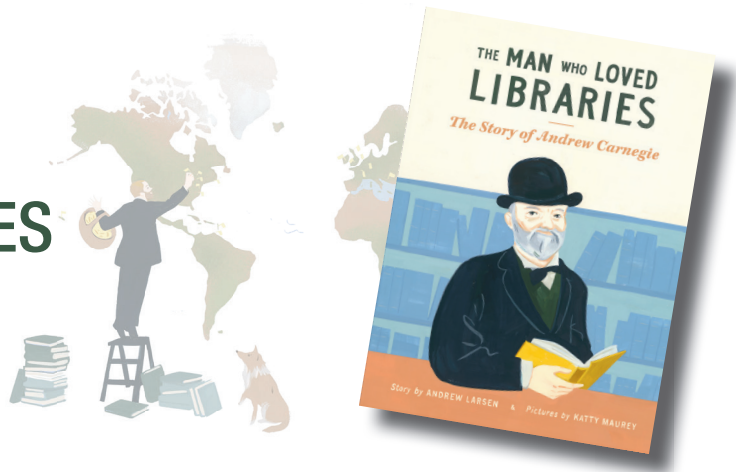


# CARNEGIE LIBRARIES

## Quick Facts



### WHO WAS ANDREW CARNEGIE?

Andrew Carnegie was 12 years old when he moved to the USA from Scotland in 1848—right in the middle of the American Industrial Revolution—along with his working-class family. He immediately found work in a factory and, with hard work and an entrepreneurial spirit, succeeded and started investing his money. He was able to start his own steel company and eventually became one of the richest men in the world. Carnegie decided to use his wealth to help others, becoming known as the “father of philanthropy.” He remembered being able to use a private library as he was working his way up, so from 1883 to 1929 he donated \$55 million to fund the construction of over 2,500 libraries around the world. Carnegie’s reputation is not without blemish—his steel company was not responsive to demands from his factory workers for better pay, working conditions, and hours—but his philanthropic work still has impact today in many ways, not the least of which is the growth of public libraries.

### HOW MANY LIBRARIES WERE BUILT IN THE USA?

- The USA had 1,689 public libraries built thanks to Carnegie grants. Of those, about 750 are still functioning as libraries today.
- Carnegie donated over \$45 million to libraries in the USA.
- The State of New York received the biggest donation, approximately \$6.7 million.

### TWO STATES NEVER GOT A CARNEGIE LIBRARY:

- Delaware and Alaska are the only states that were never granted a Carnegie library.

### WHERE WAS THE FIRST LIBRARY IN THE USA BUILT?

- In 1889, Braddock, Pennsylvania, the location of one of Carnegie Steel Company’s mills, became home to the first American Carnegie library.

### WHICH STATE HAD THE MOST CARNEGIE LIBRARIES BUILT?

- Indiana had the most built (164) thanks to grants totaling about \$2.6 million.
  - Why did they get so many? When the Indiana town of Goshen received the state’s first-ever Carnegie grant, the state passed the Mummert Library Law, which let municipal governments tax citizens to help maintain Carnegie libraries built in Indiana. This made it easier for other towns in the state to get Carnegie libraries.
- California had the second most with 142 Carnegie libraries.
- Illinois, New York, and Ohio are all third with 106 libraries each.
- Iowa is fourth with 101 libraries.

### WHAT WAS THE SMALLEST CITY/TOWN THAT GOT A GRANT?

Honea Path, with a population of 1,765, got a Carnegie Library in 1908.





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### HOW MANY CARNEGIE LIBRARIES WERE FUNDED AROUND THE WORLD?

2,509 libraries were built between 1883 and 1929 in the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom, Ireland, France, Serbia, South Africa, Belgium, Australia, New Zealand, the Caribbean, Malaysia, Mauritius, and Fiji.

### WHERE WAS THE FIRST-EVER CARNEGIE LIBRARY BUILT?

In Dunfermline, Scotland, Carnegie's hometown.

### HOW DID CITIES/TOWNS GET FUNDING?

Carnegie would give grants if local governments could show they:

- needed a public library
- had a site for the building
- would pay staff and maintain the library
- would use some public funds to run the library
- would make sure service was free for everyone

### THE OPEN-SHELF/SELF-SERVE LIBRARY POLICY

In the 1880s, all libraries were closed-stack: a librarian had to get books from behind a door where the public didn't have access.

To save money when building libraries, Carnegie created the open-shelf system—which was started in Pittsburgh—where people could take books off the shelves themselves.

And how did libraries make sure nobody stole a book? The library's substantial circulation desk was placed right by the front door.

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