

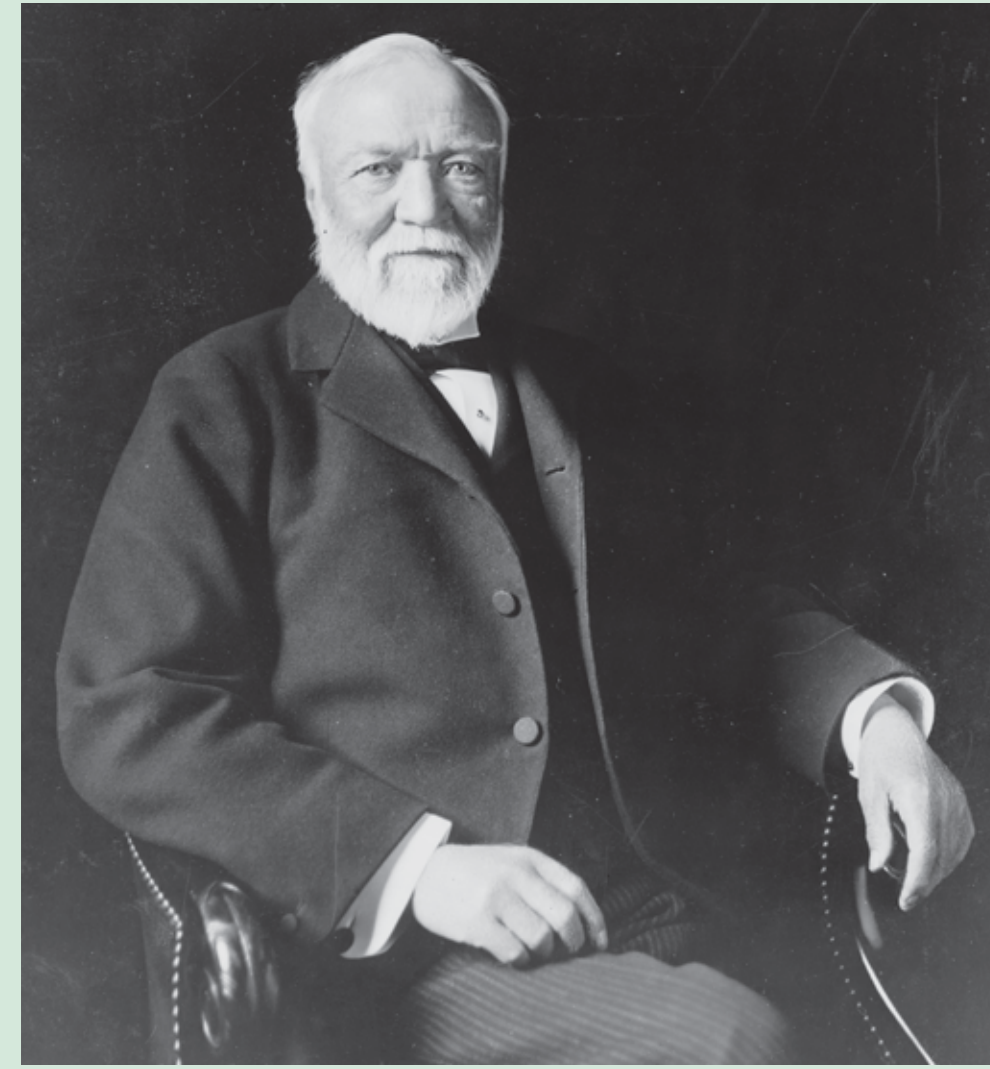
Planning and Building Weston Public Library 1912-1914

Library service in Weston before the Carnegie grant

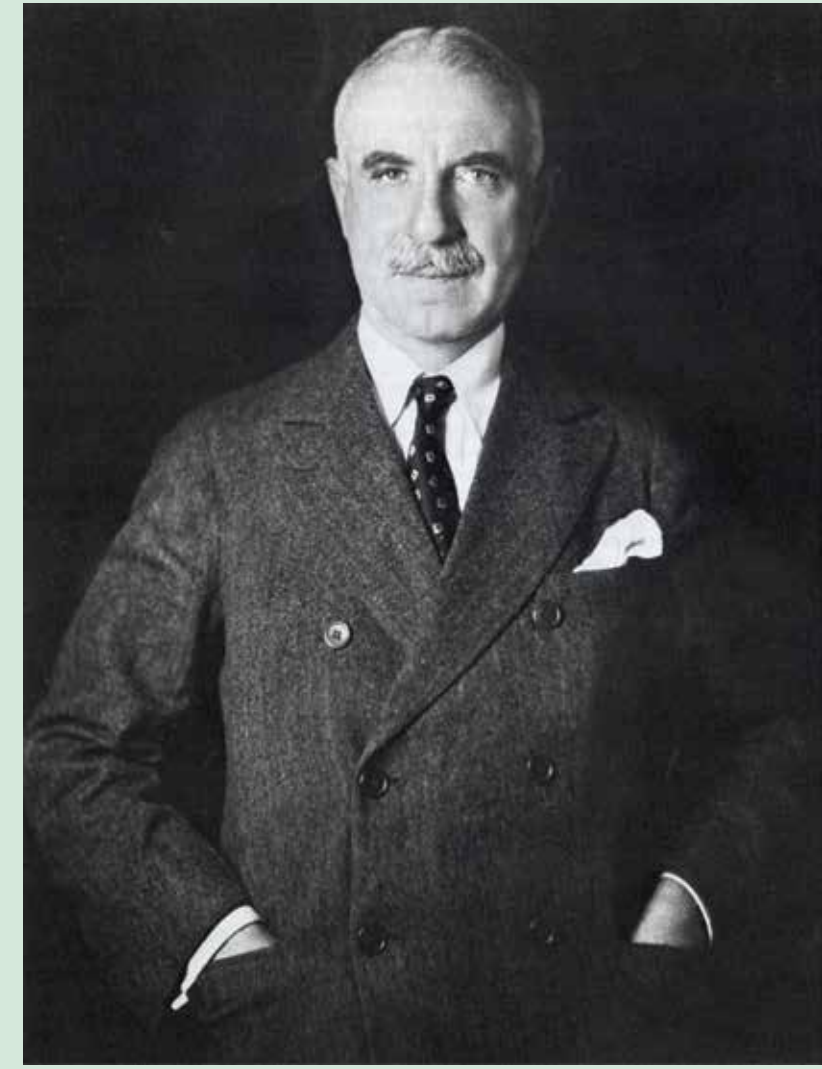


Weston Town Hall, 1909
Library service was provided for 30 years in one or two back rooms here, first from 1884 to April 1895 by the Weston Mechanics' Institute (established 1858) and then from May 1895 until December 1914 by the successor Weston Public Library. The building, designed by William Tyrrell, stood at the northwest corner of today's Weston Road and Little Avenue, 1883-1967.

Andrew Carnegie and the Carnegie grants



Andrew Carnegie, 1913
Carnegie (1835-1919) was among the most famous and wealthy industrialists of his day. His best known philanthropy was libraries, and from 1883 to 1917, he and, after 1911, the Carnegie Corporation of New York gave more than \$56 million to build 2,509 public libraries worldwide, including ten in what is now Toronto.



James Bertram, 1920s?
Bertram (1872-1934) was secretary to Andrew Carnegie from 1897 to 1914, and of the Carnegie Corporation of New York from 1911 to 1934. He administered and personally approved most of the library grants on Carnegie's behalf; after 1907 he insisted on approving library building plans as well.

Carnegie grant conditions

The library must be supported through local taxes, and open to all citizens free of charge without membership fees.

The municipality must provide a suitable site for the library.

The municipal council must annually appropriate no less than 10 percent of the grant to support library operations.

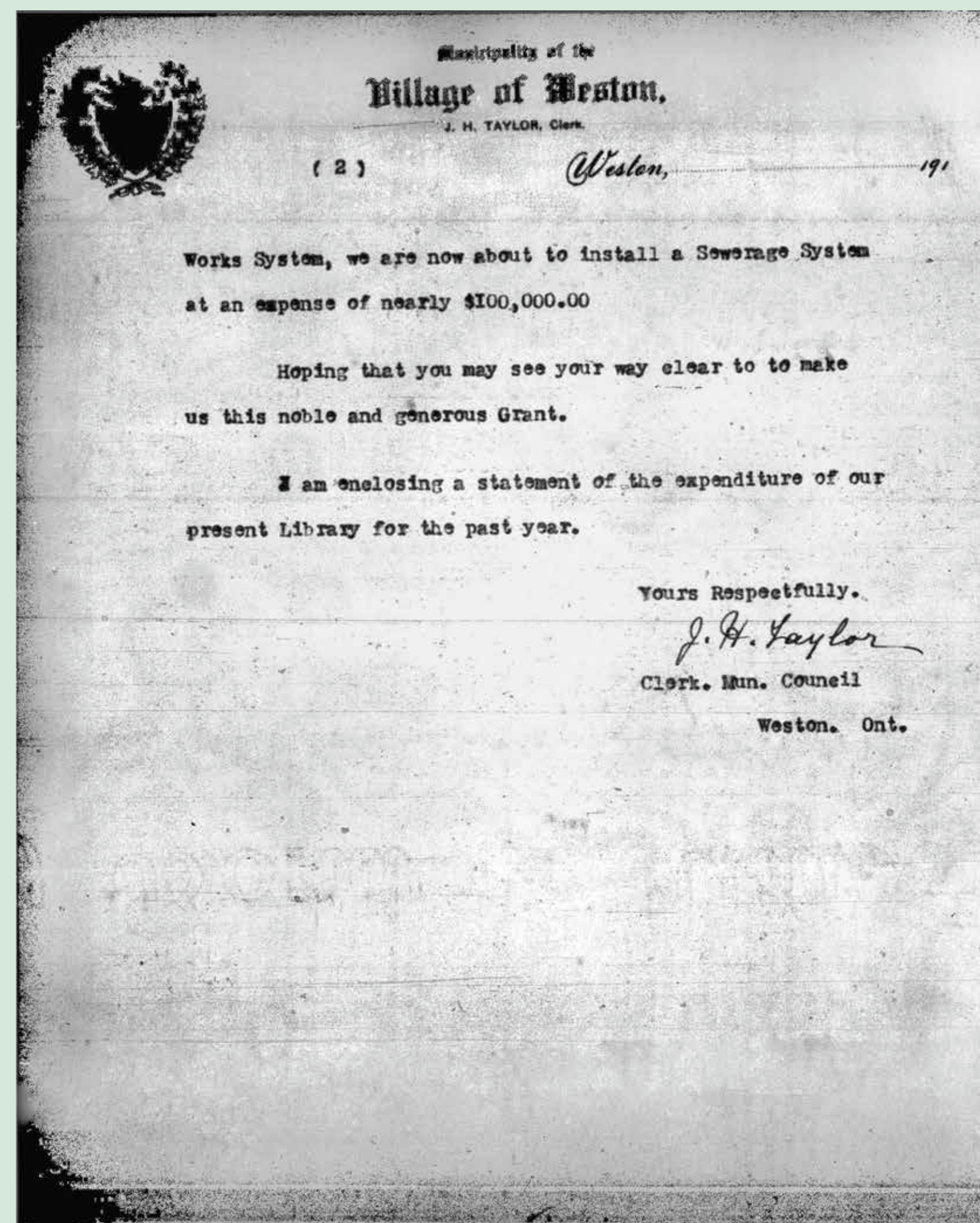
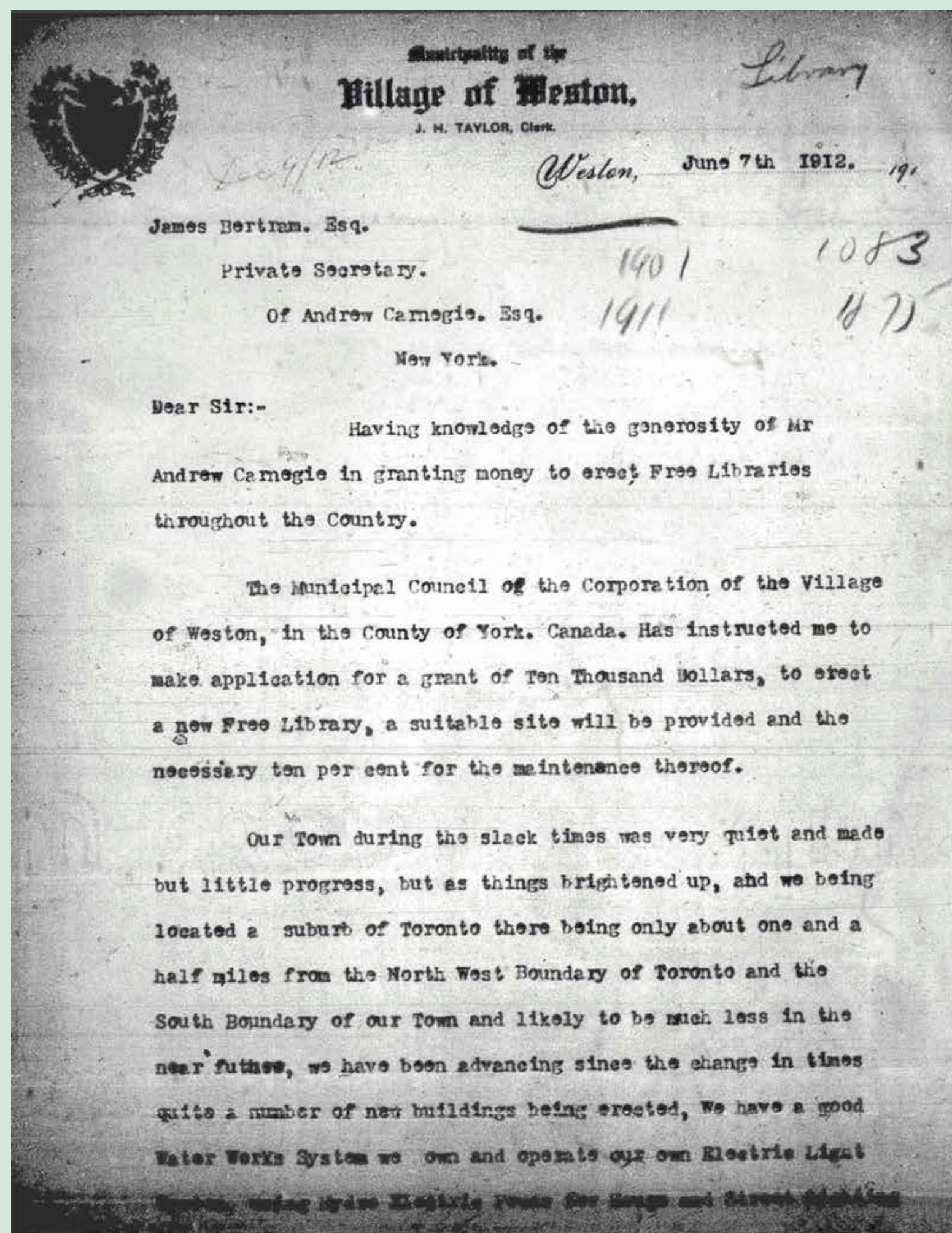
Weston Council meets the conditions

By-law No. 554 for establishing a "free" public library is passed on January 15, 1912. Previously Weston had a "not free" library.

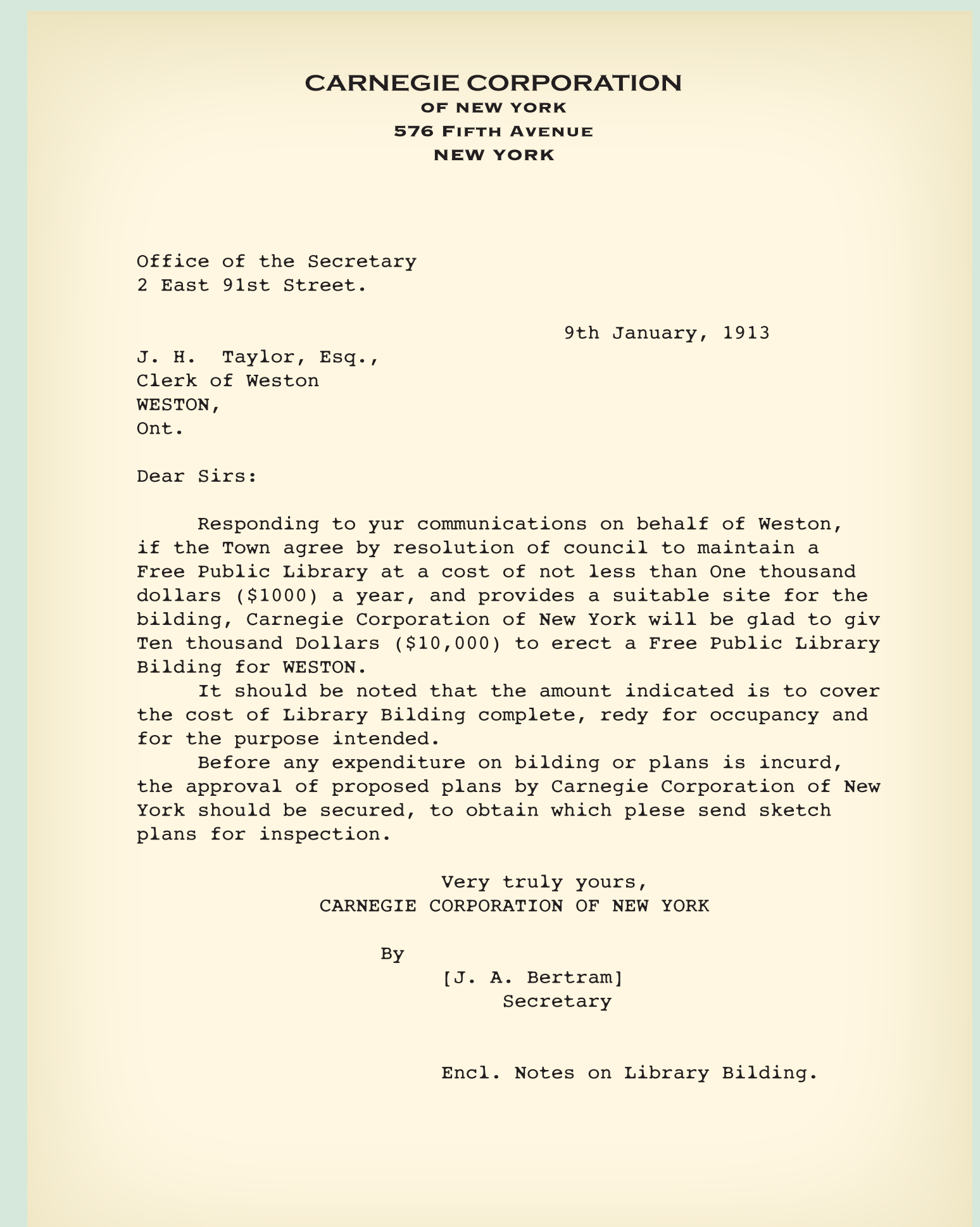
By-law No. 574 to borrow \$2,000 for the purchase of a site for a public library is passed on May 20, 1912.

No by-law is passed although Weston ratepayers voted in favour of a maintenance by-law on May 18, 1912.

Applying for and receiving the Carnegie grant, 1912-13



First letter between Weston and Carnegie officials to obtain a library grant for Weston, June 7, 1912



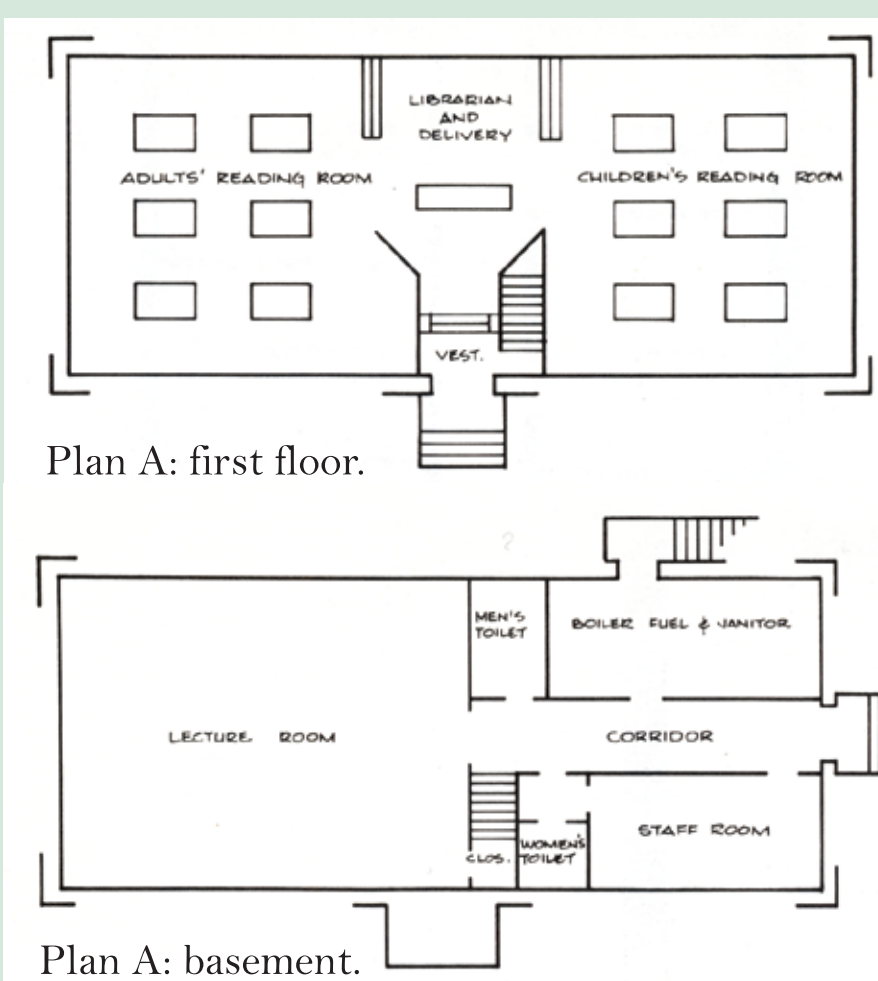
Re-creation of the letter from the Carnegie Corporation of New York granting \$10,000 to Weston to construct a library, January 9, 1913
Note that Bertram used the simplified spelling method that Andrew Carnegie advocated.

Planning and building the Carnegie library, 1913-14

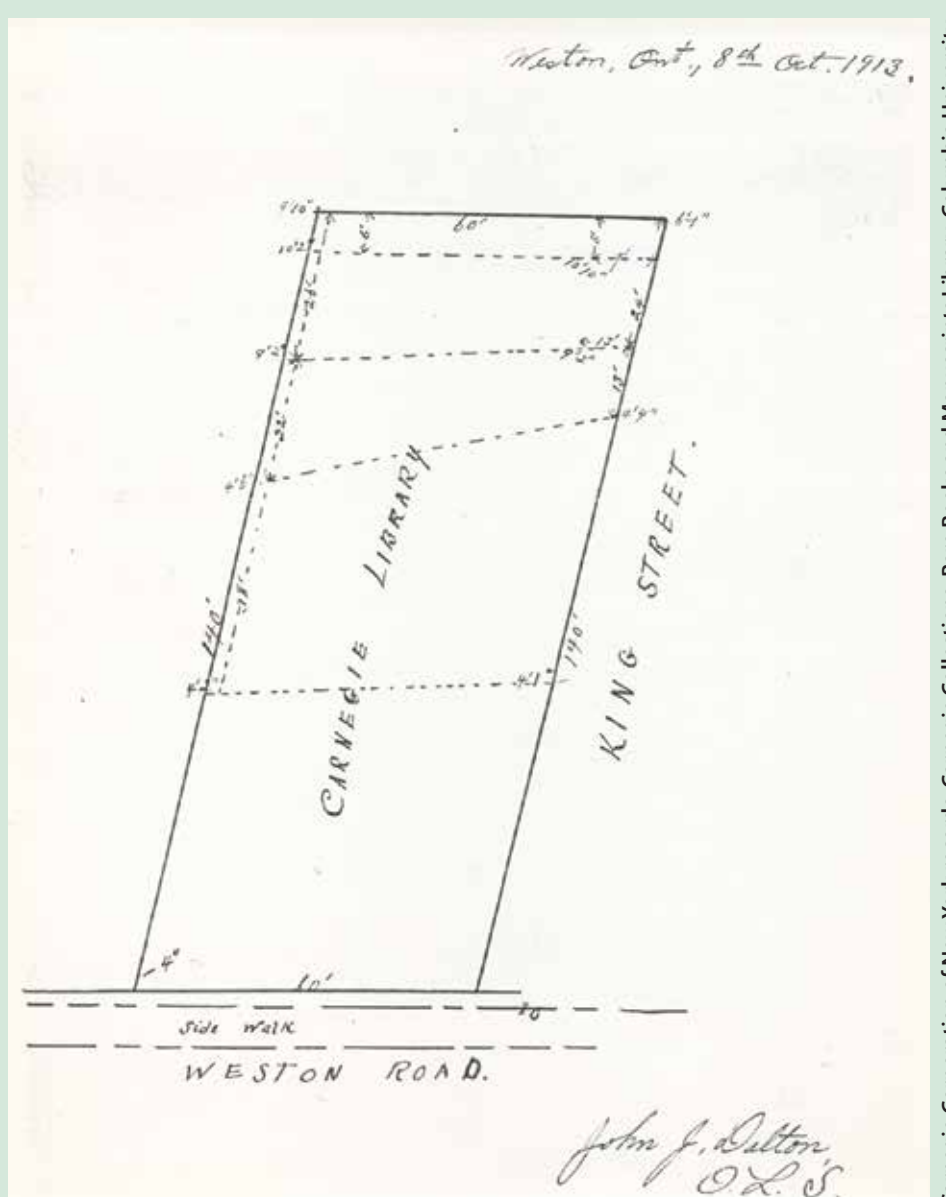


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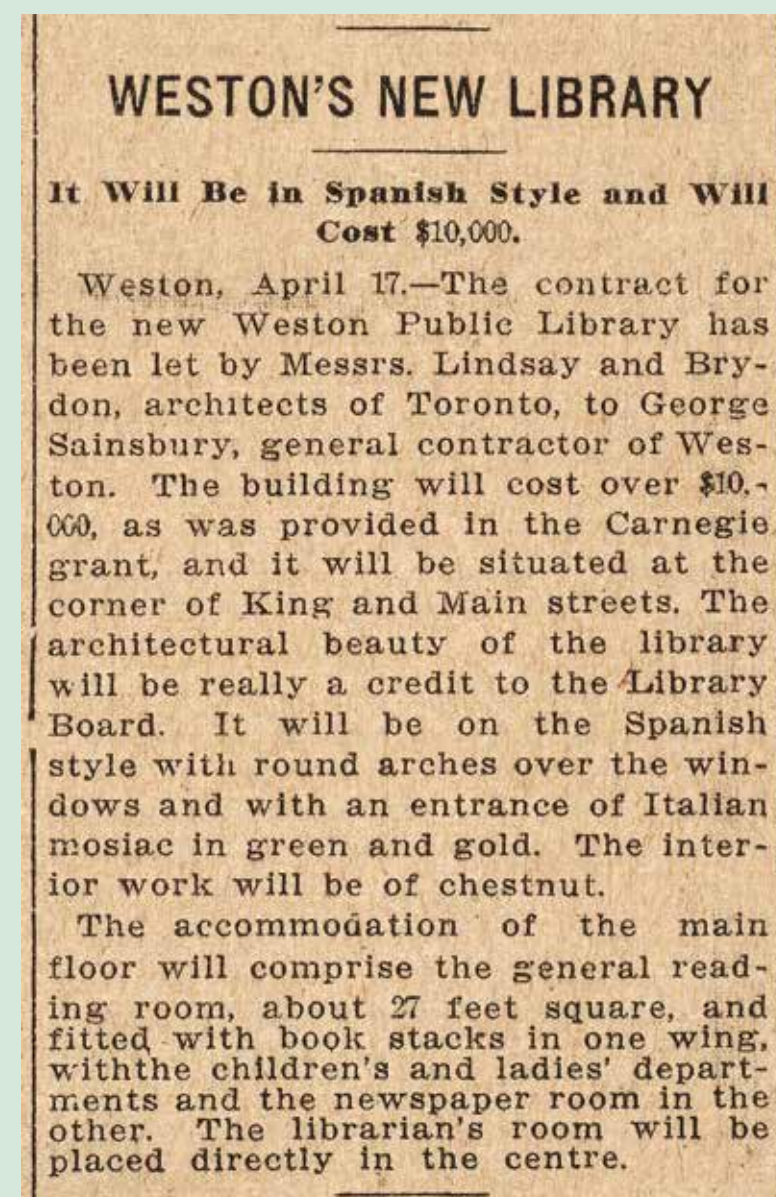
Peter White Lindsay, 1909
Lindsay (1886-1953), a Weston resident, formed a partnership with Alexander Mackenzie Brydon in 1912/13. Lindsay & Brydon first issued plans for the Weston library in February 1913 but they were not approved by Bertram until August 1913.



Sample library plan, 1911
This was one of six recommended plans included in the memorandum, "Notes on the Erection of Library Buildings," sent as a guide to communities planning a Carnegie library. Weston Public Library's architects used Plan A with some modifications.



Library site plan, October 8, 1913
Two purchases for the site, acquired for \$1300 and \$650, were registered on August 15, 1913.



"Weston's New Library," *Toronto Daily Star*, April 17, 1914, 9



Construction of Weston Public Library, summer 1914
George Sainsbury (1875-1951), a Weston contractor and builder, started excavation for the library on April 8, 1914. By July 10, the walls were almost ready for the roof. Sainsbury, who also was on Weston Council in 1913 and 1914, was paid \$7,445 for his work.

Weston's Carnegie Library, providing service since December 29, 1914



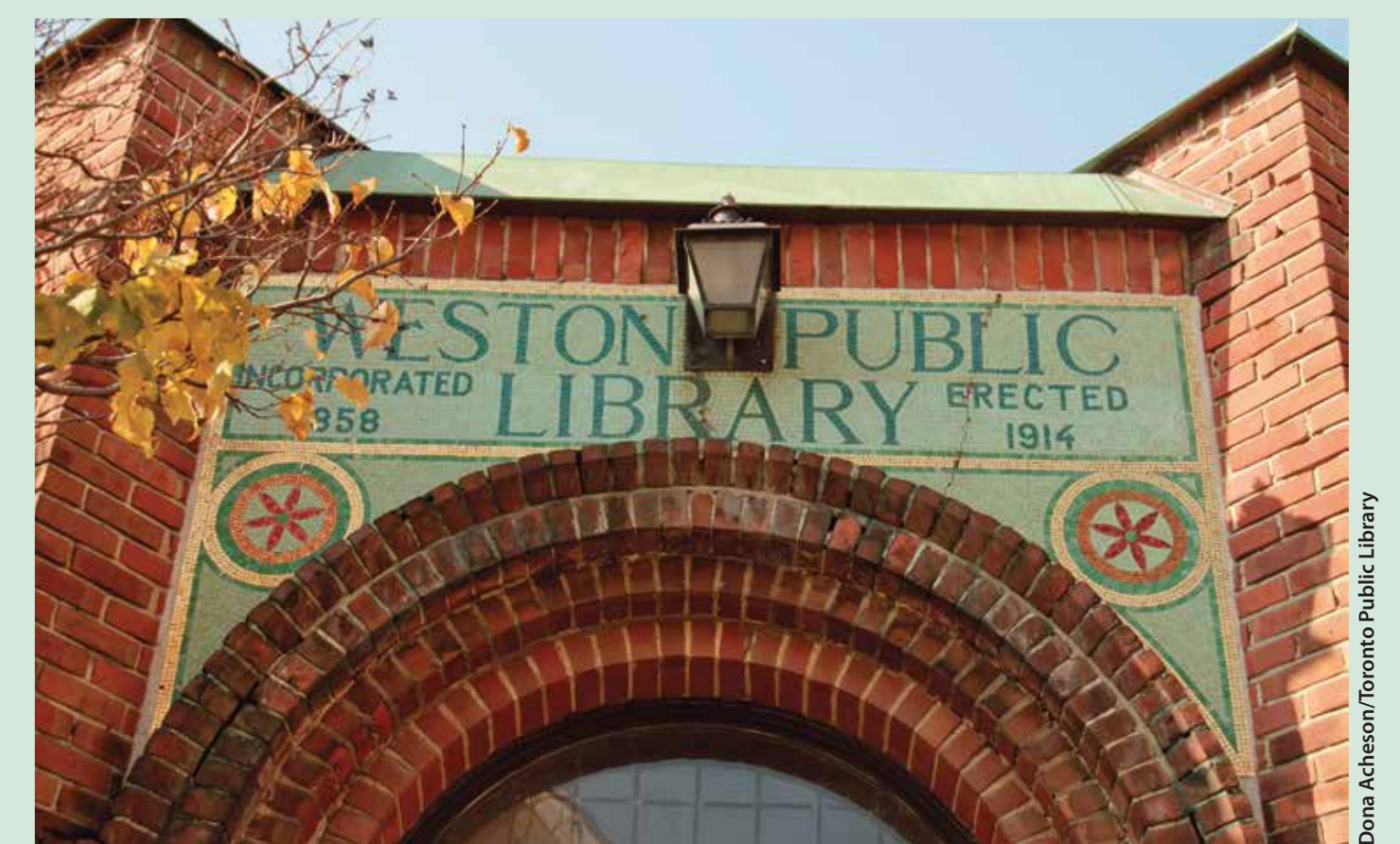
Public Library Weston, Ont. postcard, about 1918



General Reading/Newspaper Room and Library, looking west, 1915?
Originally the main floor housed the general reading/newspaper room and library (fitted with book stacks) in the west wing, the children's and ladies' departments in the east wing and the librarian's room in the centre directly behind the entrance. The wood ceiling was replaced with a suspended acoustic ceiling in a 1962 renovation.



Stained glass window, north wall, 2014
In 1914, Robert McCausland Limited created 24 stained glass windows for the four exterior walls of the new Weston Public Library. Each window was decorated with a crest and a banner. Twenty-three of the banners were inscribed with the name of a prominent author of the time, while one banner was left mysteriously blank. The Toronto firm was paid \$715 for its work.



Original front entrance showing mosaics, 2014
The mosaic panels over the original front entrance and in the window spandrels are a unique feature among Ontario's Carnegie libraries. They were created by the Italian Mosaic and Marble Company of Canada, Limited, a Buffalo, New York firm that established a branch in Toronto in about 1912. It was paid \$500 for its work.



Stained glass windows, west wall, facing Weston Road, 2014