

Central I

Name: **Central School**
 Location: East side of 3rd Avenue
 between Madison & Spring
 Building: 2-room, 2-story wood
 Architect: n.a.
 Site: n.a.

1870: Opened on August 4
 1883: Closed on May 7; sold on
 June 6; building moved to
 Front Street (1st Avenue)
 & Virginia
 1911: Former schoolhouse
 demolished
 1914-34: District administrative
 offices leased at site
 in the Central Building
 (810-812 3rd Avenue)

In 1867, the district moved classes from the University Building where they had been held on and off since 1861 (see University) to the original County Building on Third Avenue between James and Jefferson (site of today's Prefontaine Fountain). Erected on property owned by Henry Yesler in 1860, this was the first county building. Yesler assumed ownership of the building in payment for back rent and rented it to the school district. Eliza Anna Fearer taught at least one of the terms there in 1867.

Classes were transferred to Yesler's Pavilion (later called Yesler's Hall) when the County Building closed as a school site around 1868. Located on the southeast corner of Front Street (now First Avenue) and Cherry Street, it was built in 1866 for visiting entertainment, dances, celebrations, and public meetings. The hall served as a schoolhouse for one year with Sarah Jane Gallagher teaching at least one of the terms. From 1867-1882, the hall was the site of large school board meetings and, in the early 1870s, school musical performances for the entire town. The building was destroyed by the Seattle Fire in 1889.

From Yesler's Hall, classes moved to a temporary building erected by the school board on Third Avenue between James and Yesler (the present site of the King County Court House at 516 Third Avenue) for



Central I, ca. 1870 SPSA 094-1

use from 1869 to 1870 while a permanent building was being readied. The temporary site was called Bacon's Hall after Carrie Bacon, the first teacher there. She was followed by Elma Preston.

In 1870, the original Central School, the first schoolhouse erected by the Seattle School District, opened on Third Avenue between Madison and Spring Street. Although the school had two classrooms for 120 pupils, only one teacher, Lizzie Ordway, greeted an overflow of pupils on opening day. A second teacher, Mrs. C.M. Sanderson, was quickly hired.

At the end of the 1871 school year, 294 pupils attended Central, so the school board rented the Fisher Building on the northwest corner of Third and Union for an additional classroom in December 1871. The teacher was Caroline Parsons, the future wife of Seattle banker Dexter Horton. The Fisher site was abandoned at the end of the academic year because of the planned opening of North and South schools.

In 1881, a third classroom was created in the Central attic. The original Central School closed in 1883 when the larger Sixth Street or Eastern School was opened (see Central II). The lot and building were then sold. The old schoolhouse was moved to Front Street (now First Avenue) and Virginia where it became the Central Boarding House or Central Rooms.