

from HANDBOOK OF THE BRANCH LIBRARIES
LOS ANGELES PUBLIC LIBRARY

1928

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THE SIX CARNEGIE BUILDINGS (1913-1916)

In looking through the family album of the branch libraries, we find the stately and aristocratic elders in the six buildings constructed with the Carnegie gift of \$210,000 during the years 1913-1916. In those days of pre-war building costs, \$35,000 would erect a fire-proof brick structure having a capacity for 15,000 to 20,000 volumes, reading rooms seating about 100, and an auditorium with capacity of 100 to 300.

With one exception, these Carnegie buildings have an assembly room located in a high basement, and provision is made for an outdoor reading porch or garden. These early branches were heated by coal or oil burning furnaces, which are gradually being replaced with gas. Staff quarters, office, work room, and rest room were provided on a very small scale.

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CAHUENGA BRANCH

Cahuenga Branch was opened to the public in the last and smallest (sic) of the Carnegie buildings in December, 1916, at 4591 Santa Monica Boulevard. It is a substantial and dignified Italian building faced with brick laid in pattern and panels, with a grand exterior central stairway leading upward to the main entrance and down to the basement club room and auditorium.

The plan is similar to that of Vermont Square and like Vermont Square, Cahuenga began full-grown in a Carnegie building, giving service to a community which had no previous public library privileges. Increasing rapidly in popularity, with systematic publicity based on a thorough survey of the neighborhood, Cahuenga soon proved the wisdom of the Library Commissioners in their selection of the location on Santa Monica Boulevard. The establishment of the Southern Branch of the University of California on the old Normal School grounds on Vermont Avenue brought many university students to the library and an interesting reference and study collection is being built up. The auditorium is used on many occasions for community gatherings.

Architect: C. H. Russell	Building dimensions: 94'x58'
Cost: \$33,978	Floor space: 8,474 Sq.Ft.
(Building, equipment, furniture)	
Construction: Brick	Volumes capacity: 17,000