United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x' in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name   Olsen House and Mortuary

other name/site number   Olsen, Otto & Eliza, House; Ashwood Cottage; Otto G. Olsen Mortuary; Rasmussen, Josie, House

2. Location

street & town   315 South 200 East   ☐ not for publication

city or town   Ephraim   ☐ vicinity

state   Utah   code   UT   county Sanpete   code 039   zip code 84627

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this ☒ nomination
☐ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property ☒ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant
☐ nationally ☐ statewide ☒ locally. (☐ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

_____
Signature of certifying official/Title   Date

 Utah Division of State History, Office of Historic Preservation
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property ☐ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. (☐ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

_____/SHPO_____
Signature of certifying official/Title   Date

_____
State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is: Signature of the Keeper   Date of Action

☐ entered in the National Register.
   ☐ See continuation sheet.
☐ determined eligible for the
   National Register
   ☐ See continuation sheet.
☐ determined not eligible for the
   National Register.
☐ removed from the National
   Register.
☐ other, (explain:) _____

_____

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(check as many boxes as apply)

Category of Property
(check only one box)

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Noncontributing

Contributing

☒ private

☒ building(s)

2		buildings
		sites
	1	structures
		objects
2	1	Total

☐ public-local

☐ district

☐ public-State

☐ site

☐ public-Federal

☐ structure

☐ object

Name of related multiple property listing listed
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously in the National Register

N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Function
(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC: single dwelling
FUNERARY: mortuary/funeral home

Current Function
(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC: single dwelling

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

LATE VICTORIAN: Italianate

LATE VICTORIAN: Victorian Eclectic

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation STONE/CONCRETE

walls BRICK

roof ASPHALT SHINGLE

other

Narrative Description
(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

☒ See continuation sheet(s) for Section No. 7

8. Description

Applicable National Register Criteria
(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

☒ **A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.

☐ **B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.

☒ **C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.

☐ **D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations
(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

☐ **A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.

☐ **B** removed from its original location.

☐ **C** a birthplace or grave.

☐ **D** a cemetery.

☐ **E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.

☐ **F** a commemorative property.

☐ **G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Narrative Statement of Significance
(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

Areas of Significance
(enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE

COMMERCE

Period of Significance
1889-1972

Significant Dates
1889, 1927, 1930, 1944, 1949, 1950

Significant Persons
(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)
N/A

Cultural Affiliation
N/A

Architect/Builder
Designer & Builder: Otto G. Olsen, carpenter

Builder: Hyrum Brimhall, mason

☒See continuation sheet(s) for Section No. 8

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography
(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

State Historic Preservation Office
  CFR 67) has been requested
 ☐ previously listed in the National Register
 ☐ previously determined eligible by the National Register
 ☐ designated a National Historic Landmark
 ☐ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey
 # _____
 ☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering
 Record # _____

Primary location of additional data:
☒ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 ☒

☐ Other State agency
☐ Federal agency
☐ Local government
☐ University
☐ Other Name of repository:

Utah State Historic Preservation Office

☒ See continuation sheet(s) for Section No. 9

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property _0.34 acres_

UTM References
(Place additional boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

1/2 4/4/9/8/8/2 4/3/5/6/2/5/2
Zone   Easting   Northing

Latitude/Longitude References
(Place additional boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Latitude 39.354264°   Longitude -111.581725°

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

BEG NW COR LOT 5, BLK 8, PLAT B, EPHRAIM CITY SURVEY, E 105.625 FT, S 8.50 RDS, W 105.625 FT, N 8.50 RDS TO BEG.   0.34 ACRES

Property Tax No.   S564x

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundaries are those that were historically and continue to be associated with the property. The legal description was retrieved from the Sanpete County Recorder's website in May 2021.

☐ See continuation sheet(s) for Section No. 10

11. Form Prepared By

name/title   Korral Broschinsky, Preservation Documentation Resource

organization prepared for Jan & Lyle Chamberlain   date January 11, 2022

email   kbro@kbropreservation.com   telephone 801-913-5645

Additional Documentation
Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets
Maps A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
        A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.
Photographs: Representative photographs of the property.
Additional items: (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

name/title   Jan & Lyle Chamberlain

email   wholesome.things.jc@gmail.com

street & number   315 South 200 East   telephone 435-340-0877

city or town   Ephraim   state UT   zip code 84627

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Narrative Description

Summary

The Olsen House and Mortuary is located on a corner lot at 315 S. 200 East in Ephraim, Utah. The house was built in four phases between 1889 and 2006. The two-story yellow brick main section was built in 1889 as a central-block-with-projecting-bays type. The style is a mix of Victorian Eclectic brickwork and Italianate elements, including bracketed cornice, projecting square bays, and a low roof with over-hanging belcast eaves. In 1930, a 1½ -story kitchen wing was added to the rear. A one-story entry and room was added at the northeast corner in 1949. Both the 1930 and 1949 additions were made to facilitate the continued use of the house as a mortuary/funeral home. The mortuary use ended around 1981. The house is now exclusively a single-family dwelling. The final construction phase was a one-story family-sun room built on the south elevation in 2006. A year later, the attached circa 1980s carport on the east elevation was enclosed as a garage. The family room and garage are the only major out-of-period exterior modifications. The 1889 section of the house is built on an oolite limestone foundation. The subsequent phases were built on concrete foundations with walls of yellow brick to match the main house. The house sits on a parcel of 0.34-acres surrounded by lawn. The dominant element on the site is the house facing the intersection of 200 East and 300 South streets. The garage is visually subordinate and the family room addition is mostly hidden behind a wood fence. Behind the garage is the Olsen family's original home on the site, a contributing log cabin that was later modified as a carriage house and workshop for the funeral home. The main house and the historic construction phases have good historic integrity for the period of significance between the original construction in 1889 and the cut-off for eligibility in 1971. The house is currently undergoing a minor exterior rehabilitation using a state historic preservation tax credit.

Exterior

The main 1889 section of the house has an irregular footprint with three 10-foot-wide square bays facing north, west, and northwest to the intersection. There is a 15-foot-wide projection on the rear half of the south elevation and a 16-foot-wide projection to the east [Photographs 1-2 & 6].   Above grade, the oolite limestone foundation is laid in two rock-faced ashlar courses. Below grade the foundation is the same limestone but with narrower blocks and more random courses. The yellow brick is laid in a common bond with headers every sixth course. The mortar is flush and is a light color. Minor repointing was included in the recent rehabilitation. The window openings feature segmental arches with soldier brick drip moldings. A double brick string course ties the main floor moldings together around the primary elevations. The upper windows have similar moldings, which are partially obscured by the Italianate bracketed cornice. The gable trim above each two-story square bay features historically compatible hexagonal shingles that were installed during the recent rehabilitation. The original shingles were damaged by a fire in the 1980s and subsequently replaced with vertical siding. The truncated pyramidal roof features both simple gables and hips above the bays. The wide eaves have a slightly belcast curve. The 1930 addition has a hipped roof with a small dormer. The 1949 addition has a shed roof and the north entry has a simple gable [Photograph 3].   The roof is covered in brown hexagonal asphalt shingles (circa 2005). A tall brick chimney with a corbelled cap is centrally located in the roof of the 1889 section. The garage and sunroom have flat roofs [Photographs 4-5].

The 1889 main house has two primary elevations, to the west and to the north, both of which have functioned as the façade [Figures 1-2]. The house appears tall and narrow on the west elevation with one bay facing west and a slightly deeper bay facing northwest [Photograph 2, Figure 3]. The original front entrance is within the west facing bay. According to family history, this doorway was blocked until the 1930 remodeling, when a single door with sidelights was installed. A concrete stoop was badly deteriorated, so the current owners removed it and there is no access to the historic door. Currently, the front door to the house is in an alcove where the 2006 addition abuts the original house. The exterior wood trim was painted brown, green, red and salmon during the recent rehabilitation.

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The window openings are tall and found singly or in pairs. In the deeper northwest facing bay, there are narrow windows in the sides of the bay. Most of the second-floor windows are the original one-over-one double-hung wood windows with lugs. The exceptions include one single pane window on the south elevation and glass block infill of the northwest bay windows after the fire on the second floor of the bay. The wood lintels are curved to match the segmental-arched brickwork. The sills are also wood. The paired windows are separated by a thick mullion with flutes and paterae. The wood windows have been painted with the same color scheme as the trim. The main floor windows were replaced with single panes circa 1980s. The south elevation is similar to the west elevation, except at the northeast corner where the 1949 brick entry is located.[1] The entrance foyer features a wood-panel door with a fanlight at the top. The side windows are filled with glass block. The brick is yellow and laid in a running bond. Above the entrance is a shallow balcony on the upper floor with a newer wrought-iron rail. The balcony door is original 1889 half-glass wood-carved Victorian door.

The 1949 one-story brick room addition is setback slightly from the north entry. The yellow brick is laid in a running bond. There are two horizontal windows, one facing north and one facing east, both with a rowlock brick sills. The east window is blocked on the interior. There is wood siding on the east gable trim of the shed roof. Between 2006 and 2007, a series of modifications impacted the east and south elevations. The original east (rear) elevation of the 1889 house was previously modified and obscured by the 1½-story addition built in 1930. When the carport was modified into a garage in 2007, a deck was created above the garage. This deck is accessed by a spiral staircase from the main level patio and from a door in the upper floor of the 1930 addition. In addition to the door, there are two original windows on the upper level of the east elevation, one in the 1889 house and one in the 1930 addition. A small portion of the 1930 addition's east elevation are visible as the west interior wall of the garage. A small mechanical room covered in drop siding is also within the garage.

The one-story family room addition built in 2006 has a footprint of 18.5 by 32 feet. The long side obscures most of the main level south elevations of both the 1889 house and the 1930 addition. One main level window is visible on the front bay and two upper-level windows are visible on the 1889 house (one window is original, one is a replacement). At the west end, the 2006 addition forms a small alcove to the new front door with one window of the 1889 still visible. On the end east, the addition is one side of a patio area that is open only to the south. The other two sides are formed by the garage enclosure (to the north) and the west wall of the log cabin (to the east). The patio is sheltered by a pergola-style structure. This pergola extends around the south and west elevations of the family room addition. The addition is built on a concrete foundation. The walls are yellow brick laid in a running bond punctured by numerous tall windows with segmental-arched hoods. The wood lintels and sills have been painted to match the main house. Although the family room has a large footprint, the one-story addition is visually subordinate to the main house and can barely be seen over the wood fence along the perimeter of the back (south) yard.

Interior

The main floor of the Olsen House and Mortuary has a total of 1,948 square feet of space: the 1889 house is 820 square feet, the 1930 addition is 371 square feet, the 1949 addition is 140 square feet, and the 2006 addition is 617 square feet. The second floor is 1,191 with two-thirds above the 1889 house and one-third above the 1930 addition, for a total of 3,135 square feet of living space. There is also approximately 336 square feet of space in the cellar divided between a coal room under the main house, a storage room under the 2006 addition, and a larger storage room under the 1930 addition.

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[1] The house used the address 214 E. 3rd South from the 1930s to the 1980s. As a small town, Ephraim did not use address numbers prior to the 1930s.

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In general, the main floor of the house was extensively remodeled between the 1990s and the 2000s, although numerous historic features have been retained. The second floor and the cellar have good historic integrity for the periods in which they were constructed. The main floor is divided into four main sections. From the west elevation, the house appears to be a side-passage type house, but the plan is more complicated. There is a foyer in the southwest corner where the original owner/builder roughed-in a spiral staircase. The staircase was never completed and the foyer and its exterior door remained blocked until 1930 when upgrades were made to the mortuary functions of the house. The remnants of the spiral staircase were removed in 1930 and a door placed in the east wall of the foyer to a back bedroom when the room was converted to a body preparation room. This opening has since been blocked. The foyer features a wide opening to the living room (parlor) to the north [Photograph 8]. There was a transom above the opening, which has been made into a shelf.   The wide opening from the living room to the dining room also has a shelf. Most of the finishes are new, such as the crown molding, but the wood floor is original. The window casings with flutes and paterae are also original. The northwest bay, which is 3-feet deep, still shows chips in the window mullion where the casket lids rested during viewings in the funeral parlor [Photograph 9].

The dining room has the same finishes (both old and new) as the living room, including ash floorboards that extend the full lengths of the rooms. The flooring in these rooms had visible ruts made by the mortuary gurneys over the years, which were mostly repaired when the floors were refinished. The north entrance is located in the northeast corner of the dining room and features a period-revival style arched doorway (circa 1930) to the small entry and the exterior door (1949) [Photograph 10]. The back bedroom in the southeast corner of the 1889 house (later body preparation room) has original flooring and window casings. This room was the original kitchen and the location of a rear spiral staircase that was completed. In 1930, when the kitchen wing was built, the back bedroom was converted to a preparation room for funerals, an arch doorway was installed, although this arch was later covered. The back room was returned to a bedroom use in the 1980s and is currently an exercise room.

The 1½-story addition was built in 1930 at the southeast corner of the 1889 house. The main floor of the addition has three spaces: a large kitchen, a bathroom, and stairs to the upper floor. The closed narrow wood stairs replaced the spiral staircase in the southeast corner of the older house. The kitchen was completely updated in the 1970s and again in 1992. The only original feature left is a window opening, which now opens to the 2006 family room. The bathroom, located down a short hall, has also been updated (circa 2004). The hall leads to the one-story 1949 addition built in the crook of the northeast corner of the house. This addition was originally built as an embalming room. There was a drain in the floor that was later covered with tile when the room was remodeled to a laundry room (circa 2004) [Photograph 11].

The 2006 family room is a large open space with windows along the west and south walls. Several skylights bring natural light into the floor, which also functions as a sunroom. A small section has been screened where the window opening to the kitchen is located. On the east wall of the kitchen is an exterior door to the carport, later enclosed as a garage. A set of concrete stairs was built to access the cellar in 1930. The stairs lead to a large concrete-lined storage room under the 1930 addition. A short hall connects the storage room to a furnace room under main house that was the original coal room. A second hall built circa 1930 as a second coal room (now storage) under the 2006 addition. The stone foundation has been cleaned and is visible in the first coal room.

The 1889 and the 1930 upper floors are accessed separately from the wood staircase next to the kitchen. The upper floor is well-preserved mainly due to the fact that the stairs were blocked and the owners only used the main floor between the 1980s and 2001. With the exception of the bathroom, which has been updated, the upper floor has original pine flooring, woodwork, windows, and doors. The bathroom was slightly raised so that plumbing could be added (date unknown).

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In the 1889 section, there are two large bedrooms on the north side of a hallway from the top of the stairs. A small section of the original wood floor in the northwest bay was replaced after an attic fire destroyed part of the floor in the 1980s. The rear bedroom features access to the small balcony and the original balcony door on the north elevation. The small room above the southwest foyer was converted to a playroom in the 1930s and is now a home office. The 1930 addition has a single bedroom with access to the deck above the garage.

Site and Features

The former Olsen House and Mortuary sits on a 0.34-acre corner parcel in a residential neighborhood of Ephraim [Maps #1-3]. The east third of the current parcel is where the commercial activity took place during the early historic period [Figures 4-5]. The contributing log cabin was built on the property around 1879 and was the original home of the family. The 18 by 22-foot cabin was built of hewn logs with tongue notching at the corners [Photograph 7]. According to family histories, the cabin had three rooms. After the house was completed in 1889 the log cabin was converted to a carriage house for the horse-drawn hearse and later a garage for the automobile hearse. The room dividers were removed and the west wall opening made larger.

Between the 1950s and the 1990s, it was a garage/workshop. During this period, the simple gable roof was flattened, a garage door installed on the west elevation, and three sides were covered with corrugated metal (inside and out). The current owners recently removed the metal from the south elevation, revealing the logs in good condition with some fire damage at the base. They would like to restore the cabin, but the condition of the other walls is unknown. The garage door has been removed and a curtain separates the log cabin interior from the patio area. The log cabin is a contributing building in its current condition because of its association with the mortuary throughout the period of significance.

Today the site has a residential feel, but for many years it also functioned as a commercial property. The mature elms in the front yard were planted when house was new. A low wrought-iron fence replaced the original picket fence (circa 2005). Lawn, shrubs, and flowerbeds are found in front of the house. The front yard has changed little since the historic period, with the exception of the hexagonal fountain and the paved walkway leading to the west front door. The back (south) yard is hidden from view by a tall wood plank fence. The west half is mostly lawn with a gazebo and seating area installed in 2007 (non-contributing structure). The east half of the back yard includes a rock fountain with a small bridge, a firepit near the patio, and a vegetable garden area.

The original driveway was likely entered from 200 East street because the coal chute is on the south side of the house. In 1888, the Olsen family built a two-story frame false-front general merchandise store. Although no longer extant, the store was a rare example of a commercial building in a small Utah town not located on Main Street. The general store faced 300 South and was located on the current driveway. It may have been connected to the house where the 1949 addition is located. The store building was demolished sometime in the mid-1940s. Before the east half of Lot 5 was sold off, there was a large barn and a pig pen on the property (demolished by the 1960s).

The neighborhood is a mix of historic homes, mostly on the corners of the blocks with later infill between. Many of the residential properties surrounding the Olsen house are on large lots with extant agricultural outbuildings contributing to the historic character of the Ephraim [Map #2]. As one of the taller homes in the neighborhood, the Olsen house stands out as a landmark building with good integrity in the qualities of location, design, workmanship, materials, and feeling. The setting has been somewhat compromised by modifications to the garage and the large family room addition, but the historical association with nearly a century of funerary usage contributes to the historic integrity of the property.

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Narrative Statement of Significance

The Olsen House and Mortuary, constructed in 1889 and later expanded, is a two-story brick house with a combination of Italianate and Victorian-era stylistic elements in Ephraim, Utah. The property is locally significant under Criterion C in the area of Architecture as the best example of a hybrid Italianate and Victorian-era house in Ephraim and Sanpete County. The architecture represents the introduction of pattern book domestic architecture in the isolated farming communities of Sanpete County in the late nineteenth century. The building is central-block-with-projecting-bays type house representing a unique adaptation of a pattern book design by its local builders: Hyrum Brimhall, mason, and Otto G. Olsen, owner and carpenter. The house was designed by Olsen to both house his family and aid his role as the first undertaker in Sanpete County. One of the three bays in the home's parlor is deeper than the other two and may have been designed to fit coffins for viewing, as was common at the time. Two subsequent additions to the house in 1930 and 1949 were also designed to accommodate the continuing use of the house as a mortuary in the twentieth century. The period of significance spans from the initial construction in 1889 to the end of eligibility in 1972. Within this period, the property is also locally significant under Criterion A in the area of Commerce as the first and longest continuous use funeral home and mortuary in Sanpete County. Otto G. Olsen was a merchant and furniture maker. He became the first undertaker in the area through his work building caskets and later a horse-drawn hearse. Two of his children, Adolphe and Josephine, took over the business after his death in 1927. After her brother moved to Salt Lake City in 1930, Josie Olsen Rasmussen, a young widow, became owner of the house and sole proprietor of the mortuary. That year Josie took out a funeral director's license. She appears to have been the first female funeral director in Utah not acting as an assistant to her husband. Josie ran the mortuary until she sold the property to Reuben Buchanan in 1944. The house continued to provide funeral services as the Ephraim branch of the Buchanan Mortuary in Manti, Utah, until 1981. During this time period, the house was occupied by Boyd H. Olsen, who drove the hearse/ambulance, and his wife, Geraldine Buchanan Olsen. Though the architectural integrity of the house has been compromised by out-of-period modifications, the impacts are minor and are mitigated by the Criterion A significance and continuous use as a mortuary through the period of significance.

Criterion C: Architectural Significance of the Olsen House and Mortuary

The Olsen House and Mortuary meets the National Register of Historic Places Criterion C in the area of Architecture and is locally significant as a unique hybrid of a pattern-book Italianate house with an asymmetrical Victorian footprint. The Italianate style did not become popular in Utah until after the Civil War and the coming of the transcontinental railroad, which brought pattern books and more diverse building materials to local builders. Italianate houses, mostly cross-wings and side passage types, were popular in Salt Lake City in the 1870s, but the style was not common in the isolated rural communities of Sanpete County until the 1880s. The style is characterized by a low-pitched hip roof, over-hanging eaves, bracketed cornices, and tall windows capped by slightly arched and hooded window heads.[2] The earliest and best example of the style in Sanpete County is the Manti City Hall at 191 North Main Street, built between 1873 and 1882, of oolite limestone, a material unique to the area.[3] A two-story commercial block at 1 North Main Street in Manti was also built of limestone in 1874. This building features an Italianate cornice along the top of its wood false front, but no other elements of the style. The Manti City Hall and the commercial block are the only non-residential Italianate

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[2] Thomas Carter and Peter Goss, *Utah's Historic Architecture, 1847-1940: a Guide,* (Salt Lake City, Utah: University of Utah Press, 1988): 105.
[3] The Manti City Hall was listed on the National Register of Historic Places on June 27, 1985 (NRIS #85001397). Manti was designated the county seat of Sanpete County in 1850 and incorporated in 1871.

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buildings in Sanpete County. The Christensen House/Gunnison Hotel at 10 East 100 South in Gunnison, built circa 1880, is a large Italianate box constructed of adobe brick covered in stucco with a non-historic façade addition.

The most common Italianate house types found in Utah are the cross wing and the side passage. There is only one side-passage example in Sanpete County. The two-story side-passage house at 110 South 300 West in Moroni, built in 1885, is probably the oldest extant Italianate-style building outside of Manti. The yellow brick house in Moroni has many similarities to the Olsen House, including a two-story square bay and brick window hoods, and may have been constructed by the same mason. Although the Olsen House has a Victorian central-block-with-projecting-bays footprint, it is the closer to a pure example of the Italianate style than any of the later examples in Sanpete County. There is 1½-story stucco-covered cross wing at 291 East 100 South with an Italian bay, but no other Italianate elements (built in 1895). A 1½-story central-block house at 120 East 100 South features a bracketed cornice, but no historic details are visible on the aluminum-sided house (built circa 1895). A one-story central-block brick house at 35 East 100 North has been converted to a restaurant, expanded on the façade, and completely sheathed in vinyl siding so no historic features are visible (built circa 1900, modified circa 2013).

The David and Evinda Madsen House, built in 1900, at 60 North 100 West is a two-story brick house in Ephraim with modest Italianate details such as bracketed cornices and a bay window, but the Victorian Eclectic features, such as the steeply pitched roof, two-story octagonal bay, and wide porch, are stronger visual elements.[4] The most elaborate example of a late Italianate-Victorian Eclectic house is located at 290 South State Street in neighboring Mount Pleasant. This two-story red brick house, built in 1897, has bracketed cornices and a square projecting bay, but lacks other elements of the Italianate style.[5] However, these two houses are excellent examples of pattern book architecture in Sanpete County.

The Olsen House and Mortuary, built in 1889, is the best example in rural Sanpete County of a transition from the rare Italianate style to the popular Victorian Eclectic central block house of the 1890s to early 1900s. With the exception of its central-block-with-projecting-bays footprint, the Olsen house has all the characteristics of the Italianate style: low-pitched hip roof, over-hanging belcast eaves, bracketed cornices, and tall windows with slightly arched and hooded window heads. Most of the upper floor windows have pristine historic integrity, except the obscured east elevation and the glass block filled windows in the northwest bay. The later historic additions contribute to the architectural evolution of the building and represents the progression from a funeral parlor to a full-service mortuary. The rarity of the architectural style and the historical use of the building mitigate the impact of the out-of-period modifications.

Although the main floor interior has been remodeled in several phases, a number of spaces and features remain that are associated with the funerary uses of the building. The original northwest bay was designed to be wide and deep enough for a casket. The interior fluted mullion of the bay window still shows the numerous gouges in the wood where the casket lids were opened too quickly. A period-revival north entrance was remodeled in 1930 to facilitate the movement of mourners from the dining room to the parlor view area to the west exit. Also in 1930, the kitchen addition allowed the back room in the 1889 house to be converted to a body preparation room. In 1949, the north entry was enclosed and a shed-roof addition was built as an embalming room complete with a drain in the floor before it was converted to a laundry room in the 1990s (the drain is now covered by newer tile).

Although the Olsen House and Mortuary is a single-family dwelling, the exterior and the interior of the house exhibit historic integrity from its nearly a century of funerary use. The first owner, Otto G. Olsen, was trained as a carpenter in his native Norway before immigrating to the Utah in 1875. Olsen installed most of the woodwork in the house, including

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[4] The Madsen House was listed on the National Register in 2014 (NRIS #14000383). Prior to the National Register listing the address of the Madsen house in the Utah State Historic Preservation Office's database was 65 North 100 West. The house is located on the odd side of the street.
[5] These examples are found in the online database of historic resources in the state (data extracted June 1, 2021).

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the now missing spiral staircases. It is also possible that he designed the layout of the house to facilitate the funeral viewings for the caskets and coffins he made as Ephraim's first undertaker.

The mason for the original house was Hy Brimhall. He may also have built the Italianate house in Moroni. Hyrum Brimhall was born in Union, Salt Lake County, in 1861.[6]   He was living in Payson, Utah County, during his time working on the Olsen house.   His family was living in Ephraim at the time of the 1900 census, where he is listed as a mason. Hy Brimhall is noted in local histories as a musician and music teacher, rather than for his masonry. He was a building contractor in Preston, Idaho, in the 1910s and 1920s. Hy Brimhall died in Provo in 1933. The builders of the 1930 and 1949 additions are unknown; however, a lien placed on the property in 1931 was $40.48 for roofing materials on the 1930 addition.

Criterion A: Commerce/Funeral Services Significance of the Olsen House and Mortuary

Otto G. Olsen, who immigrated to the Utah in 1875, was a relative latecomer in the early history of Ephraim in Sanpete County. Sanpete County is named for the San Pitch Ute tribe of Native Americans who hunted and gathered in the marshes and canyons of the valley. The first non-native residents were members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints who came seeking range and farmlands. The first settlement was located by a spring in present-day Manti in 1849. In 1850 when the county was established the population was 365 and Manti was designated the county seat. The town of Ephraim was settled a few years later in 1854. By 1870, the population of Sanpete County had grown to 6,786, with a solid majority of immigrant converts to the church from Scandinavian countries.

Otto Gunelius Olsen was born in Norway, on February 24, 1854. He trained as a carpenter before immigrating to Utah in 1875 at the age of 21. When he arrived at the train depot in Ogden, Utah, a businessman named L. M. Olsen (no relation) asked if Otto had relatives in the city and offered him lodging. Otto settled in Ephraim where Mr. L. M. Olsen would later serve as mayor. Otto Olsen found employment in Carl Uckerman's planing mill, where he became a skilled cabinet and furniture maker. After seeing the flimsy wood boxes used for burials in town, Otto suggested that the company manufacture caskets and soon used his casket making skills to become the town's first undertaker.

Otto G. Olsen married Eliza Christensen on February 27, 1879. Eliza was born in Fairfield, Utah, on February 16, 1859, the daughter of Carl. C. A. Christensen, a prominent Utah artist, and his wife, Elise Scheel. The Christensen family moved to Ephraim in 1870. Before her marriage, Eliza clerked in the Sanpete Co-op Store and was also one of Ephraim's early schoolteachers. Otto and Eliza are listed on the June 1880 census in Ephraim with their infant daughter, who later died before her second birthday. Otto's occupation on the census is cabinet maker. Although the census does not provide street names, neighboring family names indicate the couple is living on Lot 5, Block 8, Ephraim's Plat B (at the corner of today's 200 East and 300 South streets). Otto Olsen received the deed to the property in 1882, but family records state that their first five children, three daughters and two sons, were born in the log cabin between December 1879 and May 1888.

Around 1888, Otto G. Olsen built a two-story general store that faced 200 North. Some sources suggest the family lived in the store for a short time. Five more children, two sons and three daughters, were born between 1890 and 1901 after the family moved into the two-story brick house in the spring of 1889.   One of these sons died as an infant in 1891. Otto and Eliza are listed on the 1900 census with seven of their children. Otto gave his occupation as a merchant in 1900. According to a granddaughter, the Otto G. Olsen Mercantile House, sold "almost everything one can think of. Many of the things were beautiful such as the china, lace, and fabric."[7]

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[6] Hyrum Brimhall appears in some historic records with the spelling Hiram and sometimes with the middle initials M. or W.
[7] Dora Davis, unpublished TMs about the Otto and Eliza Olsen family.

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However, it is clear from advertisements in early issues of the *Ephraim Enterprise* that Olsen's coffin and casket making building was growing in importance. In an October 1891 newspaper ad for the store, the largest type read: "Furniture, Upholstery, Coffins and Caskets."[8] By the time of an advertisement in the April 6, 1892, issue, Otto G. Olsen's business had a name: the Ephraim Coffin Factory stating, "We manufacture and import the most extensive line of Coffins, Caskets and Furniture in the West" with a six foot coffin priced "from $6.00 and upwards."[9] This factory may have started in the upper floor of the general store or in the log cabin. Around 1900, Otto Olsen built a dedicated hearse for his funeral business and the log cabin was converted to a carriage house.

In addition to raising a household of nine children, Eliza Olsen helped manage the mercantile store. Eliza was also an expert seamstress who prepared all the intricate fabric linings for the coffins and caskets. It is clear from both family records and newspaper articles that the Olsen house played an important role in the transition from the Victorian practice of viewing bodies in the home of the deceased to viewings in the funeral parlor. With all the commercial activity surrounding the house, their daughter Josie, noted that many Manti residents referred to the property as the Otto G. Olsen corner.[10] Otto G. Olsen called the house "Ashwood Cottage" on the stationary he used.

The Olsen corner was a rarity in Utah's small towns as a general store and a funeral parlor two blocks off of Main Street, probably the result of Otto's late entry into property acquisition. Sometime before 1905, Otto acquired an old frame saloon at approximately 135 S. Main Street. The building is marked on a 1908 Sanborn map as an undertaker's.[11] When Otto and Eliza's second to youngest child, Lillie Octavia Olsen, died of diphtheria in 1907 at the age of eight, her casket was photographed in the hearse in front of the Main Street building. The hearse was driven by her older brothers, Adolphe and Lafayette. Lillie was also photographed in her open casket on the north side of the house. As was the practice with most communicable diseases of the period, the viewing was not held in the house, but out in the open with mourners paying their respects from the safety of the other side of the picket fence. The 1910 census is the last enumeration where Otto Olsen gives his occupation as merchant. His oldest son at home, Lafayette, was employed as an assistant undertaker on the enumeration.

By the 1910s, the Olsen Mercantile was no longer operating, but the more lucrative funeral business was booming. Olsen had begun importing steel caskets from the St. Louis Casket Company. He was still making wood caskets and coffins that were frequently shipped outside of Sanpete County. On the 1920 census, Otto G. Olsen, finally describes his primary profession as undertaker, an acknowledgment that the funeral business had become more successful than the mercantile. In 1921 the Otto G. Olsen Mortuary acquired its first gasoline-powered hearse, a gray Cadillac. Their second hearse, a Pierce Arrow, was also gray. Otto G. Olsen was the only early undertaker in the Sanpete County to remain in the business long enough to become a professional mortician.

Olsen's success in the 1920s is remarkable because he finally had competition in the funeral business. Several early undertakers in Sanpete County moved their business (John P. Sorenson, Manti), changed their profession (J.C. Cahoon, Manti), or only worked part time as undertaker (Albertus Willardson, Mayfield), without duplicating Otto Olsen's success. Two short-term mortuaries were also in Manti in the 1920s. Lee R. Fry established a funeral parlor in Manti in 1919 with a side business as a druggist and florist. In 1921, the Wallace and Livingston Funeral Parlor was established in Manti by A. N. Wallace, an embalmer, and A. D. Livingston, a retired farmer.

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[8] *Ephraim Enterprise,* October 14, 1891: 4.
[9] *Ephraim Enterprise,* April 6, 1892: 1.
[10] Inga Josephine Olsen, Autobiography, unpublished TMs [1955]: 1.
[11] The building is marked as a saloon on both the 1892 and 1898 Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps of Ephraim. The Olsen house was located too far away from the commercial business district and does not appear on any of the Sanborn maps of the town.

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The only other early undertaker in Ephraim was Andreas Olsen. The following story told by Andreas' daughter, Agnes O. Anderson, was included in the town history *Ephraim's First Hundred Years* published in 1954:

> A stranger came to town and inquired for Mr. Olsen and was told there are many Olsens here. Well, he is an undertaker. We have two undertakers. He is Norwegian. They are both Norwegians. I think he builds hearses. So he was directed to Andreas Olsen who built hearses for sale.[12]

Andreas Olsen sold his workshop in 1915, three years before his death in 1918. On his death certificate, his occupations are given as mechanic, farmer, and undertaker. His wife, Mrs. Andreas [Jacobina] Olsen, is listed as undertaker. There is no mention of undertaking in Andreas Olsen's obituary, but his hearses and his carpentry work in the Manti Temple for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints are featured prominently.[13] He won a gold medal for the "best hearse" at the Utah State Fair. Andreas Olsen also taught drafting at Snow College. His home and shop were demolished when the college expanded in the 1930s.

Eliza Virginia Christensen Olsen died on April 13, 1925. Otto Gunelius Olsen died two years later, on April 20, 1927, at the age of 73. His son, Adolphe Olsen, was listed as the undertaker on his death certificate. Adolphe, like his brother, Lafayette who died in 1918, had married and left Ephraim to become a teacher. Adolphe returned to Ephraim to help run the mortuary business, but it was his sister, Josephine O. Rasmussen, who had been helping run the funeral home with her father, who probably hired the company's first licensed embalmer, Reuben Buchanan, in September 1927. Adolphe bought a place in Salt Lake City at 1445 S. State Street, which he remodeled into a mortuary in 1930 (demolished). He went to California to qualify for his embalmer's license in 1932. Adolphe C. Olsen died in 1943.

When Josie Olsen Rasmussen took out her own funeral director's license in 1930, she may have been the first single (widowed) woman to be a licensed funeral director, and not as an assistant to a husband in the business. Inga Josephine Olsen was born in the log cabin on May 17, 1888. She was always known as Josie. Josie attended school until the 8th grade when she quit to help her mother with a new baby, while also working in her father's store and undertaker enterprise. Josie was employed as a telephone operator beginning in 1907 until her marriage to James Oliver "Ollie" Rasmussen in June 1919. The couple fostered a little girl, Eunice Nadell, who was four years old. Josie returned to working for the telephone company again between 1920 and 1926. In 1922, Josie became a local hero for alerting the fire department by telephone to a fire in the Main Street movie theater.

Just before Eliza Olsen's body was moved to the tabernacle for her funeral, Otto called his family to have a prayer around the casket in the parlor. Josie would later suggest this practice to bereaved families and a family prayer before the funeral is a common practice in the LDS Church today. After her mother's death, Josie helped her father "in the undertaking business by sewing the interior and trim for caskets, putting on sets of handles and hardware, and helping with the funeral directing."[14] Josie's husband, Ollie, died in January 1927 just four months before the death of her father in April. She moved into her parents' home in July 1927 and bought the property from her siblings in 1929.

In 1930, Josie remodeled the house and "made a preparation room for preparing the dead."[15] On the 1930 census, Josie and Eunice are the only occupants of the house. Josie's occupation is listed as "undertaker [of her] own establishment" which she continued to operate under the name Olsen Mortuary. The embalmer, Reuben Buchanan, moved to the Deseret Mortuary in Manti in the 1930s, but continued to provide services to Ephraim mortuary. The Olsen Mortuary was one of three funeral homes in Sanpete that began providing ambulance services in the 1930s.

[12] *Ephraim's First Hundred Years,* (Centennial Committee [s.n. 1954]): 78.
[13] *Ephraim Enterprise,* January 4, 1918: 1, 15.
[14] Josie Olsen biography, p. 11.
[15] Ibid, p. 14.

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Josie O. Rasmussen took on some of the most onerous tasks of a funeral director. In July 1930, the Olsen hearse/ambulance was asked to pick up the body of a local man, who had drowned while on a church mission in Denmark, from the closest railroad stop in Thistle. Two years later, Josie retrieved and prepared the beaten and burned body of her neighbor, Andrew N. Bjerregaard, after he was brutally murdered in his home.

After the Eunice's marriage, Josie married a widower, William G. Reid in 1933. The couple took in another foster daughter, two-year old Georgia Childs, in 1935. The room above the west foyer was remodeled into a playroom for Georgia. The 1940 census enumeration lists Will, Josie, Will's fourteen-year-old son, Mel, and Georgia living in the house. Although Will is listed as the head of household, he is employed as the assistant at the mortuary. Josie is listed as the funeral director. Josie frequently advertised in the local newspaper noting that the Olsen Mortuary had served "the People of Ephraim for Over Forty Years."[16] In return, the bereaved families she served would often published their thanks in the newspaper, including one funeral speaker who "praised Josie O. Reid for the extra service she gives in the undertaking business [and said] too few people appreciate this."[17]

William G. Reid died in March 1941. Josie had another heartbreak when Georgia's mother came to claim her in 1943. Josie married her third husband, Anton T. Anderson, in June 1944, that month selling the house and mortuary business to Reuben Buchanan. After a year of traveling, Josie and Anton moved back to Ephraim in 1945. Josie was able to visit the family home often while attending the viewings of family and friends in the old parlor, including her beloved sister, Matilda in 1955. Josie and Anton Andersen were feted as Ephraim's oldest couple in February 1973 and Anton passed away in December 1973.

In an article about local mortuaries published in 1970, Josie O. Anderson listed the many innovations that she and her father brought to the funeral business: family prayers, grave liners, leather casket lowering straps, and providing personalized hair and makeup for the deceased. She also mentioned the changes in funeral customs, "Viewings used to be in the homes. Later they were moved to the funeral homes of the sake of convenience." Josie summed up her career saying: "It felt like that if you could do something to make [the bereaved] feel that it's all right . . . then I figured [what I did was] more of an art than a profession."[18]   Inga Josephine Olsen Rasmussen Reid Anderson died on February 1, 1977. Her obituary stated, "She was a funeral director who assisted her father in the first mortuary business between Provo and Richfield."[19] Josie Olsen Anderson was buried in the Ephraim City Cemetery among many of the people she had served over the years.

Josie's employee, Reuben Buchanan purchased the Olsen house and mortuary property in 1944. Reuben Lorenzo Buchanan was born in Manti in 1899. Reuben worked at the Lee Fry funeral parlor in Manti. In the 1920s, Reuben spent nine years as apprentice at the Taylor Mortuary in Salt Lake City. He graduated from the Cincinnati College of Embalming in 1925 and worked as a traveling embalmer. After the death of his first wife, Sophia Chavez, in March 1934, Reuben married Ann Winefred Soffe in November 1934. The couple moved to Manti in 1936 with Reuben's five children in 1936. He helped establish the Deseret Mortuary in Manti. Ann Buchanan secured her funeral director's license in 1945. The Buchanans lived in the Deseret Mortuary's converted funeral home at 195 West 100 North. They later bought the business and renamed it the Buchanan Mortuary. In the mid-1940s, Reuben used the name Olsen or Olsen-Buchanan Mortuary for the Ephraim branch of his Manti business until the 1950s when it became the Buchanan Mortuary. It is not known if the house was occupied between 1945 and 1949.

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[16] *Ephraim Enterprise,* February 154, 1930: 8.
[17] *Ephraim Enterprise,* December 24, 1942: 3.
[18] *Ephraim Enterprise* and *Manti Messenger,* September 3, 1970: 1, 3.
[19] *Ephraim Enterprise,* February 10, 1977: 2.

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On July 19, 1950, Reuben's daughter Jerry married Boyd H. Olsen (no relation to Otto). Boyd and Jerry moved into the former Olsen Mortuary, where they lived until August 2001. Geraldine "Jerry" Buchanan was born in Salt Lake City in 1932. Boyd H. "Tobe" Olsen was born in Ephraim in 1931. Boyd and Jerry raised four children in the home. They do not appear to have actively participated in the preparation of bodies. Jerry was a freelance seamstress who may have prepared materials for the coffins.

Boyd was a mechanic for 35 years. He managed Tobe's Sinclair Service at 300 North and Main Street in Ephraim (demolished). Articles in the local newspapers note that Boyd drove the ambulance/hearse and it is likely he maintained the mortuary's fleet of vehicles. Boyd converted the log cabin into a garage for his tinkering. The Buchanan ambulance service ended in 1972 when a change in federal standards made it difficult to provide the service. Two other mortuaries, the Jacobs Mortuary (demolished) and the Ursenbach Funeral Home (today Rasmussen Mortuary), both in Mt. Pleasant, also eliminated ambulance service at the same time. By the late 1960s, Reuben's son, Wallace "Wally" S. Buchanan had taken over management of the Buchanan mortuaries. It was around this time that the mortuary functions at the Ephraim branch of the Buchanan Mortuary appeared to decrease. The last time the Ephraim branch was advertised was in 1981, after which the former mortuary appears to be just a private home for Boyd and Jerry Olsen. Reuben L. Buchanan died in 1983. Wallace S. Buchanan died in 2016. The Buchanan Mortuary in Manti is now the Magleby Mortuary.

Additional Context for the Olsen House and Mortuary:

In August 2001, Boyd and Jerry Olsen sold the property to Lyle and Jan Chamberlain. Boyd H. Olsen died in Manti in 2006. Jerry remarried. The Chamberlains remodeled the main floor, built the sunroom for their family, and landscaped the backyard. They repaired the masonry, restored the gable trim, and repainted the woodwork using a state historic preservation tax credit in 2021.

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Olsen House and Mortuary, Ephraim, Sanpete County, UT

Olsen House and Mortuary

315 South 200 East
Ephraim, Sanpete Co., Utah

MAP #1 - TOPOGRAPHIC MAP

UTM: 12S 449882 4356252

GIS Data Courtesy Utah AGRC

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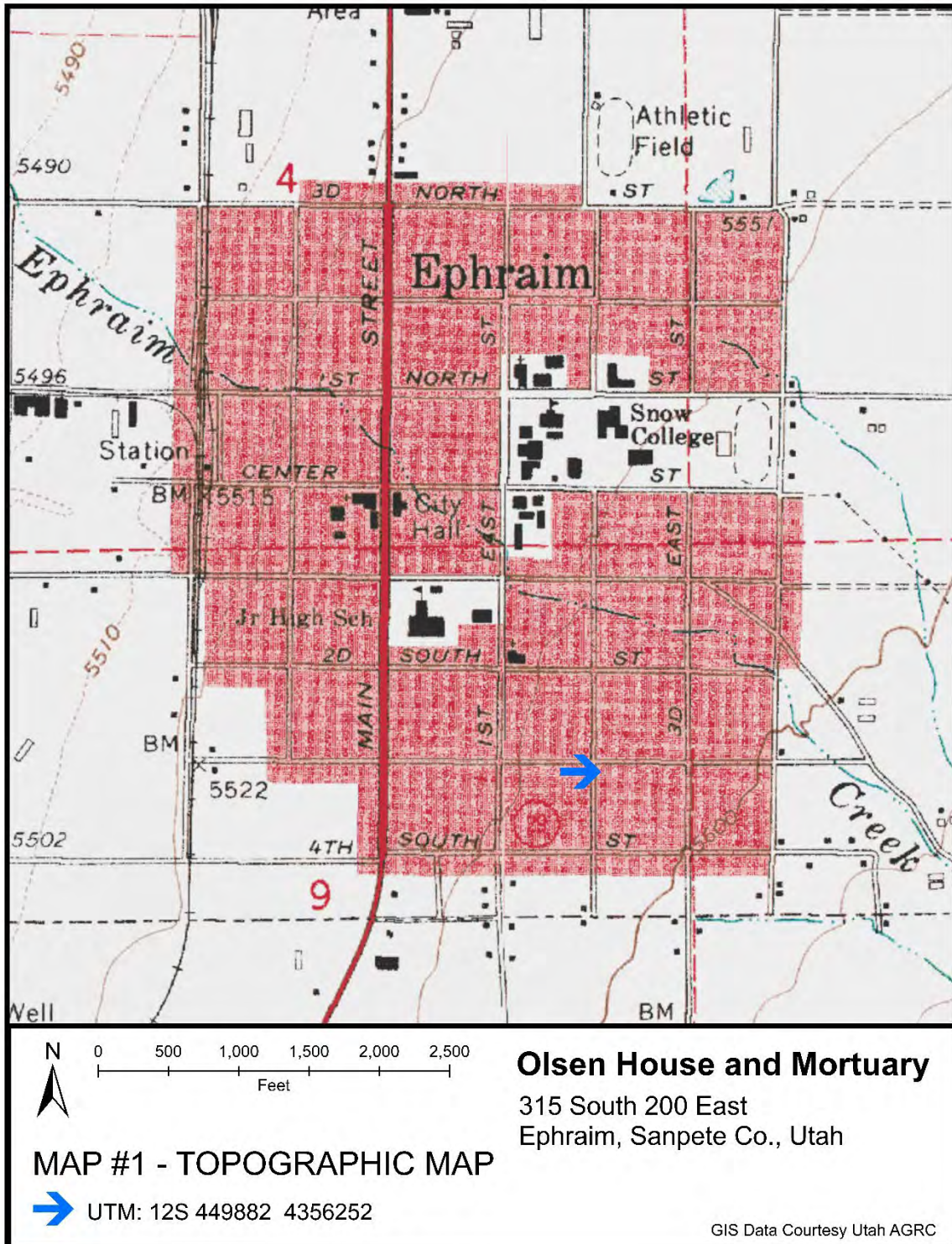
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MAP #2 - NEIGHBORHOOD

N   0   100   200   300   400   500
Feet

Latitude 39.354264°   Longitude -111.581725°

Olsen House Current Parcel

Olsen House and Mortuary

315 South 200 East
Ephraim, Sanpete Co., Utah

GIS Data Courtesy Utah AGRC

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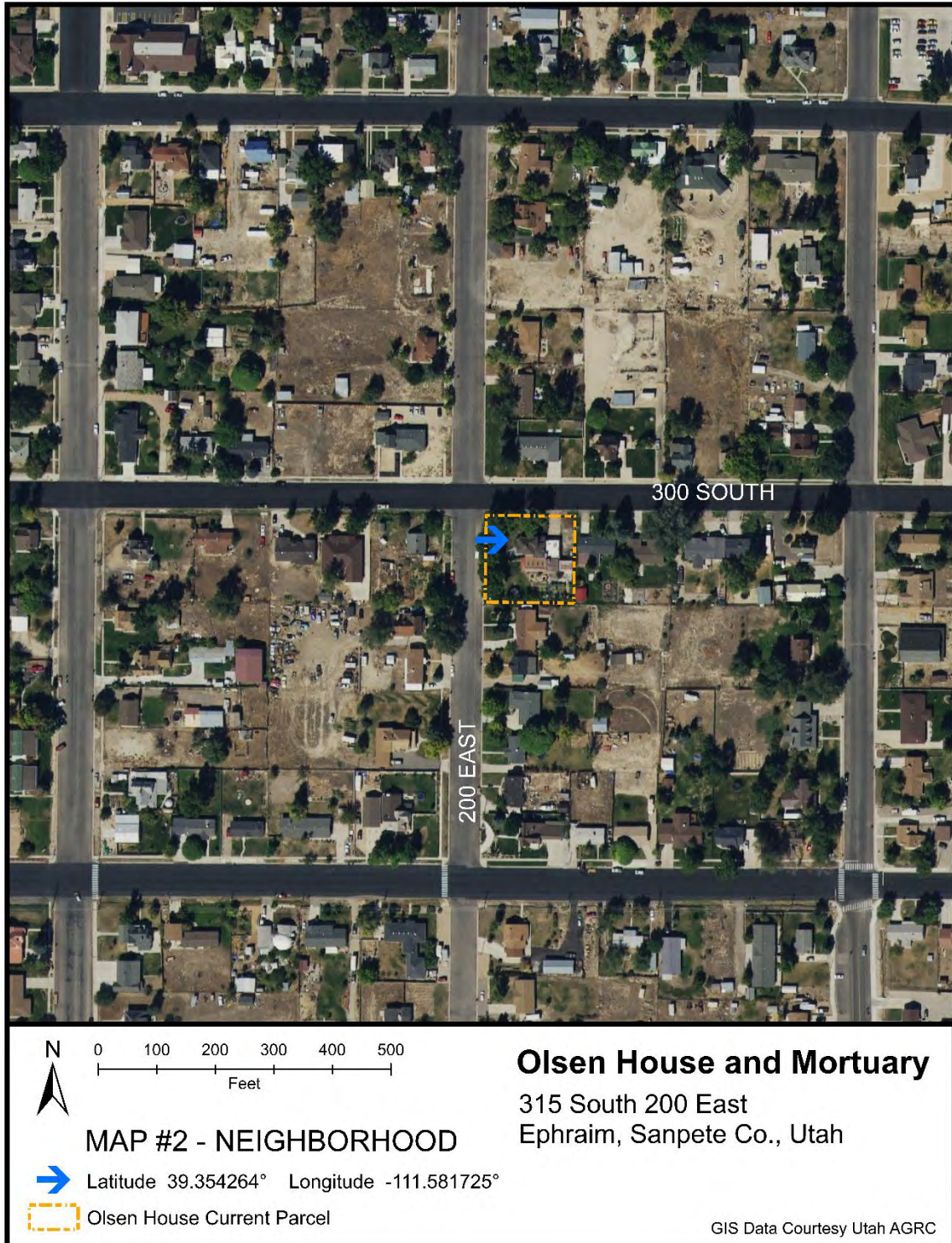
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300 SOUTH

200 EAST

N   0   25   50   75   100
                 Feet

Olsen House and Mortuary

315 South 200 East
Ephraim, Sanpete Co., Utah

MAP #3 - SITE PLAN

Olsen House Current Parcel

GIS Data Courtesy Utah AGRC

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Olsen House and Mortuary

315 South 200 East
Ephraim, Sanpete Co., Utah

N   0   25   50   75   100
Feet

NRHP EXTERIOR
PHOTOGRAPH KEY

Olsen House Current Parcel

GIS Data Courtesy Utah AGRC

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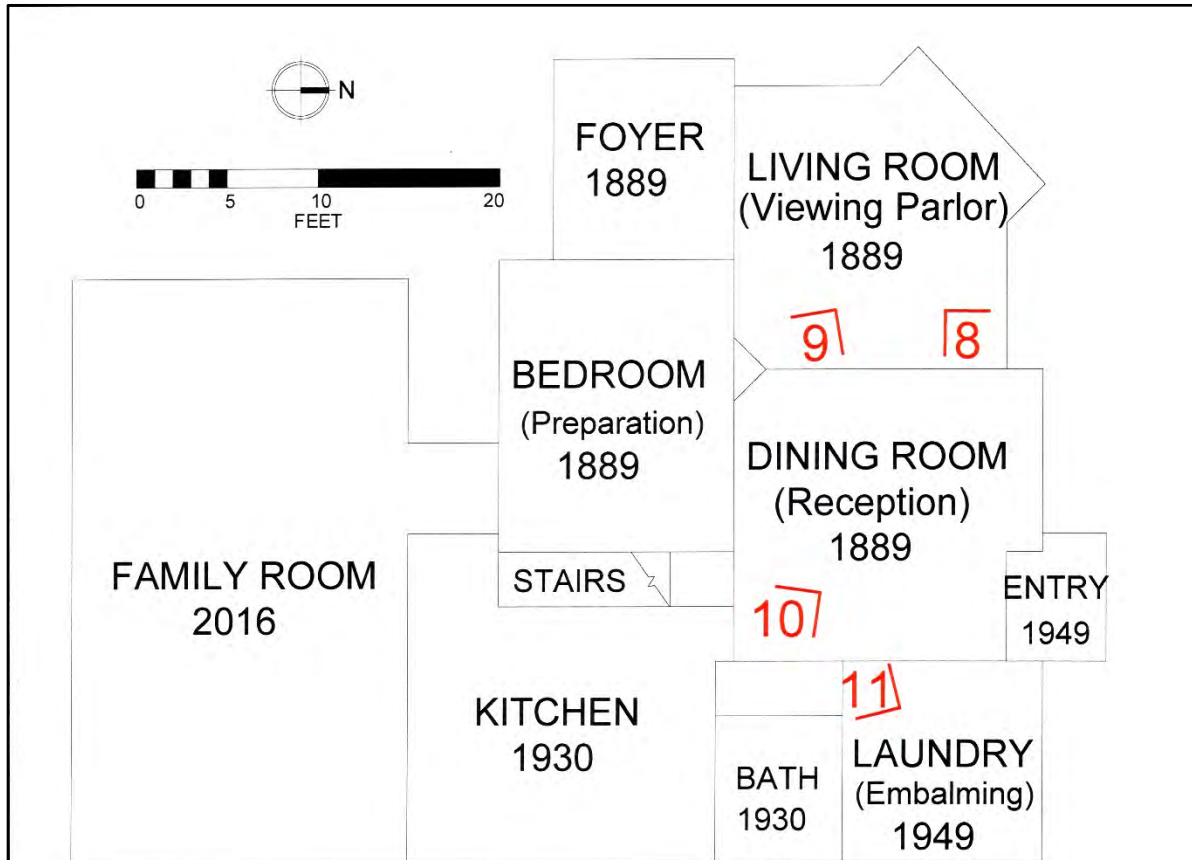
MAIN FLOOR PLAN SCHEMATIC (Funeral Use)

< INTERIOR PHOTOGRAPH KEY

Olsen House and Mortuary
315 South 200 East
Ephraim, Sanpete County, Utah

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Section No. <u>PHOTOGRAPHS</u>   Page <u>1</u>   Olsen House and Mortuary, Ephraim, Sanpete County, UT

Common Label Information:

1.   *Olsen House and Mortuary*
2.   315 South 200 East, Ephraim, Sanpete County, Utah
3.   Photographer: Korral Broschinsky
4.   Date: May 10 and November 11, 2021.
5.   Image files available at Utah SHPO.

Photograph 1
Olsen House and Mortuary, west and north elevations. Camera facing southeast.

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Olsen House and Mortuary, Ephraim, Sanpete County, UT

Photograph 2
Olsen House and Mortuary, west elevation. Camera facing east.

Photograph 3
Olsen House and Mortuary, north elevation. Camera facing south.

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Photograph 4
Olsen House and Mortuary, west and south elevations. Camera facing northeast.

Photograph 5
North and east elevations of house, garage and cabin (far left). Camera facing southwest.

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Photograph 6
Olsen House and Mortuary, view of site with west and north elevations. Camera facing southeast.

Photograph 7
Olsen House and Mortuary, south elevation of log cabin. Camera facing north.

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Section No. <u>PHOTOGRAPHS</u>   Page <u>5</u>   Olsen House and Mortuary, Ephraim, Sanpete County, UT

Photograph 8
Olsen House and Mortuary, interior, parlor and foyer. Camera facing southwest.

Photograph 9
Olsen House and Mortuary, interior, main floor, northwest bay. Camera facing northwest.

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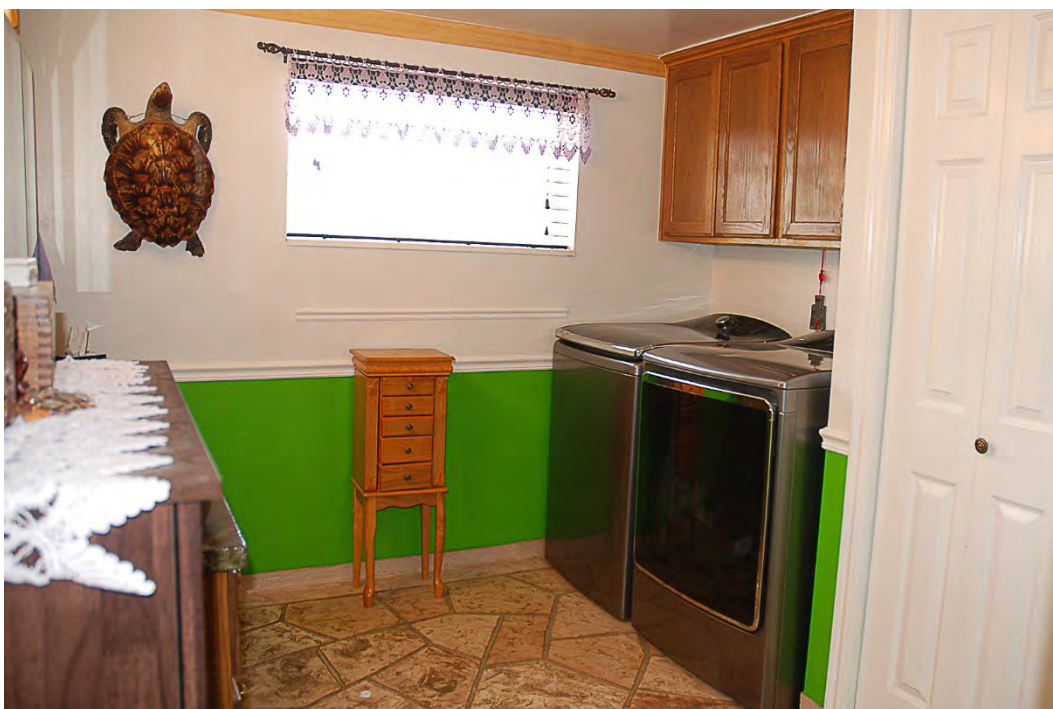Section No. <u>PHOTOGRAPHS</u>   Page <u>6</u>   Olsen House and Mortuary, Ephraim, Sanpete County, UT

Photograph 10
Olsen House and Mortuary, main floor, dining room and north entry. Camera facing north.

Photograph 11
Olsen House and Mortuary, main floor, laundry (former embalming) room. Camera facing northeast.

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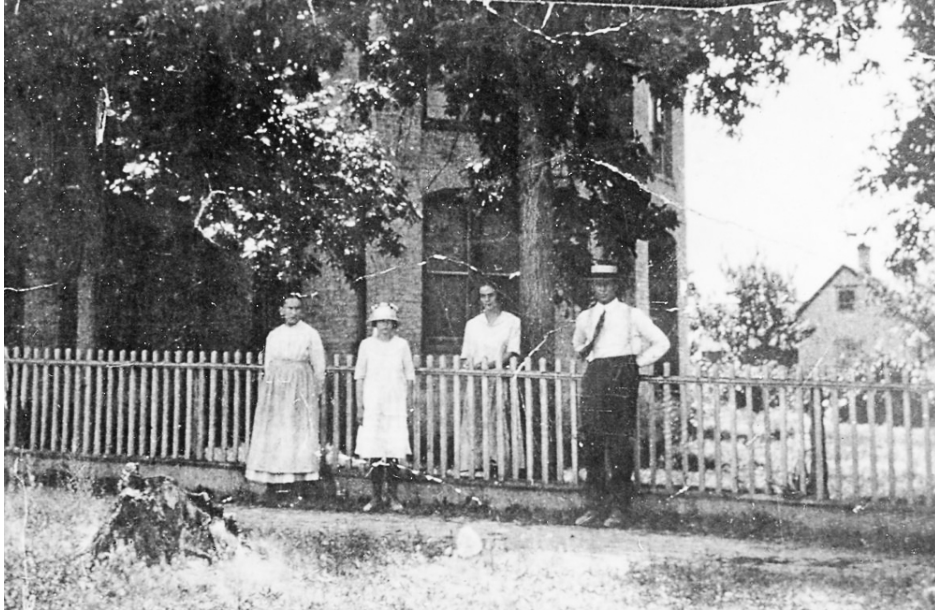
Figure 1
Otto and Eliza Olsen with two daughters in front of house, circa 1915. Camera facing south.
Courtesy Olsen family photograph collection (best available copy).

Figure 2
Eliza and Otto Olsen in front of house, circa 1920. Camera facing northeast.
Courtesy Olsen family photograph collection.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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Figure 3
Eugene Davis and Therald Wernz in front of Olsen house, circa 1942. Camera facing east.
Courtesy Olsen family photograph collection.

Figure 4
Children in front of Olsen store,
log cabin on left, circa 1942.
Camera facing south.

Figure 5
Georgia Childs and Allen Allred with
store (center), Olsen House (right), circa 1944.
Camera facing east.