



Andrew Carnegie was born in Dunfermline, Scotland, in 1835. When he was 13, he came with his family to the United States. The family settled in Allegheny, Pennsylvania, near Pittsburgh. He soon went to work as a bobbin boy (one who operates a spindle on which thread is wound) in a cotton mill for \$1.20 per week. In his life, he held many jobs with companies like Western Union and the Pennsylvania Railroad. In 1865, he started the Carnegie Steel Company, which began the steel industry in Pittsburgh. Carnegie was very successful in his business career. When he was 65, he sold the steel company to J.P. Morgan for \$400 million and devoted the rest of his life to his philanthropic activities and writing.

Very wealthy people at this time lived lavishly and spent huge amounts of money on themselves, but Andrew Carnegie was not one of them. Many wealthy people gave a portion of their money to charity, but Carnegie gave even more. He believed that the rich have a moral obligation to give away their fortunes. When he was in his thirties, he started to give away his money through many personal gifts and through the establishment of various trusts. All of his life he set up free libraries so that everyone had the opportunity to educate themselves. There were only a few public libraries in the world when, in 1881, Mr. Carnegie began to build libraries. By the time he finished his work, he had built 2,509 libraries. Mr. Carnegie also donated to adult education and education in the fine arts. During his lifetime, Mr. Carnegie gave away over \$350 million to make people's lives better. This was almost 90 percent of his fortune. In 1886, he married Louise Whitfield, the daughter of a wealthy merchant in New York. She, too, liked to give money to help people. They had one child, Margaret, in 1897. Andrew Carnegie died in 1919.

Student Activity

There are seven dates in this biography.

1. Locate the dates.
2. Put them into chronological order below.
3. On another sheet of paper, make a timeline of Andrew Carnegie's life. Give your timeline a title.
4. Place three pictures or illustrations on your timeline to depict key events or important places in Carnegie's life.