

2. McHENRY MUSEUM

1402 I Street (1912)



Landmark Preservation Commission Resolution: August 21, 1989

Designated by City Council: December 5, 1989

Description: Constructed of reinforced concrete, the building was originally square. Its shape was changed and size doubled by an addition in 1928. A flat roof with a parapet above a classical cornice covers three sides of the original building. The fourth side, facing the alley, is covered by the addition. The main entrance is recessed in the corner of the building at the intersection of 14th and I Streets. An imposing convex portico stretches over the entrance doors. Two pairs of fluted Roman Doric columns, with egg and dart on the echinus, and six circular bands on the shafts, support an elaborate curved entablature consisting of an architrave, plain frieze, dentils, bead and reel, egg and dart, rectangle modillion, and cornice. Along the cornice is a series of lion heads. Books in wreaths adjacent to the portico are a reminder of the building's original purpose.

Historic Significance: In 1905, Oramil McHenry, son of Robert and Mathilda McHenry, bequeathed three lots on 10th Street and the sum of \$20,000 to the City of Modesto to be used to construct a public library. Prior to that time various groups operated private libraries, open to the public, for many years. Immediately prior to construction of the McHenry Library, the city operated a library in the California House on H Street which had been donated to the city.