

**Structure/Site Information Form**

IDENTIFICATION 1

Street Address: 30 South Main Street UTM: 12 449460 4357590  
 Ephraim, Sanpete County, Utah  
 Name of Structure: Ephraim Carnegie Library (Carnegie Library TR/T). R. S.  
 Present Owner: Ephraim City Corporation  
 Owner Address: 5 South Main, Ephraim, Utah 84627  
 Year Built (Tax Record): Effective Age: Tax #: S-232  
 Legal Description Kind of Building:

Commencing 130.50 feet South of NE Corner of Block 17, Plat A, Ephraim City Survey, West 280.50 feet, South 150 feet to beginning. Less than one acre.

STATUS/USE 2

Original Owner: Ephraim City Corp. Construction Date: 1914-15 Demolition Date:  
 Original Use: Education - Library Present Use: Education - Library  
 Building Condition: Integrity: Preliminary Evaluation: Final Register Status:  
 Excellent  Site  Unaltered  Significant  Not of the  National Landmark  District  
 Good  Ruins  Minor Alterations  Contributory  Historic Period  National Register  Multi-Resource  
 Deteriorated  Major Alterations  Not Contributory  State Register  Thematic

DOCUMENTATION 3

Photography: Date of Slides: 1983 Slide No.: Date of Photographs: 1983 Photo No.:  
 Views:  Front  Side  Rear  Other Views:  Front  Side  Rear  Other

Research Sources:  
 Abstract of Title  Sanborn Maps  Newspapers  U of U Library  
 Plat Records/ Map  City Directories  Utah State Historical Society  BYU Library  
 Tax Card & Photo  Biographical Encyclopedias  Personal Interviews  USU Library  
 Building Permit  Obituary Index  LDS Church Archives  SLC Library  
 Sewer Permit  County & City Histories  LDS Genealogical Society  Other

Bibliographical References (books, articles, records, interviews, old photographs and maps, etc.):

The Ephraim Enterprise. 1915, 1935  
Ephraim's First One Hundred Years. Edited and privately published by the Centennial Book Committee, Ephraim, Utah 1954.

Architect/Builder: Watkins, Birch & Wright/Hans Peterson, A.C. Nielson, Thors Monsen

Building Materials: Masonry - Brick

Building Type/Style: Beaux Arts Classicism

Description of physical appearance & significant architectural features:

(Include additions, alterations, ancillary structures, and landscaping if applicable)

The Ephraim Carnegie Library is a one story brick rectangular building with a raised basement, and a flat roof. Its form is similar to that of many other Carnegie libraries in Utah. What distinguishes it from the others, however, is the Classical Revival decorative scheme applied to the exterior. More specifically, it reflects the influence of Beaux Arts Classicism, a popular style for public buildings from the 1890s until the 1940s. Features common to Beaux Arts designs and incorporated in the Ephraim Library include: the symmetrical division of the facade with pilasters and a central pavilion; the raised basement faced with terra cotta tiles; and the pronounced cornice with modillions topped by a parapet.

The facade is divided into five bays by pilasters and has a projecting entrance pavilion centered between pairs of window bays. The original doors of the main entrance have been replaced by modern glass doors, but the opening size is unchanged. It is topped by a projecting sill above which is a transom. Into each of the other bays is set a pair of long windows. There is a raised brick edging around both the window and door openings. The sill of each window and above the door projects and has a pair of corbels beneath it. Above the unique capitals of the pilasters is a plain frieze, a cornice  
(See continuation sheet)

Statement of Historical Significance:

Construction Date: 1914-15

Built in 1914-15, the Ephraim Carnegie Library is significant as one of sixteen remaining Carnegie libraries of the twenty-three built in Utah. Thirteen of the sixteen library buildings maintain their original integrity and are included in the Carnegie Library Thematic Resource Nomination. In addition to making significant contributions to public education in their respective communities, these libraries are Utah's representatives of the important nation-wide Carnegie library program, and they document its unparalleled effect in the establishment of community-supported, free public libraries in Utah.

The Ephraim Carnegie Library was built in 1914 with a \$10,000 grant from millionaire/philanthropist Andrew Carnegie. Carnegie funded the construction of over 1650 library buildings in the U.S., 23 of which were built in Utah communities. The conditions upon which all Carnegie grants were given were that the recipient community donate the building site and provide an annual maintenance budget of at least 10% of the grant amount.

A library program in Ephraim began as early as about 1880 when a group of ambitious young men established a small library in a rented room in the house of John F.F. Dorius. They had obtained the necessary money to found the library through the sale of some farm land which they had purchased as one of their joint business ventures. The city council, impressed with the boys' initiative, decided to help in the operation of the library and took over its operation of the library and provided a room in the old City Hall. This library continued until the construction of the Carnegie library in 1914. The Ephraim Carnegie Library has continued in use from that time to the present as the city's library.

(See continuation sheet page 1)

The Ephraim Carnegie Library  
Description Continued:

supported by modillions, and a brick parapet. There are pilasters with capitals around the whole building, unlike many Carnegie libraries which have pilasters only on the facade and at the two ends of the building.

The original yellow brick was painted white (n.d.), and the original doors were replaced with glass doors (n.d.). Despite these changes, however, the original integrity of the building has been maintained.

The Ephraim Carnegie Library  
History Continued:

Steps to secure a permanent public library began in 1913. Under the direction of Mayor P.D. Jensen, application was made to Andrew Carnegie, resulting in the \$10,000 grant to erect a library building. The architectural firm of Watkins, Birch & Wright was chosen to design and supervise the construction of the building. Contractors for the building were Hans Peterson, A.C. Nielson, and Thors Monsen, partners in a local construction firm. The library building was completed in the spring of 1915 and was dedicated on March 27, 1915.

Elaborate exercises marked the formal opening of the Ephraim Carnegie Library, occasioning a half-day holiday for local businesses on the afternoon of the dedication day. Dedication ceremonies for the library included a parade down Main Street, a band concert, a benefit dance, a dedicatory prayer, and speeches by dignitaries, including Professor John Widstoe of Salt Lake City, and State Superintendent of Public Education Dr. Ephraim G. Gowans, who "gave a forceful talk on the subject of 'Prevention,'" emphasizing the value of libraries in providing preventive moral training for young people.<sup>1</sup> The following description of the new library appeared in the local newspaper:

The new building is well adapted to its purpose and does great credit to the library board and city council. There is no better arranged building in the state if one so good as the Ephraim library. The main floor is in one big room with no partitions to cut off circulation of air and light. The two book stacks running down the center of each side divide the room into four departments leaving the floor space for tables and chairs to form reading rooms....The beautiful auditorium on the lower floor will serve many useful purposes and be the meeting place for small gatherings.

There are possibilities too for future growth - new furniture will still be added as the needs arise; shelving will also be added under the windows in the ends and at the back of the building. Some day, too, the auditorium may develop into a children's room but this will come when the library is full of books and people. The library now has 800 books, but it is hoped that there will be at least 1,000 by the day of dedication. There should be at least 2,500 books to do the library work that should be done in a town the size of Ephraim.<sup>2</sup>

A 1935 report on the Ephraim Carnegie Library noted that it had made rapid growth over the first twenty years of its operation, and that it "ranks with the best in the state."<sup>3</sup> By that time, the library's resources included 7,519 books, 3 newspapers, and 52 periodicals. Annual circulation was over 14,000, and there were 2454 card holders.

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## The Ephraim Carnegie Library History continued:

Watkins, Birch & Wright, a Provo, Utah based architectural firm, actively pursued Carnegie library contracts throughout the state and were responsible for designing several other library buildings besides this one. Their design for this and other library buildings conformed to the rectangular, one-story design recommended by the Carnegie Library Board as being the most efficient and economical plan for a small town library. Other library buildings designed by the firm, which in all other instances operated under either the name Watkins & Birch or simply under Richard C. Watkins' name, include those in Richmond, Provo, Eureka, Manti, Cedar City, and possibly Garland, since it closely resembles the building in Richmond.

The architectural firm of Watkins, Birch & Wright consisted of Richard C. Watkins, who is best known for designing numerous school buildings throughout the state, John F. Birch, a talented English architect who returned to his native land in 1918, and possibly Isaac L. Wright, a Richfield architect who is credited with the design of the Panguitch Carnegie Library. Although there is no clear evidence connecting Isaac L. Wright with Watkins & Birch, it is very probable that he was the "Wright" in the partnership, since, in addition to having the Wright name, he was involved in the design of another Carnegie library and his home town of Richfield is not far from Ephraim.

### Footnotes

- <sup>1</sup>The Ephraim Enterprise, April 3, 1915, p. 1.
- <sup>2</sup>The Ephraim Enterprise, March 20, 1915, p. 1.
- <sup>3</sup>The Ephraim Enterprise, November 22, 1935, p. 4.