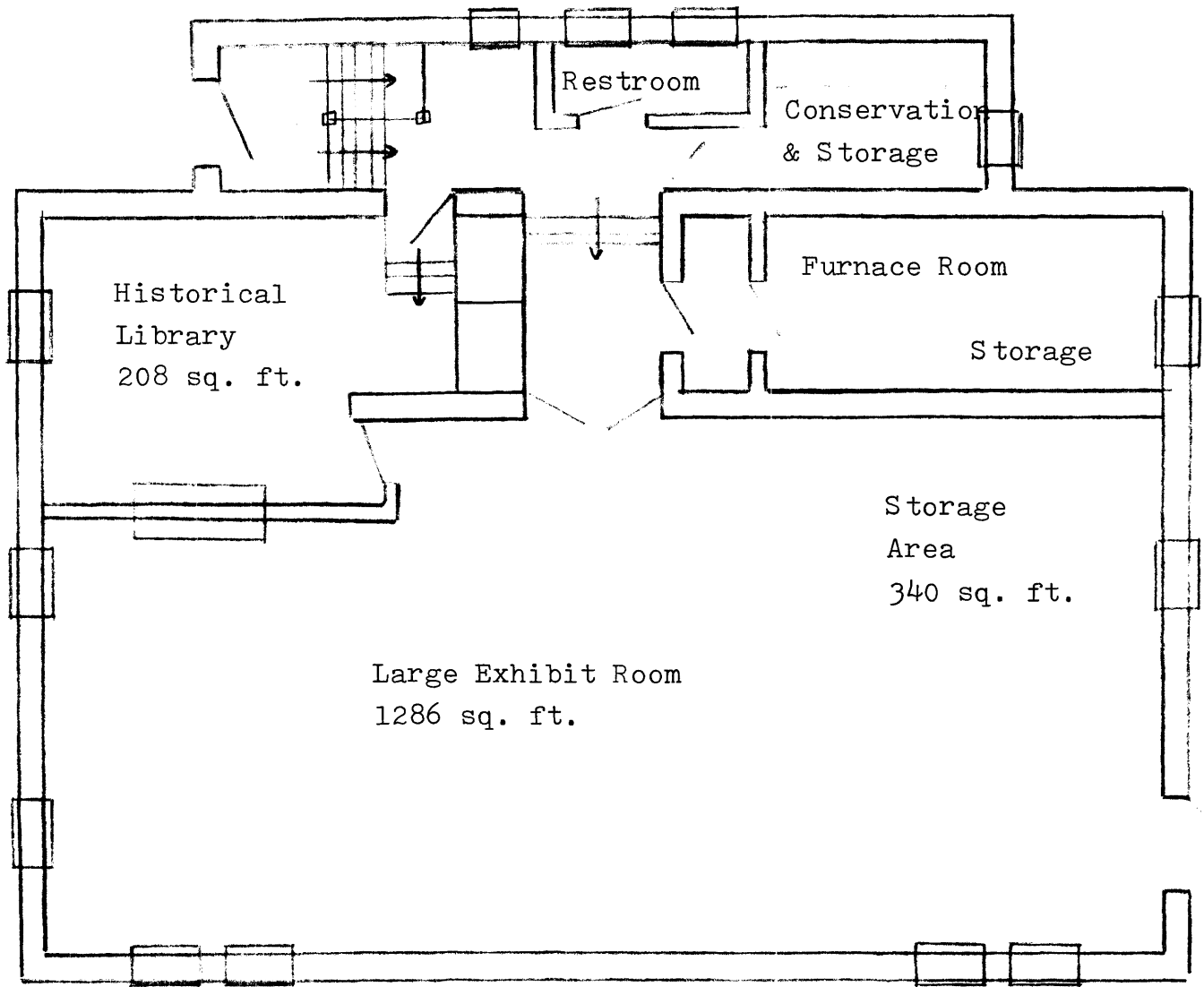
Sawyer, E. J., History of Santa Clara County, 1922.

I-5553H

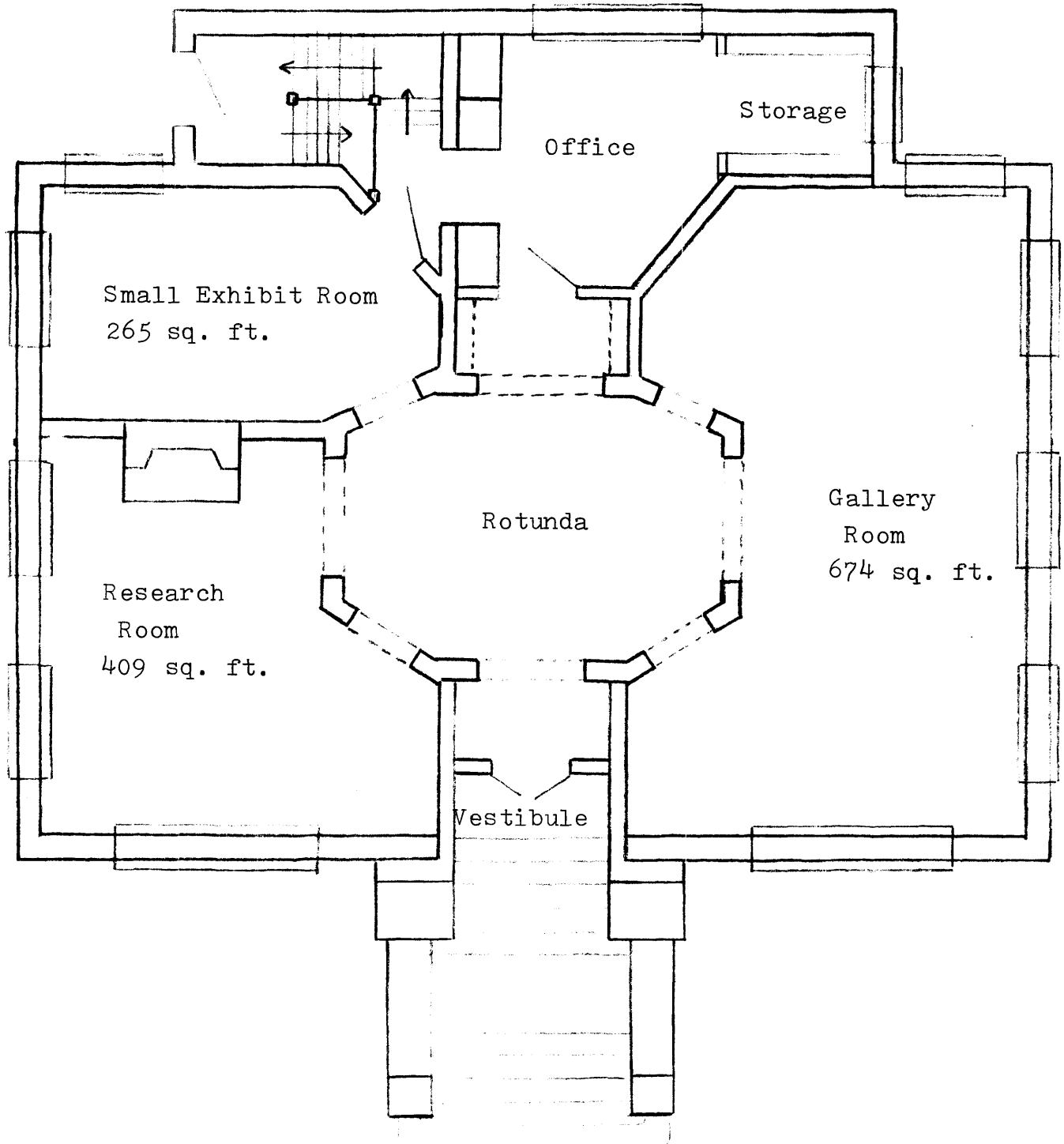
Carnegie Library Building  
195 Fifth Street  
Gilroy, Calif.  
(Santa Clara County)



CARNEGIE LIBRARY BUILDING  
195 Fifth Street  
Gilroy, California 95020 (Santa Clara County)  
Lower Floor (Basement)  
Scale: 1/8" = 1'



CARNEGIE LIBRARY BUILDING  
195 Fifth Street  
Gilroy, California 95020 (Santa Clara County)  
First Floor (Upper Floor)  
Scale: 1/8" = 1'





Carnegie Library Building  
 195 Fifth St.  
 Gilroy, Santa Clara Co., California

SOUTHERN PACIFIC CO.

12