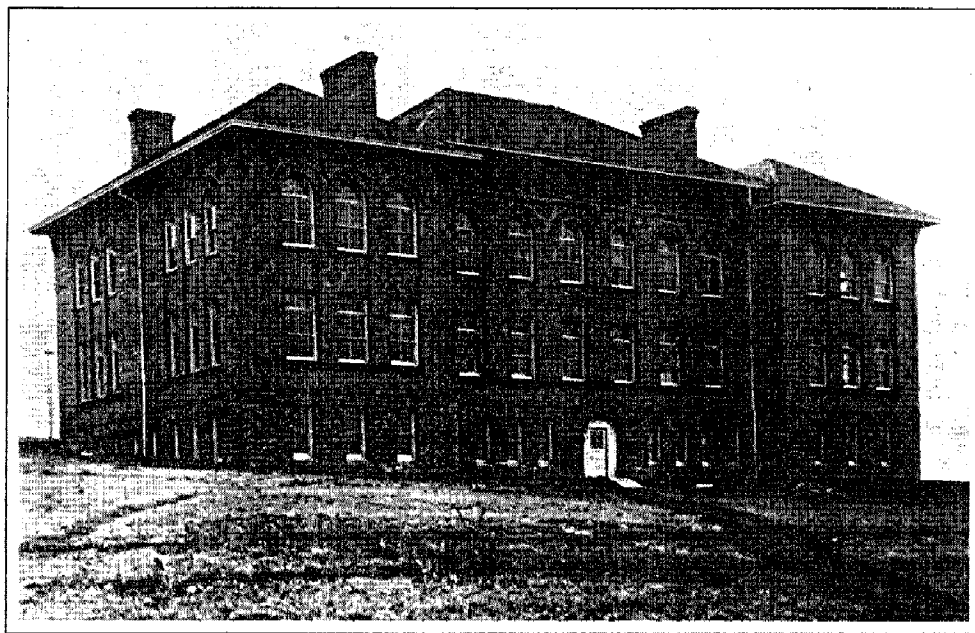


A MORRILL HALL FOR CHEMISTRY

Paul R. Jones, University of Michigan

Senator Justin Smith Morrill first introduced the "Agricultural College Act" into the US House in 1857; after a series of setbacks, the "Morrill Act" was finally approved by close margins in both the House and Senate and submitted in 1859 to President Buchanan, who vetoed the measure. When Senator Morrill re-introduced the bill into the House in 1861, the Committee on Public Lands recommended 'that it not pass.' Once it had been soundly supported in the Senate where it had been introduced by Ohio Senator Wade, however, it was put before the full House, which also passed the bill with a healthy majority. The bill establishing the land-grant institutions was finally signed into law by President Abraham Lincoln on July 2, 1862.

In recognition of the Senator's dedication to the cause, he has been immortalized on thirteen land-grant campuses through the naming of buildings. Often Morrill Hall was the first or one of the very early buildings on the campus, and usually it housed agriculture. The very first at Cornell University is an example. Only one of the 13 buildings, however, was originally built for Chemistry. Morrill Hall at Washington State University, Pullman, was erected in 1903-4, the fourth building on the campus, constructed of red brick with a basalt foundation. No longer housing chemistry, the building was refurbished in 1981, its original wooden windows being retained.



Morrill Hall Chemistry Building, Washington State University, Pullman, WA, erected 1903-1904. Photograph courtesy of Historical Photograph Collections, Washington State University Libraries