

City of McKinney

Historic Building Marker Application

(Supporting Documentation)

McKenney-Stewart House 617 North Church Street



A. Alterations & Construction

Construction

The McKenney-Stewart House was built in 1914 as a single-story, six-room home. The house is a wood-frame structure on a pier-and-beam foundation. In its original concept, its footprint followed a modified L-plan. The house is sheathed in three-inch ship-lap siding. The roof plan consisted of a central gable intersected by two gables on either end of the main roof structure. The home is fenestrated with full-pane, one-over-one sash windows.

The house represents an eclectic mix of architectural styles. First, the two front-facing gables are reminiscent of the Cotswald Style, often called Cottage Style. This approach scales down the massing of the house in order to give it a "quaint" old-world feel. The symmetrical massing of the gables on either side of the recessed porch hearkens to the dog-run style of the pioneer plains. The most "modern" element of the house is the repetition of the square shapes of the sash windows, attic vents, and flanking pavilions. This play of geometric shapes suggests an Art Deco influence. None of these styles exist in their pure form but their blending indicates a desire to turn from traditional forms toward something new and unadorned.

The building contractor, though unknown, could have been J.E. Cooper who was responsible for work on the Texas Cotton Mill as well as an addition to J. Perry Burrus' house. Since Mr. Burrus was the boss of the homeowner, Paul McKenney, and Mr. McKenney oversaw Mr. Cooper's construction at the mill, it is very possible he was involved in the construction, if not the design, of this house. J.E. Cooper was known to have built other homes on North Church.

Alterations

The McKenney-Stewart House has undergone two major alterations. The first was in 1948 and involved enlarging an existing bedroom and adding a bedroom and a bath at the rear of the house. This alteration gave two rooms of the house private access to the outside. It is possible that the enlarged bedroom was originally conceived as a living space connected to the new bed and bath. This would have given privacy to the owner's mother-in-law who lived in the home until her death in 1971. Later owners may have turned these areas into two separate bedrooms.

The second alteration occurred in 2011. This involved an extensive remodeling of the interior space by removing the walls that separated the dining room from the kitchen and living room. The kitchen was completely redesigned and updated with new cabinets. Also, a master bathroom was added to the rear bedroom. Exterior modifications were kept to a minimum. With respects to the front of the house, all windows and doors are original. The porch columns were reinforced. Decking and railing were brought up to code.

Despite these alterations, the house would be very recognizable to its historical owners. Its exterior siding, trim, windows and doors, as well as other design elements have been preserved in full.

B. Historical Figures

J.C. Rhea (1837-1925)

At the age of 18, James Calvin Rhea migrated from Tennessee in 1855 with his mother and father, Joseph R. Rhea. The Rhea family settled about 10 miles west of McKinney in the area now known as Rhea Mills. James and his older brother, William, purchased and operated a wool carding machine there for the purpose of preparing wool for spinning. Later, they began milling grains and thus became the name sake for the area. Their success in the ginning and milling business gave them the capital to purchase about 2-3 thousand acres of land in Collin County.

In 1861, James became a member of Company D, South Texas Cavalry and was wounded at the Battle of Corinth in Mississippi. His brother William lost a foot in the same battle. They both returned to Texas after the war to continue their successful business operations. Ironically, three years after losing a foot in the war, William married Ella Foote, the daughter of Dr. Gerald A. Foote, a prominent McKinney doctor and business man.

In 1874, James married Mary Gosset. Two years later James secured a post office for the Rhea Mills community and became its postmaster for three years. He resigned in order to spend more time on his various business interests which included a mercantile store and real estate.

James and Mary moved to McKinney in 1892 eventually retiring from active business. While in McKinney he was a member of the Central Presbyterian Church and staunch advocate for Prohibition. Though he held no political office, he chaired the county committee that helped Prohibition become law in 1902.

When James C. Rhea died on March 19, 1925 the McKinney mayor Tom W. Perkins issued a resolution that flags be flown at half-staff and City offices to be closed in honor of Mr. Rhea's passing.

John Henry Stinson (1872-1932)

J.H. Stinson was a singing, wheeler-dealer of a businessman. He was born in 1872 in Georgia but migrated to Princeton, Texas sometime before 1896. He was active in the Methodist church as a choir director and was part of a singing quartet that performed publicly. His early years were spent farming but eventually became active in real estate, selling lots in a Princeton subdivision he and J.T. Cave established.

In 1913, John became one of the first people in Collin County to own a car. He purchased an Abbott-Detroit from a dealer in Dallas and drove with this family to McKinney to pick up his mother, Mrs. M.E. Meroney. The car, no doubt, was useful in his business dealings since he made frequent trips to McKinney for the purpose of buying and selling horses, mules, and real estate. Along with his varied business interests, John was the president of the Collin County Singing Convention whose purpose was to train and promote vocalist in the area.

By 1917, John was living in McKinney full-time where he established a car dealership selling the "famous Hupmobile." The Hupp Motor Company was established by Robert C. Hupp in Detroit in 1908 and produced medium to high priced cars. Mr. Stinson later began selling the Peerless, a competitor of the better-known Packard. The J.H. Stinson & Sons dealership was originally on South Tennessee but moved in 1919 to 213 N. Tennessee (current site of Local Yocal). The dealership hit on hard times and was forced to close but the resilient entrepreneur moved on to ginning and the oil business afterwards. His wife Rettie and he moved to Dallas in 1921 following the death of their seven-year-old daughter Lois. J.H. Stinson died in Dallas in 1932.

Herman Pinder Harris (1890-1965)

H.P. Harris was born in Collin County in 1890, the son McKinney school principal Prof. Z.A.C. Harris. In 1910, Herman and his bother Ray quit their jobs at the Southwestern Grain and Seed Co. to opened their own grain office. They started the Harris Grain Company in the Mallow Building on the southwest corner of the Square at 101 W. Louisiana (current site of Home & Garden Market). In 1915, Herman moved to Plano, then to Fort Worth a few years later still maintaining their business partnership. In 1926, they ventured into the lubricant business and started Home Oil Company with storage tanks in the old Collin County Mill building. They ran this business until they sold it to the Gaither Oil Company of Fort Worth.

Paul Kerns McKenney (1882-1972)

Paul K. McKenney was born on Sept. 10, 1882 in Mitchellville, Florida. He graduated from Georgia Tech at the age of 20 and worked for several mills in Mississippi and Georgia before moving to McKinney in 1910 with his wife Etta (Williams).

In McKinney, Paul became the first superintendent of the Texas Cotton Mill. The mill consisted of 500 spindles and over 600 looms. J. Perry Burrus formed the corporation that invested \$200,000 toward the construction and operation of the mill. The mill would

later go on to become the largest producer of denim in the United States. Because of Mr. McKenney's successful management he became a director of the mill and its treasurer in 1915. During his tenure, the mill was the largest business institution in Collin County.

Mr. McKenney's first order of business upon his arrival in McKinney was to hire nearly 100 employees for the mill. That was no easy task since there was not yet enough housing in the area to accommodate so large a workforce. But even more difficult, was finding the housing needed for them. Mr. McKenney would often make appeals to landlords in McKinney to make more rentable housing available.

Mr. McKenney was well aware of the economic significance the cotton mill played in the lives of the greater McKinney area and worked hard to build close relationships in the community. He was elected president of the McKinney Business Men's Association. His other associations with McKinney civic groups included schools, Red Cross, fireman, and soldiers. During his tenure as superintendent, Mr. McKenney established himself as an esteemed leader in the community. He was fond of slogans. His favorite was one he created which he turned into a rubber stamp that he used on every letter or memo he wrote, "There is every reason why Texas should clothe herself, as well as feed herself."

Mr. McKenney was married to Etta Williams whose father was in the milling business in Georgia. Despite his success and business promotions in McKinney, he tendered his resignation in the summer of 1918 in order to become the superintendent of Swift Cotton Mill of Columbus, Georgia. His devoted employees were saddened by this but as a symbol of their appreciation gave him a neatly engraved gold watch upon his departure.

Dr. A.E. Booth (1868-1939)

In 1918, Dr. Eustace King of the First Baptist Church of McKinney became too ill to continue his duties as pastor. That year the church sent a call to Dr. A.E. Booth of Harrisburg, Illinois who accepted the open position. Dr. Booth's first order of business was to reorganize the church which had been partially neglected because of his predecessor's lengthy illness. Dr. Booth's enthusiasm and administrative talent lead the membership of the church to jump in one year from 780 to 976. The Sunday School enrollment climbed from 400 to 766.

Despite his accomplishments, Dr. Booth tendered his resignation in September of 1919, after only 14 months on the job citing poor health and an offer from a congregation in Beaumont, Texas. A newspaper article at the time stated that Dr. Booth had suffered a

nervous breakdown and was troubled by high-blood pressure and Dr. Booth believed the climate in Beaumont would suit his health better. When Dr. Booth left, the church owed money on the newly added Sunday School Annex and despite not having a pastor, the congregation raised enough to retire the debt. Dr. Booth died in 1939 in Kansas.

Dr. Gholston Leonard Yates (1878-1936)

In December of 1919, Dr. G.L. Yates accepted the call to be the next pastor of the First Baptist Church in McKinney. Dr. Yates was once the pastor of a congregation in Tyler, Texas but at the time of the call, he was at a church in Macon, Georgia. Dr. Yates began working at the Church in January of 1920 but within weeks of accepting his new position his wife Anne (Swan) died. Her remains were shipped to Tyler where her family lived.

Dr. Yates was born in Cross Roads, Alabama in 1878 and has been described by the Courier-Gazette as a "man of great personal warmth, with intense evangelistic zeal." Dr. Yates' tenure lasted just over four years. Among his accomplishments, he grew the congregation by 420 souls to over 1,000 members and had the pastoral salary raised to \$5,000 per year.

In February of 1923 Dr. Yates was granted a 60-day leave of absence beginning in July to attend the Baptist World Alliance in Stockholm, Sweden. However, Dr. Yates surprised the congregation when he instead skipped the conference that summer to wed Miss Lucy Sprecker of Kansas City. The two spent the month of August honeymooning at the coast.

Dr. Yates resigned in May of 1924 to become the pastor of the First Baptist Church of Amarillo, Texas. He died from prostate cancer in 1936 and was buried in Tyler.

Dr. Marion E. Hudson (1876-1930)

Dr. M.E. Hudson arrived at the First Baptist Church of McKinney in June of 1924. He came from Marshall, Texas where he had been president of East Texas Baptist College. Dr. Hudson was the pastor during troubled financial times. Several staff positions were eliminated and pay was cut. Dr. Hudson saw his own salary drop 20% to \$4,000.

Despite these financial setbacks the congregation gave Dr. Booth a unanimous vote of confidence. When he became ill in December of 1929, the church was able to give him a leave of absence with salary and full use of the parsonage on North Church Street. Dr. Hudson died in March of 1930 and was buried in Marshall.

Jesse Eakle (1858-1937)

Jesse Eakle was born in Blue Ridge, Texas in 1858. His father Henry Eakle was one of the early settlers in the community located 18 miles northeast of McKinney. Henry died when Jesse was about six months old. Jordan O. Straughan, the district clerk of Collin County, became his guardian.

Jesse was in the real estate and loan business. He was a founding director of the Guaranty State Bank in Blue Ridge in 1914, along with J.S. Stewart. Jesse moved to McKinney with his wife Martha (Glenn) in 1933, the same year as their 50th wedding anniversary.

Jesse died in his home on January 22, 1937 and was buried in the W.O.W. Cemetery at Blue Ridge. Six days later his wife Martha passed away. J.C. Stewart, the Vice-President of the Central National Bank of McKinney and son of J.S. Stewart, was the administrator of her estate.

Clyde L. Fagg (1909-1994)

Clyde L. Fagg was born in Blue Ridge, Texas in 1909. He was the son of Charles Marion Fagg, a well-known dry-goods merchant in Blue Ridge. Clyde's uncle, James W. Fagg was appointed as the postmaster of Blue Ridge by President Herbert Hoover. James was a Republican and lost the appointment when President Franklin Roosevelt, a Democrat, took office. However, James' brother Charles was a Democrat and was subsequently appointed to the office.

Clyde was an industrial arts instructor at the McKinney High School. He made his home at 410 N. Bradley but owned a few investment properties in McKinney including an apartment building at 615 W. Lamar and a single-family residence at 617 North Church Street.

Katie Jetton (1879-1971)

Katie Jetton was born in McKinney as Kate Lee George to Mr. and Mrs. Joseph George in 1879. Her father immigrated from Germany when he was six years old. He was a railroad laborer until the company he worked for, H. & T. C., laid tracks in Collin County. He saw opportunity in the fertile soil and cheap land and started a farm.

In 1876, Joseph married Rebecca Jane Thompson who was 16 years old and 15 years his junior. They had 15 children. Kate was the second.

Kate married George G. Jetton, a farmer, in 1879. They lived in Westminster, Texas until his death in 1939. After George's death, Kate would make frequent trips to McKinney to visit her daughter, Cleo who was married to James C. Stewart. In 1943, Kate bought the home at 617 North Church Street. She lived there with her daughter and son-in-law until she died in 1971.

James Clarence Stewart (1894-1963)

J.C. Stewart was born in the Verona community of Collin County in 1894, the son of J.S. and Frances (Anderson) Stewart. He began his banking career at the Security State Bank, a bank in Blue Ridge that his father J.S. Stewart help found.

In 1925, James married Cleo Jetton, the daughter of George and Katie Jetton of Westminster. They moved to McKinney in 1932 so that James could become cashier of the Central State Bank which later became the Central National Bank. In 1941 he was promoted to Executive Officer and in 1949 he became the bank President. He held that position until his retirement in 1963.

While in McKinney, James and his wife Cleo were involved in many civic organizations. James had a leadership position in the First Baptist Church. He was the Director of the McKinney Lions Club and Treasurer-Director of Camp Fire Girls. Cleo was the chairman of the Collin County Prenatal Clinic. She was active in several civic groups, including the Wednesday Bridge Club and the En Avant Club. During WWII and for some time afterwards, she was the assistant manager of the C.P. Horn Appliance Store at 227 E. Louisiana Street. She frequently hosted parties at the couple's house.

James retired as President of Central National Bank in January 1963. In April he died at the age of 69. Cleo remarried in December 1971 at the age of 71 to Chester Crabtree (78), a former States Attorney in Pontiac, Illinois. They moved from McKinney that same year to make Pontiac their home. Chester was previously married to Myrt Alexander Giles from Anna, Texas who died in September 1970.

The newly wed Cleo and Chester Crabtree did not spend much time in Illinois. In April of 1972 they returned to McKinney and lived in a house on West Lamar Street. Chester died in 1986. Cleo lived another decade passing away in 1995 at the age of 95.

C. Property Ownership

Address: 617 North Church Street

Legal Description: W A & J C Rhea, Lot 3b aka Lot 4

Purchase Date	Seller	Buyer
May 6, 1911	J.C. Rhea	J.H. Stinson
Mar. 3, 1912	J.H. Stinson	H.P. Harris
Apr. 28, 1913	H.P. Harris	Paul McKenney
Aug. 13, 1918	Paul McKenney	First Baptist Church
Apr. 5, 1933	First Baptist Church	Jesse Eakle
Jan. 4, 1940	Martha Eakle Estate	Clyde Fagg
Apr. 19, 1943	Clyde Fagg	Katie Jetton
Oct. 20, 1943	Katie Jetton	J.C. Stewart
Oct. 28, 1971	Cleo Stewart	J.L. Hayes
Jun. 20, 1975	J.L. Hayes	Cleo Crabtree
Sep. 23, 1975	Cleo Crabtree	H.T. Wright
Feb. 27, 1979	H.T. Wright	Central Baptist Church
Apr. 22, 1981	Central Baptist Church	Jack Miller
Sep. 1, 1983	Jack Miller	Dungan Real Estate
Nov. 6, 1987	Dungan Real Estate	Misa Jovanovic
Aug. 20, 1998	Misa Jovanovic	Paul J. Dyer
Aug. 13, 2008	Paul J. Dyer	Deutsche Bank
Oct. 23, 2008	Deutsche Bank	Brian McCarthy
Oct. 13, 2009	Brian McCarthy	Charles T. Bratt, III
Dec. 22, 2011	Charles T. Bratt, III	Doreen Christensen

D. Tenant History

Start Year	End Year	Tenant	Relationship
1913	1918	Paul McKenney	
"	"	Etta	wife
"	"	Natilu	daughter
1917 ¹	"	Paul, Jr.	son
1918	1919	Dr. A.E. Booth	
"	"	Sallie	wife
1919	1924	Dr. G.L. Yates	
1919	1920 ²	Gertrude	wife
1923 ⁴	"	Lucie	wife
1924	1930 ²	Dr. M.E. Hudson	
"	1933	Rilla	wife
1933	1937 ²	Jesse Eakle	
"	1937 ²	Martha	wife
1937	1963 ²	J.C Stewart	
"	1971	Cleo	wife
"	1945 ³	James, Jr.	son
1943	1971 ²	Katie Jetton	mother-in-law
1971	1975	J.L. Hayes	
"	"	Janie	wife
1975	1979	H.T. Wright	
"	"	Dora	wife
1979	1981	Central Baptist Church	
1981	1983	Jack Miller	
1983	1987	Carl Owen Smith	
1987	1998	Mary Wright	
1998	2008	Paul J. Dyer	
2008	2009	Brian McCarthy	
2009	2011 ⁵	Charles T. Bratt, III	
2011	present	Doreen Christensen	

¹ Born

² Died

³ Child became 18 years old

⁴ Married and moved in

⁵ Remodeled extensively during this period

E. Narrative History

On July 4, 1911, Texas the Federated Women's Clubs of McKinney presented a statue of Texas Governor James W. Throckmorton, to the city of McKinney. The statue by artist Coppini was placed on the northeast corner of the Courthouse square. That momentous occasion occurred as the ink was drying on a deed that conveyed Lot 4 of the Rhea Subdivision on North Church Street to J.H. Stinson, a well-known businessman and real estate investor, for \$750.

Early Years

The arrival of railroads and processing mills in the area in the early 20th century created a demand for labor which, in turn, created a demand for housing. People were moving to the area to ride the wave of McKinney's new prosperity. Consequentially, this demand for housing created a frenzy of real estate investing. The decade following 1910 saw a 40% increase in the McKinney population. It was during this boom that J.H. Stinson sold the Lot 4 the following year to grain trader, H.P. Harris for \$850, a 13% return. Mr. Harris held the property for a little less than a year and sold it in 1913 for \$900 to Paul McKenney. Mr. Harris' investment yielded 6%, still a respectable return and better than a Wall Street investor could expect at the time.

The new owner of Lot 4 was Paul McKenney. Mill magnate J. Perry Burrus hired Mr. McKenney away from a Georgia mill and installed him as the first superintendent of the Texas Cotton Mill. Paul purchased the property with thoughts toward building a house for his wife, Etta and baby Natilu. Construction began on the house in January 1914. In April, the family moved in.

Paul McKenney lived at 617 North Church for 4 years. During that time, by virtue of being the manager of the largest employer in McKinney, he became one of the town's best-known resident. He was the president of the Business Men's Association and active in many civic functions. However, despite his bond to McKinney, in 1918 Paul accepted a position with the Swift Cotton Mill of Columbus, Georgia. His wife Etta was born there and her father had once been the president of the mill.

Paul McKenney's exit was bitter-sweet. He was given a gold watch by his employees. However, even more impressive, his employer, J. Perry Burrus, donated \$5,000 of his own money to his church to buy Paul's house for \$6,500. At that time in McKinney, a one-story, six-room house would normally cost about \$2,500. The house price was so generous, it begs the question whether Mr. Burrus was saying "thank you" to his depart-

ing employee.

Mr. Burrus belonged to the First Baptist Church which needed a house for their new pastor. The previous paster, Dr. E.E. King, resigned do to illness but was allowed to remain in the church's existing parsonage. In the fall of 1918 the church, with Mr. Burrus' help, purchased the property which the new pastor Dr. A.E. Booth would soon occupy.

The Parsonage

First Baptist Church owned 617 North Church for 15 years. Three of its pastors called it home. Dr. A.E. Booth from Harrisburg, Illinois was the first. His year-long habitation was punctuated by a nervous break-down.

The second pastor to call it home was Dr. G.L. Yates from Tyler, Texas. Only weeks after his arrival in McKinney his wife unexpectedly died. He remained in the parsonage and did an outstanding job of expanding the church membership and collecting on pledges. As a reward, the church board raised his salary to \$5,000 per year. He remarried in 1923 and took another job in Amarillo the following year.

Third pastor to occupy the parsonage was Dr. M.E. Hudson from Marshall, Texas. He came to the church during some difficult financial times for the country and the church. Though church membership was increasing, it was becoming more difficult for the church to meet its financial obligations. Some staff positions were eliminated, some cut back. Dr. Hudson saw his own salary go from \$5,000 to \$4,000 per year. Despite the hard financial times, when Dr. Hudson became ill in 1929 the church gave him paid leave, paid is medical bills, and allowed him to remain in the parsonage. Dr. Hudson died in 1930 but his widow Rilla (Shives) continued to live there for two more years.

However, by 1933 the church was suffering financially from the Depression and needed money to continue. Selling the house was a part of that strategy. The church sold the property to Blue Ridge banker Jesse Eakle for \$650, a price that underscored both the economic times and the church's difficulty with asset management.

Finances, Family, and Fun

In 1933, the retired banker Jesse Eakle and his wife Martha (Glenn) moved from Blue Ridge to their newly purchased home on North Church. The couple lived there together for four years until Jesse passed away in January of 1937 after a bout of pneumonia. Five days after Jesse's funeral Martha died of the same illness.

Mr. and Mrs. Eakle had no children which complicated the settlement of their estate. It must have been Jesse Eakle's friend and business associate G. G. Jetton, who was in charge of picking someone to settle Martha's estate. Mr. Jetton did not have to look hard to find a suitable administrator. Mr. Jetton's own daughter was married to just the man, James C. Stewart.

James C. Stewart came to McKinney from Blue Ridge in 1932 to take a cashier position at the Central State Bank on the northeast corner of the Courthouse square. His wife Cleo (Jetton) was the daughter of G.G. Jetton, a close friend of Jesse Eakle and co-director of the Guaranty State Bank in Blue Ridge where James' father, J.S. Stewart had also been a director. In short, the Jetton, Stewart, and Eakle families were kith and kin.

Since the Eakles had no heirs to pass the house to, on January 22, 1938, one year after Martha's death James C. Stewart posted an ad in the classified section of the McKinney Courier-Gazette offering the home at 617 North Church for sale. The home did not sell. Likely, because of market conditions and issues settling the probate, the house did not sell until December of 1939. It did not sit vacant, however. Apparently, Mr. Stewart moved his family into the house in 1938 while looking for a buyer. When no buyer came forward, James decided to help Clyde Fagg, an industrial arts teacher at McKinney High, purchase the property.

Clyde Fagg had only \$400 to invest so Mr. Stewart arranged a \$1,600 loan from Central National Bank (the bank where he was cashier) to cover the home's \$2,000 purchase price. Mr. Fagg had close connections to the Eakles and the Stewarts. Clyde Fagg's father was C.M. Fagg and was a director of the same Blue Ridge bank along with Jesse Eakle and James' father J.S. Stewart.

It's hard to know if this deal was to help Clyde or James. Clyde owned other rent property in McKinney but James may have been motivated to secure a home that he could not yet afford to buy. This may have also been an arrangement to expedite the settling of Martha Eakle's probate. At any rate, Clyde held the property for only three years and sold it for exactly what he paid for it. He sold it to, of all people, James' mother-in-law, Katie Jetton.

Katie Jetton was the widow of the German immigrant farmer George G. Jetton of Westminster, Texas. George came to America as a young child and spent his early years as a railroad laborer until his work brought him to Collin County. When he saw the cheap land and great opportunity, he bought all the land he could and became one of the

wealthiest farmers in the county.

George died in 1939 and his widow Katie remained in Westminster for the next three years. At the age of 64 she moved to McKinney to live with her daughter, Cleo and son-in-law James Stewart at 617 North Church Street. Shortly after her move, she purchased the house they were all living in from Clyde Fagg for \$2,000. The house was in her name for only six months before James purchased the house from Katie. The reason for this transaction is unclear. James was the bank vice president at the time and would have been able to purchase the house earlier if he had wanted, given his financial connections. Perhaps it would not have been proper for James to buy property from someone owing money to his bank.

As an accommodation to Katie, in 1948 James added two rooms and a bath to the existing structure. James, Cleo, and Katie would occupy the house together until James' death in 1963.

Cleo hosted frequent parties at 617 North Church Street. Cleo was a member of the En Avant Club and the Wednesday Bridge Club as well as active in the First Baptist Church. Her name appeared in the Courier-Gazette's society column with great regularity. In fact, a computer word-search of her name in extant issues of the Courier-Gazette from 1925 to 1975 produces over 500 results. She hosted summer picnics, Christmas parties, wedding receptions, civic club and church gatherings, out-of-town guests and much more. The house would have been well-known to McKinneyites of all social strata.

Though Cleo enjoyed a good party she was not above hard, productive work. During and a few years after WWII she was the assistant manager of C.P. Horn, an appliance store located at 227 East Louisiana Street. She also helped foster woman participation in business by starting the Women's Business Circle.

Cleo remained in the house until 1971. That proved to be an eventful year for Cleo. In September her mother Katie died. In October Cleo sold the house and in December she remarried. At the age of 71, she married a man whose late wife had been a close friend of hers for many years. Cleo's new husband was Chester Crabtree, a lawyer with local ties who lived in Pontiac, Illinois. The newly weds enjoyed December wedding and a honeymoon in the Bahamas. In January 1972, the two left McKinney to make their new home in Pontiac. Whether they changed their minds or it was their plan, they did not stay away long. In April they returned to McKinney.

Cleo and Chester were probably thinking they would be in Illinois for much longer since even before they married Cleo sold 617 North Church to J.L. Hayes for \$10,000 and a \$3,700 promissory note. This meant when the couple returned to McKinney from Pontiac, they had to find a new home. They ended up on Lamar Street. However, it was not the end of Cleo's involvement with the property on North Church.

In June of 1975 Cleo bought the home she had sold to J.L. Hayes 3½ years previously. This appears to be an accommodation to J.L. Hayes who still owed on the note and not for the purpose of returning to live there. She resold the property three months later to Herbert T. Wright, the choir director of Faith Baptist Church of Princeton.

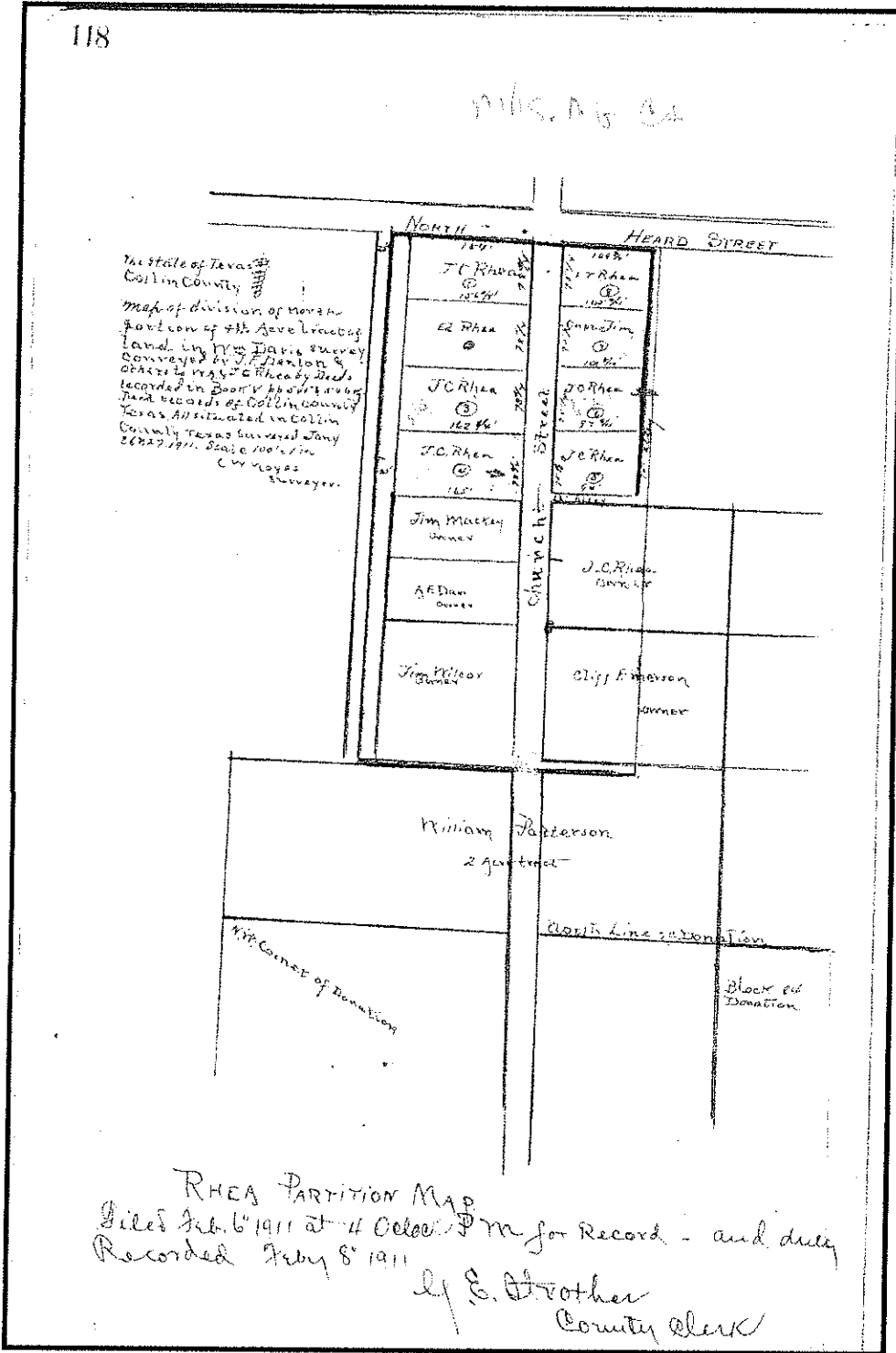
Summary

It is impossible to understate the grit and determination of the pioneers who built a town atop the Texas Blackland Prairie of Collin County. Those early days were not easy but when things got tough, McKinneyites had three things that they could count on in their hour of need – cotton, banking, and religion. These forces permeated all civic life in McKinney in the early 20th Century. The city would not have existed without them.

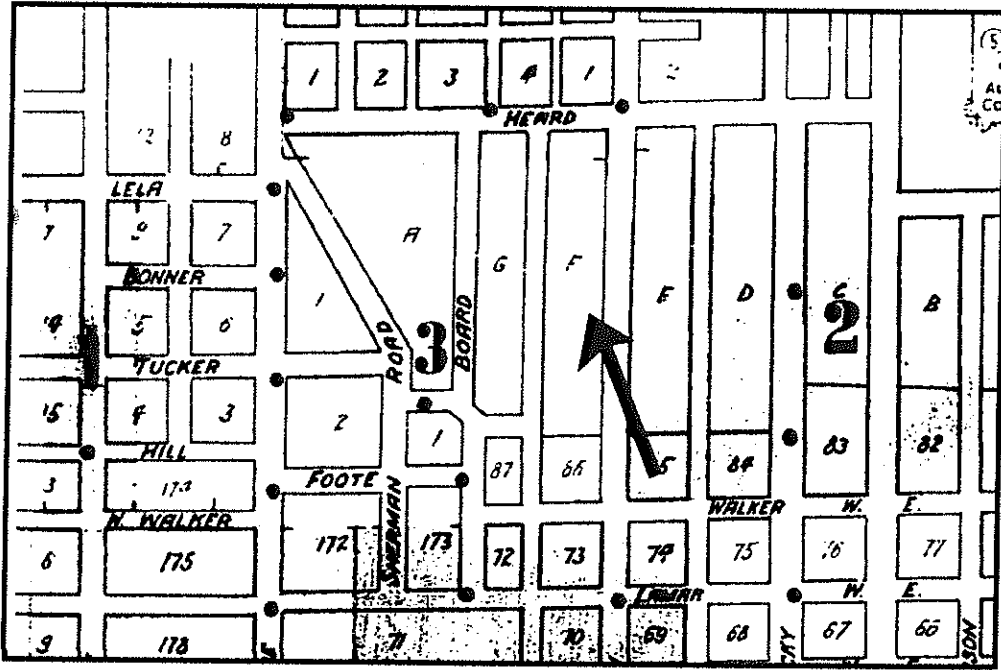
The McKenney-Stewart house was the home to all that made McKinney vibrant and prosperous. The residents of this home on North Church Street were major actors in the town's growth socially, economically, and spiritually. It was home to the first manager of the Texas Cotton Mill, the largest employer in the county. It was also the parsonage to three pastors of the largest church in the county. And, it was the home to the president of one of the largest bank in the county.

Its importance architecturally springs from its blending of stylistic influences into a well-balanced composition. It was not meant to be an imitator of earlier traditions. Instead, it was a forward looking structure that embraced the modern city McKinney was becoming.

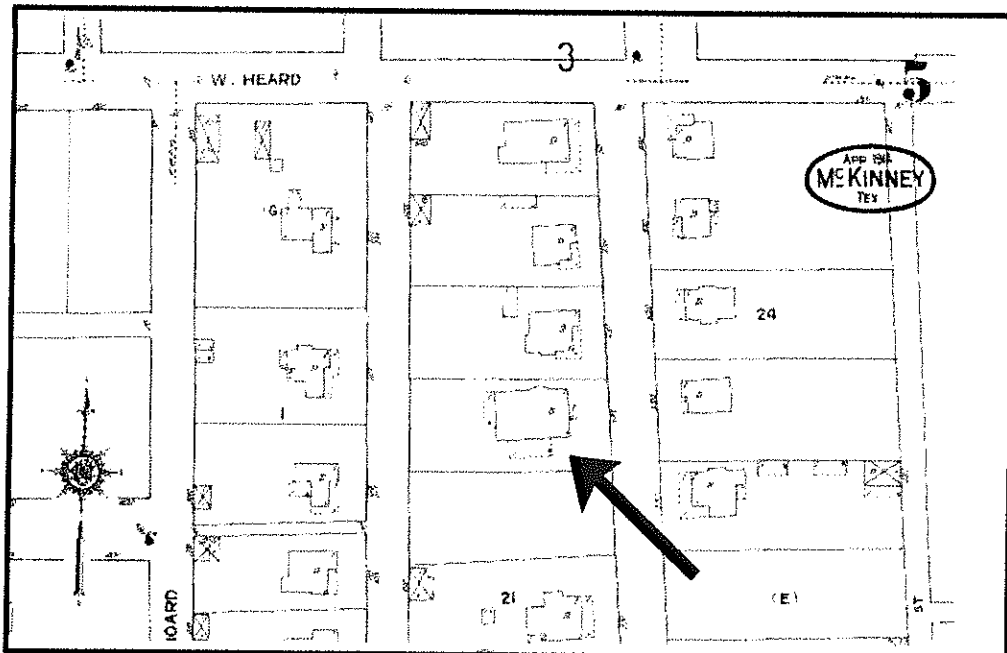
F. Drawings



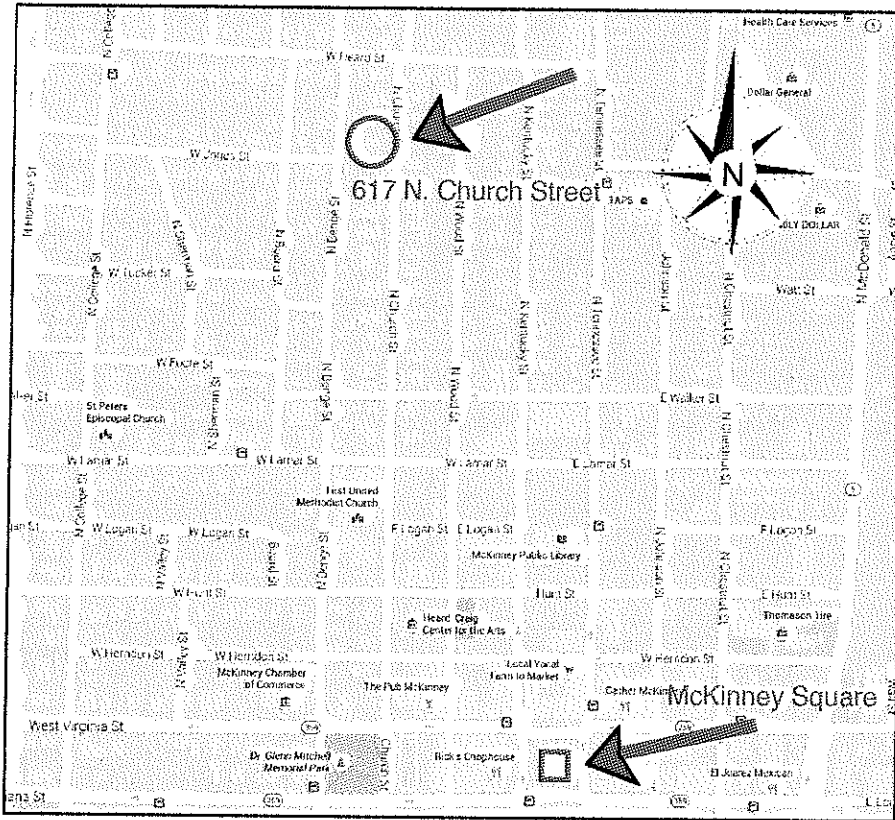
This drawing is taken from Vol. 118 page 77 of Collin County deed records dated February 8, 1911 showing the 4.5 acre W.A. & J.C. Rhea subdivision conveyed by J.F. Denton.



This Sanborn Map from 1908 shows no structures on the block that would later become the Rhea Subdivision.

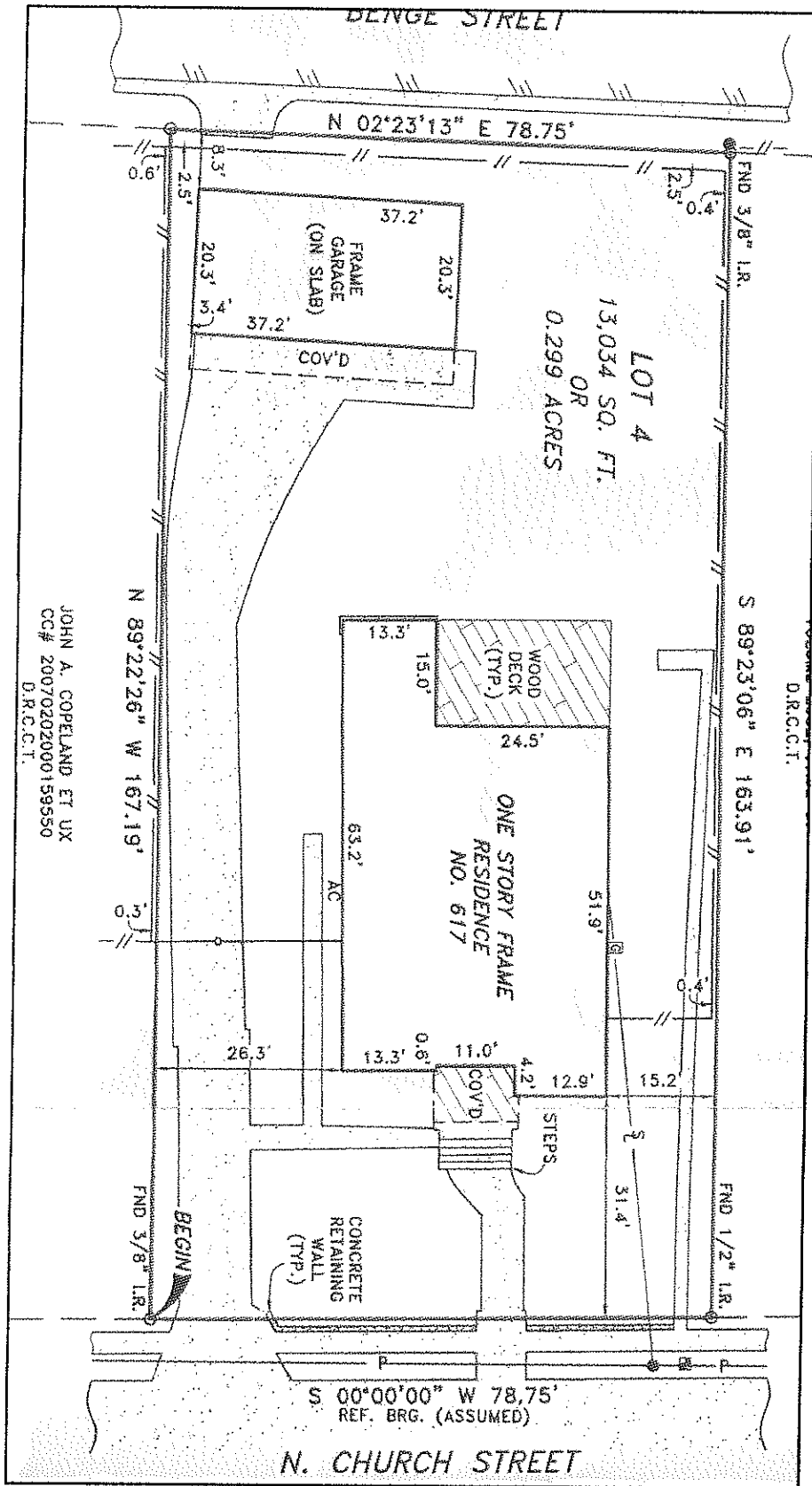


This Sanborn Map from 1914 shows several structures constructed on the Rhea Subdivision including a structure at 535 North Church which was later changed to 617 North Church in the late 20's.



The map above shows area streets and 617 N. Church in relationship to the McKinney Square. The aerial picture below shows the immediate neighborhood streets and structures near the Intersection of North Church and Heard Street.

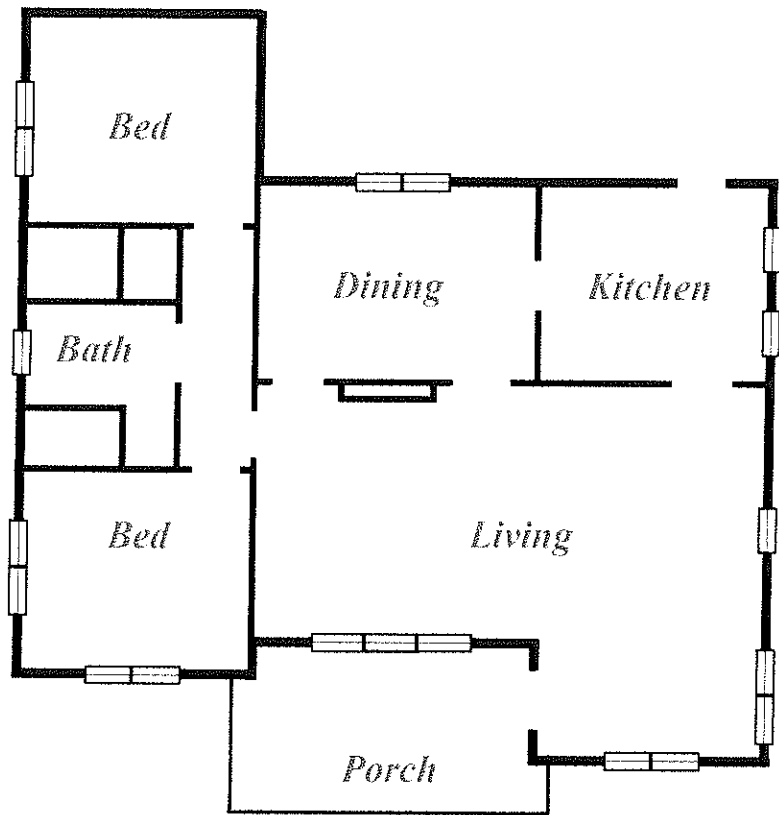




This survey plat dated from 2011 shows the property bounded by Church and Benge Street and the relationship between the main house and the garage at the rear of the property.

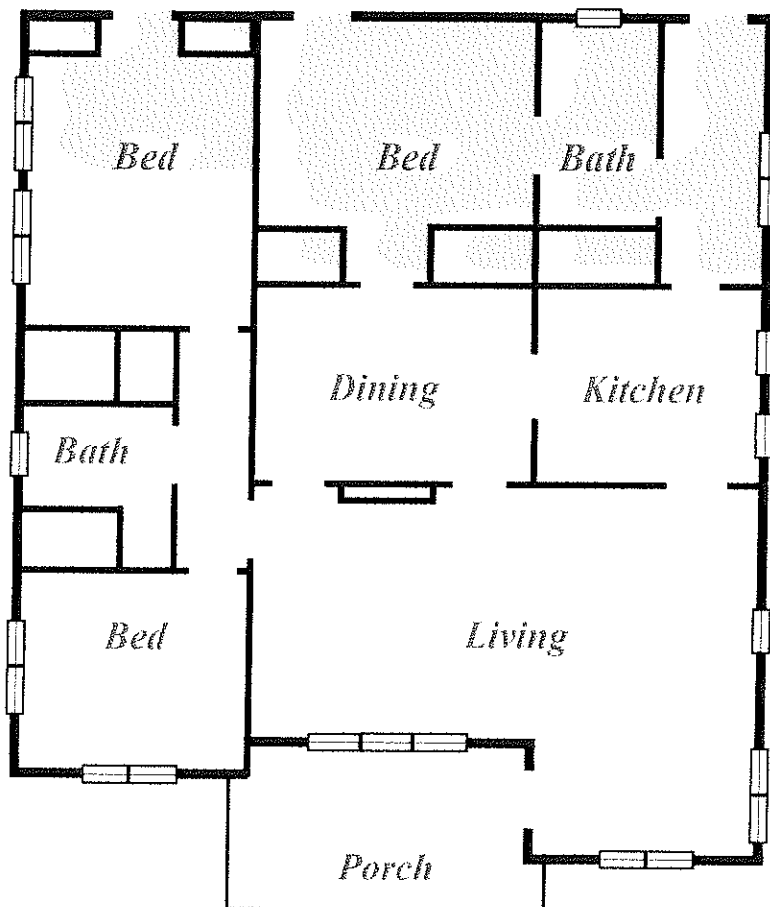
Original Plan (1914)

This plan is the original plan built for Paul McKenney as derived from historical descriptions of the house and inference from the existing framing.



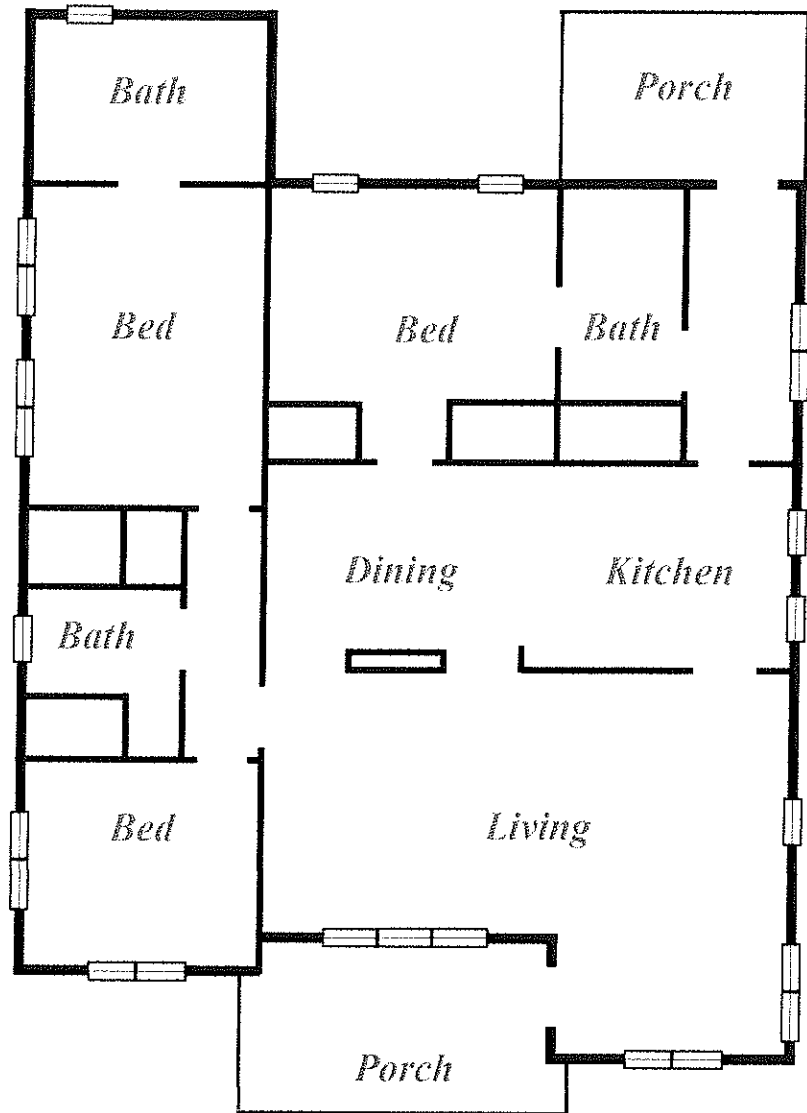
Additions (1948)

In 1948 J.C. Stewart extended one bedroom and added two other rooms, a bedroom and a bath. The bedrooms were given their own egress to the outside.



Current Plan (2015)

This shows the floor plan as modified by Charles Bratt in 2011. The kitchen, living, and dining areas were also opened up by the removal of some interior wall. A master bath was added to a rear bedroom.



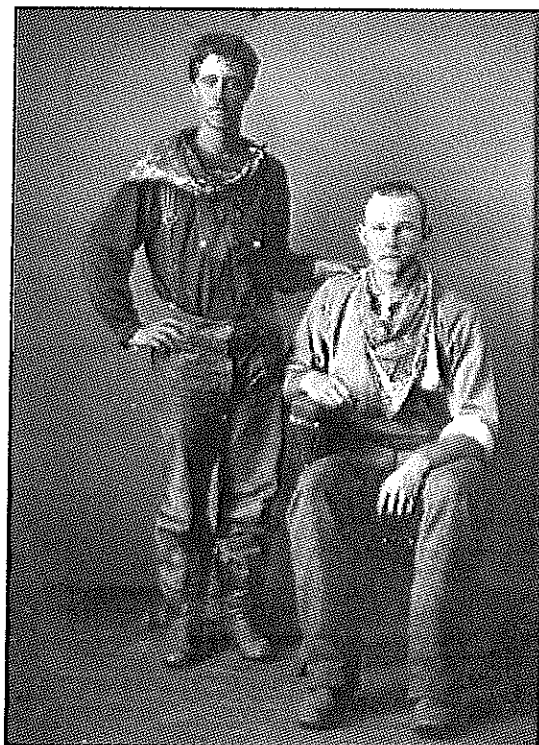
Plaque Placement

The City landmark plaque is to be placed on the porch facing the street.



G. Photographs

James C. Rhea (seated) with his brother William in this photo from 1861 were among the first to settle Collin County. The family began a mill operation in the area which became known as Rhea Mills. James bought 4.5 acres of land from J.F. Denton to be subdivided and sold. The lot at 617 N. Church was one of those lots in the Rhea Subdivision. It was sold to land investor J.H. Stinson in 1911.



J. H. FERGUSON, President PAUL K. MCKENNEY, Manager

TEXAS COTTON MILL COMPANY

MCKINNEY, TEXAS

Now Doubling Its Capacity

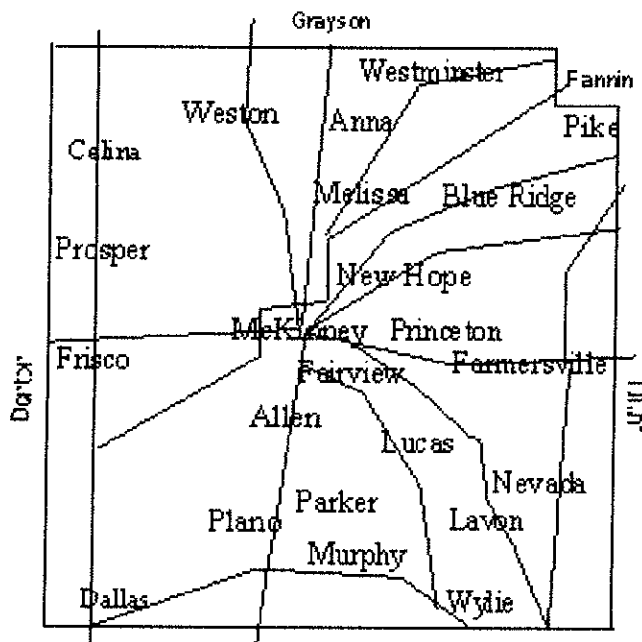
The Pride of Collin County

Owned, Controlled and Managed by Home People

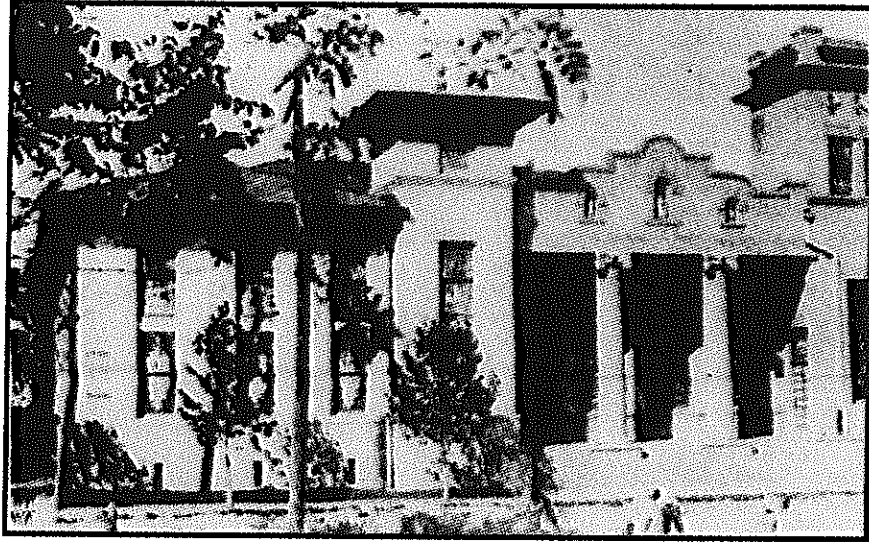
This mill when the work of doubling the capacity is completed will buy 4,000 bales of cotton annually from Collin county farmers. Gives steady employment, after capacity has been doubled, to nearly 250 people. Entire output of this big mill is readily sold. Tell the people about this big mill when you go away from home. Only mill in this section United States making colored goods.

TEXAS COTTON MILL CO. MCKINNEY, TEXAS

The Texas Cotton Mill opened in 1910 with J. Perry Burrus as president. Paul McKenney was its first superintendent. The mill went on to become an economic engine of the area and the largest employer in the county.



This map of early Collin County roads shows the locations of communities that figure prominently in its history. Many of the people associated with the history of 617 N. Church were from the Westminster and Blue Ridge areas.



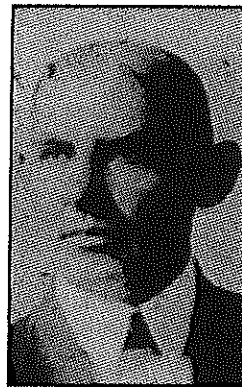
This mission-style building was located on what is now Mitchell Park (two blocks west of the Square) and became the home of the First Baptist Church after a storm damaged the previous structure in 1906. The building and lot cost the church \$37,000. Three of its pastors called 617 N. Church their home.



Dr. A.E. Booth
(1918-1919)

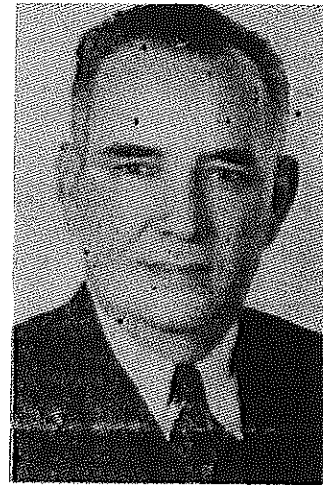
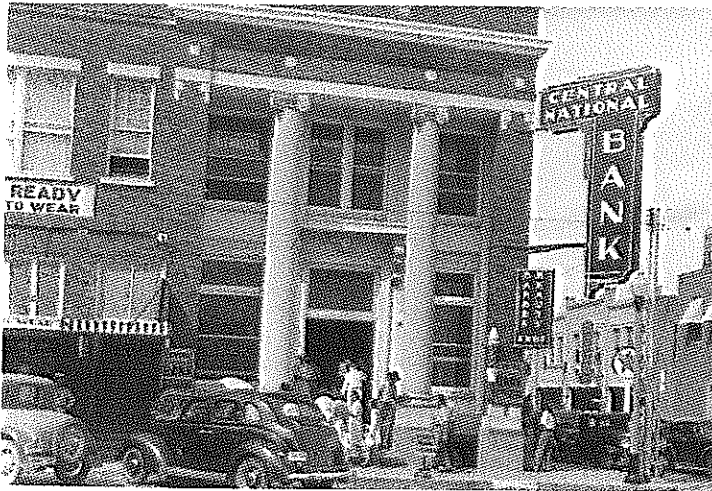


Dr. G.L. Yates
(1919-1924)



Dr. M.E. Hudson
(1924-1930)



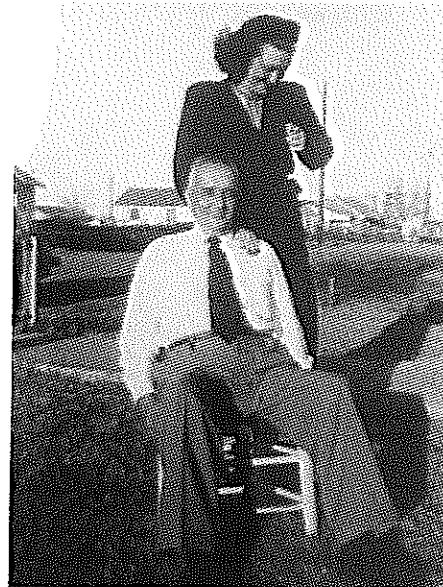


The Central National Bank founded in 1900 as the Guaranty Fund Bank. James C. Stewart moved to McKinney and became cashier in 1932. He was promoted through the ranks until in 1949 he became president. He retired in 1963, only months before his death.

James C. Stewart

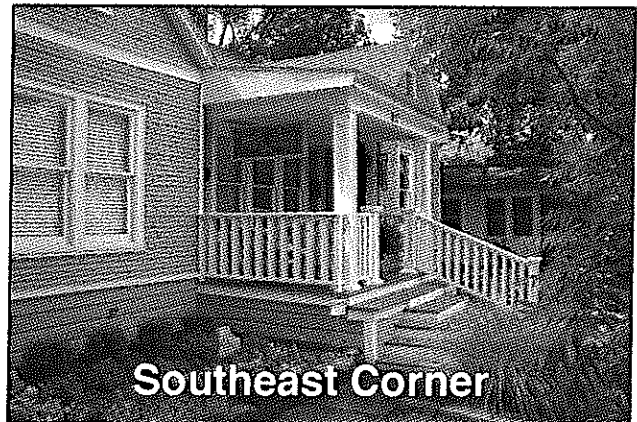
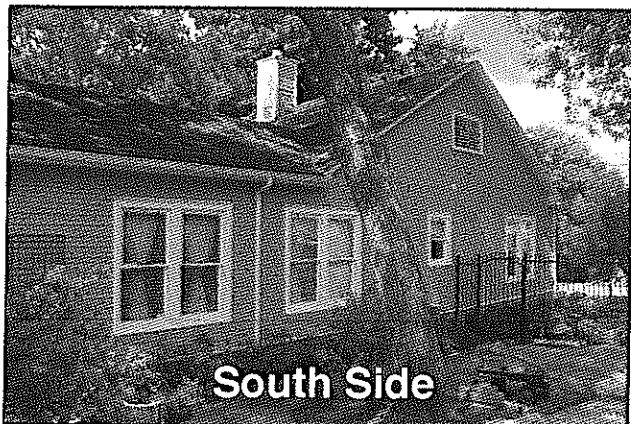
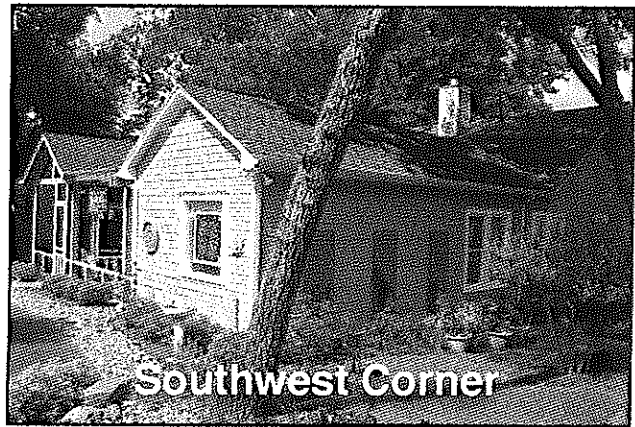
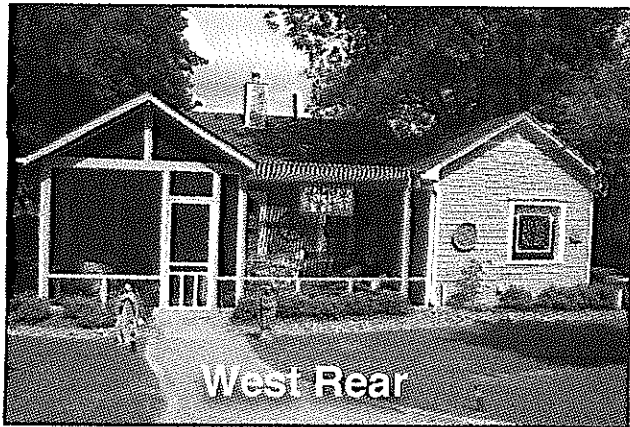
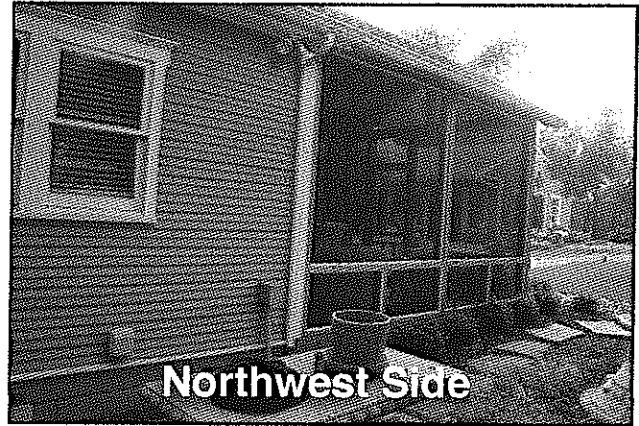
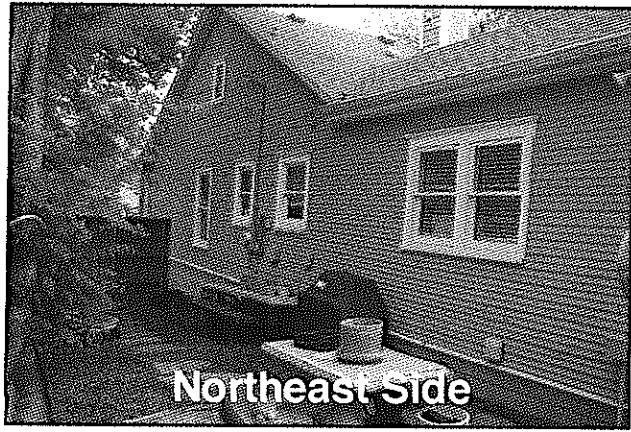
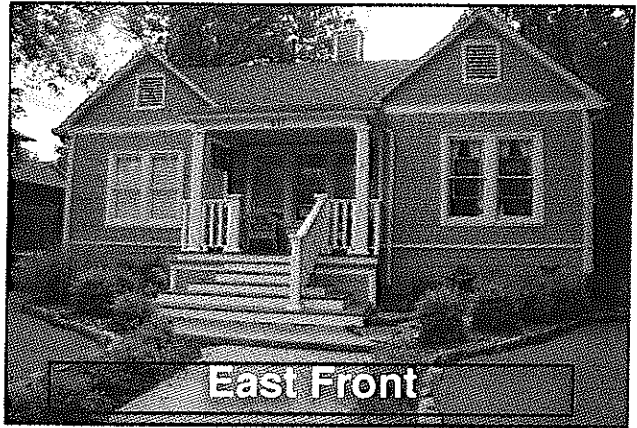


Katie Jetton is shown here with her daughter Cleo around 1901. Around 1941 Katie came to live with the Stewarts at 617 N. Church.

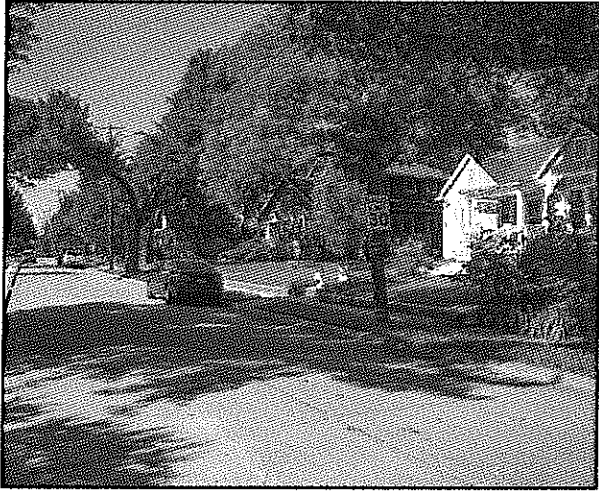


Cleo Jetton and J.C. Stewart married on Halloween in 1925. They moved to 617 N. Church around 1938.

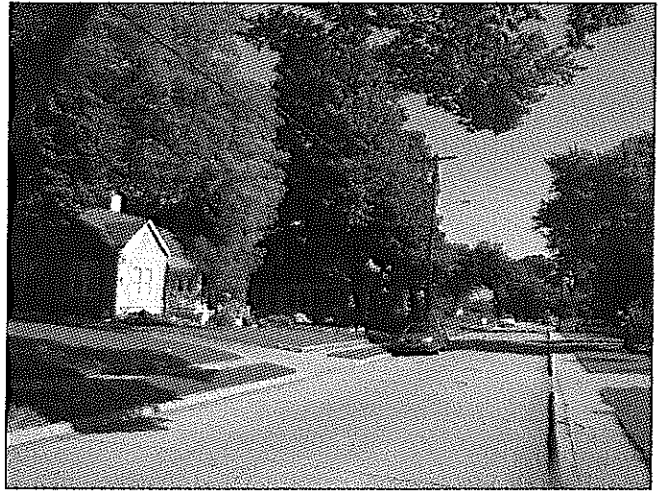
Current Photos (2015)



617 North Church Street neighborhood context



Street view looking south



Street view looking north

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Research assistance provided by Tom Michero

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