

Town Hall
43 Main Street
Ophir
Tooele County
Utah

HABS No. U-38

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UTAH
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PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, D.C. 20240

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HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

HABS No. U-38

TOWN HALL

Location: 43 Main Street, Ophir, Tooele County, Utah
Latitude: 40° 22' 14" N Longitude: 112° 15' W

Present Owner: Town of Ophir

Present Occupant: Town of Ophir

Present Use: Town Hall

Statement of Significance: One of the few remaining mining town city hall-fire stations.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Original and subsequent owners:

Town of Ophir

2. Date of erection: c. 1870

3. Architect and builder: Unknown

4. Original plan and construction: The building was a combination City Hall, Firehouse and jail. The fire station still contains two high-wheeled man-powered fire carts, complete with 400 feet of two-and-a-half inch cotton rubber hose. The fire department was a volunteer company, not organized.

5. Alterations and additions: None known

B. Historical Events and Persons Associated with the Building:

Ophir became significant in Utah mining in 1865, when soldiers of General Connor's army found croppings of lead in East Canyon on Treasure Hill, which they named the St. Louis Lode. The Ophir mining district was organized in 1870, and that year A. W. Morris laid out the town and buildings were built along Main Street. In August, 1870 silver was discovered and Ophir became a boom town. Between 1871 and 1874, mills and smelters were constructed in the canyon, and for nearly 10 years the camp thrived, but in 1880 the boom was over, and the mines were all but abandoned. Other booms revived the district as copper and zinc were discovered. Senator W. A. Clark of Montana operated mines here for 25 years, and Marcus Daly put the profits of the Zella Mine into the Anaconda Copper Co.

C. Sources of Information:

1. Primary and unpublished sources:

Sanborn Map Co., Map of Ophir, Utah. July, 1917.

2. Bibliography:

History of Tooele County. Daughters of the Utah Pioneers.

Wolle, Muriel Sibell. The Bonanza Trail, Indiana University Press, 1953.

Prepared by John L. Giusti
September 5, 1967

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural interest: The town hall, jail, and fire department are combined in a single structure. The building is in a small mining town.
2. Condition of fabric: Structure is basically sound. However, frame portion is not resting squarely on foundation.

B. Description of Exterior:

1. Over-all dimensions: This is a simple, two-story rectangle, 26' 5" x 24' 6".
2. Foundations: Concrete forms the walls of the lower floor which is the jail.
3. Wall construction, finish, and color: Upper portion is horizontal clapboard siding and is six inches wide. Exterior wood and concrete is now unpainted.
4. Structural system, framing: Wood frame on concrete foundation.
5. Chimneys: One brick chimney
6. Openings:
 - a. Doorways and doors: North or front elevation: Wood, five panel door to meeting hall and double wood doors to fire department. South elevation: One steel door to jail with hinges on outside.

- b. Windows and shutters: One double hung two-over-two window on north elevation, one on east elevation and one on west elevation. Two barred windows in jail on south elevation.

7. Roof:

- a. Shape, covering: Wood shingles - recently covered with galvanized corrugated sheet steel.
- b. Cornice, eaves: Wood on three sides and false front on north side.
- c. Dormers, cupolas, towers: Bell tower (about 8 feet high) at peak of roof near front of structure.

C. Description of Interior:

1. Floor plans: Three rooms including meeting hall, fire department and storage room for fire fighting equipment. Lower floor or jail was divided into two cells with one window in each, an exterior door and a door between the cells.
2. Stairways: None. There is no direct communication between the two levels.
3. Flooring: Wood in upper floor and concrete in lower floor.
4. Doorways and doors: One doorway between cells of jail and one door to storage room in fire department.
5. Lighting, type of fixtures: Incandescent globes - bare.
6. Heating: One pot-bellied stove in meeting hall, with an outlet pipe in the jail.

D. Site and Surroundings:

1. Orientation: Building faces north (more or less).
2. Landscaping and walks, enclosures: Concrete apron in front of structure on north side between structure and main street.

Prepared by Kenneth L. Lambert
Student Assistant Architect
Utah Project 1967
July 25, 1967

PART III. PROJECT INFORMATION

This record is part of a Utah Survey conducted in the summers of 1967 and 1968 under joint sponsorship of the Historic American Buildings Survey of the Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation of the National Park Service and the Utah Heritage Foundation.

Field work, historic research and record drawings were done under the direction of Project Supervisor Paul Goeldner, AIA (Texas Tech University) assisted by Project Historian John L. Giusti, AIA (University of Utah). Photographs were made by P. Kent Fairbanks of Salt Lake City.

Student Assistant Architects on the 1967 team were Robert M. Swanson and Charles W. Barrow, (University of Texas) and Kenneth L. Lambert and Keith Sorenson, (University of Utah). 1968 Student Assistant Architects were Keith Sorenson, Charles D. Harker and Robert Schriever, (University of Utah) and Donald G. Prycer, (Texas A. & M. University).