

City of McKinney

Historic Building Marker Application

(Supporting Documentation)

The Copeland House

1108 West Virginia Street



A. Alterations & Construction

Construction

The Copeland House is a two-story, wood-frame residential structure built in 1905 on a pier-and-beam foundation. The roof consists of gables and dormers protruding from a pyramidal form. A porch wraps around the southeast corner of the house. The floor plan is asymmetrical with rooms connecting to a central hall area containing a staircase. The interior flooring is made up of soft wood. The house is fenestrated with large one-over-one sash windows.

The home design follows the late Folk Victorian Style. Victorian elements have been applied to the simple, vernacular architecture of the house. Earlier versions of the Folk

Victorian Style often included jig-saw cut brackets and spindlework decorating porch columns. Such elements are absent on the Copeland House but the fish-scale shingles and the gables with pent roofing were common to the style. The pyramidal roof with the lower cross-gables was also a common Victorian feature. However, the simplicity of home's shape and its craftsmanship owes more to folk architecture than to the ornate Queen Anne Style.

Alterations

The house has experienced some alteration to the interior. The wall separating the kitchen from dining room has been removed. A portion of the hallway that ran to the rear of the house has been remodeled to accommodate a half bath and laundry room. Rooms upstairs have been enlarged by enclosing additional attic space. The kitchen and bathrooms have been updated with new cabinetry, flooring, and fixtures. The window frames are original, though some new glazing has replaced the older glass.

The exterior is nearly identical to its original design. The only notable alteration has been to the porch. A photo dated from 1931 shows a door that opened to the porch from the downstairs bedroom. This door no longer exists. Also in the photo, the porch columns appear round and there is no railing between them. In a later photo from 1985, the columns are square (as they are now) and there was still no porch railing. Currently, a railing exists between the columns.

Anticipated Needs

The current owners have recently incurred expenses related to the home's shifting foundation. They anticipate additional foundation work will be necessary. They also anticipate updating some of the electrical system, including new wiring, outlets, and repairs to fixtures.

B. Historical Figures

John Edward Burrage (1878-1955)

In 1894, John E. Burrage left his father's farm in Shugualak, Mississippi (pronounced "Sugar Lock") and arrived in Texas when he was only sixteen years old. He worked as a grain salesman for most of his career and married into one of McKinney's most influential families.

John was born in Shugualak in 1878 to a wealthy farm family. A newspaper article from 1903 describes John's father as "being an extensive planter at Sugar Lock (sic)." The 1880 Census indicates that he may have had as many as nine black families working for him.

There is little record of John's early life in Texas. His uncle Capt. W.P. Burrage owned a feed supply store in McKinney and probably took care of him when he was young and helped establish him in the grain trade. In 1903, John was a traveling salesman calling on accounts in East Texas, Louisiana, and Mississippi for the Victor Milling Company of Wichita Falls. That same year, John married Mary Wilson, a member of one of McKinney's most remarkable families. Mary's father was George A. Wilson, a former Collin County Sheriff. Her uncle was property abstractor Thomas B. Wilson who was also a director of the Collin County National Bank.

In 1904, a fire virtually destroyed the Victory Milling Company and John was forced to find employment elsewhere. He landed a similar job with the New Century Milling Company and moved to Dallas with his wife. This was one of the many companies that mill tycoon J. Perry Burrus owned, including the Texas Cotton Mill in McKinney. Though the couple moved to Dallas, they were still close to family. John's brother Richard was married to J. Perry's sister Annie. Therefore, John could claim the wealthy North Texas mill operator as his brother-in-law.

Around 1909, John was back in McKinney teaming up with another brother-in-law, this time his wife's brother George M. Wilson, to trade in hay. They had a second floor office on the southeast corner of the Square. A year later John was the proprietor of the Collin County Grain Company, a venture financed, in part, by his family's banking connections.

In 1912, John's father John E. Burrage, Sr. moved from Shugualak to McKinney at the age of 73 to be with his family. The senior Burrage moved into a house John and Mary

were vacating on West Louisiana Street in order to move into the home at 818 West Virginia (now known as 1108) they purchased from M.L. Phillips. John and Mary lived there for seven years.

In July of 1919, they sold their house on West Virginia and contracted with carpenter J.E. Cooper to build a new eight-room house nearby on West Louisiana. A week later a fire broke out in the old mill area of town destroying a warehouse full of hay John owned. The financial loss and the subsequent lawsuits must have taken their toll. In 1921, John closed another mill he owned in Memphis, Tennessee.

John continued to live in McKinney trading in grain and hay. He also made a failed attempt to start an ice plant under the name Home Ice. These plans were thwarted by the expansion of its competitor McKinney Ice & Coal Company.

In the mid 1930s, John and Mary divorced. Around the same time, John's health began to decline. Suffering from heart problems and senility, John moved to Dallas to live with his sister Minnie. She had once lived in McKinney and had been a well-known business woman. In the 1920s, Minnie Burrage served three terms as County Clerk (1922-1928). She was the first woman to hold the office.

When Minnie died in 1944, John moved to Dumas, Texas where his son James lived. John Burrage died in the Texas Panhandle in 1955 and his body was removed to McKinney to be interred at Pecan Grove Cemetery. His ex-wife Mary continued to live in McKinney after their divorce until her death in 1952. She is buried in the Wilson the family plot at the Woodlawn Cemetery northeast of McKinney.

Charles Abbott Emerson (1882-1950)

In 1905, Charles A. Emerson started the company that would later become North Side Pharmacy located on the McKinney Square. Later, the business moved to University Drive in 1965 and is now best known for its retro neon sign.

Charles A. Emerson's parents were Turner T. Emerson and Emma Hudson who came to Texas from Wisconsin around 1867. Charles' grandfather Francis Emerson was already living in McKinney when they arrived. Initially, Charles' father T.T. Emerson was engaged in the hardware business but in 1869 T.T. Emerson joined his father's private banking firm. This firm was the first bank to be established in McKinney and in 1882 it received a national charter to become the First National Bank of McKinney. Turner

Emerson was connected with the bank throughout his lifetime and also served as McKinney Mayor for two terms from 1871 to 1875.

Charles was one of seven children and while two of his brothers, Cliff and Fredrick, followed their father into the banking business, Charles' career took a different path. Charles was the second youngest child of the Emerson family, born in 1882. In 1905, at the age of 23, Charles started the Emerson Drug Store on the south side of the McKinney Square. The store was more than a place to get prescriptions filled. It offered a wide array of other goods including, perfume, toiletries, dry goods, and chocolates. The drug store was also well-known for its soda fountain.

In October of 1906, Charles sold his store to two men from Dallas R.S. Clower and G.M. Woodall. The First National Bank of McKinney, where Charles' father was president, assisted the sale. Within a year of the sale, the new owners moved the store to the opposite side of the Square and changed the business name to Clower & Woodall's North Side Drug. The store would change hands several times over the years and would come to be known simply as North Side Drug.

Following the sale of Charles' store, he moved to Waxahachie and worked briefly for the Hood & Curlin Drug Store. In 1910, he married Laura "Mossie" Morris of Waxahachie. A year after their marriage, they had a son Charles Emerson, Jr. Around that same time, he moved to Celina to manage the family farm known as Emerdale. Around 1916, he returned to McKinney and opened a real estate office on East Virginia Street. A year later, he opened a car dealership on North Tennessee (current site of Local Yocal) selling Briscoe Automobiles. In 1918, his career came full circle when he purchased the North Side Drug Store, the business he had started 13 years earlier.

While owner of the North Side Drug Store, Charles and his family moved into the house he purchased at 1108 West Virginia Street from grain dealer John E. Burrage. However, their stay was a short one. Charles sold the drug store in 1921 to two McKinney native sons, H.A. Finch, Jr. and J. Lyman Davis. The *McKinney Courier-Gazette* reporter who wrote a short article (12/18/1921) announcing the sale wrote, "Mr. Emerson has made no definite decision as to his future plans in business." Nevertheless, Charles put his house on the market in 1922 and immediately moved to Dallas. The house eventually sold in 1925.

Charles worked for several years for Dallas drug stores, Medical Arts Drug being one of them. During this time, he was able to complete pharmacy training at Vanderbilt

University. Back in Dallas, he founded Emerson Laboratory, a company which formulated medications for physicians. He started the business in the garage of his Dallas home. Following some success he moved the business to North Harwood Drive in 1932. He ran the business for nearly two decades.

Charles died in 1950. His wife Mossie died in 1974. The two are buried in the Pecan Grove Cemetery.

James Calloway Copeland (1854-1944)

James C. Copeland was a farmer in Princeton, Texas for many years before becoming a piano salesman for the J.T. Couch Music Company of McKinney, a dealer for Gulbransen player pianos.

James was born in Rome, Georgia in 1854 to Alexander Copeland and Miranda Tate. The family moved to a farming community in Grayson County, Texas around 1871. James was the second oldest of eleven children and took up farming as an adult in the Weston area near Anna.

In 1878, James married 16-year-old Sarah Frances Young, daughter of Emanuel M. Young and Marsella Sheppard of Oklahoma. Sarah's father Emanuel was a 1st Lt. Col. in William Fitzhugh's 16th Cavalry Regiment during the Civil War. This regiment is best known for its engagement in the battle at Milligen's Bend, Louisiana which pitted Confederated troops against a Union force composed mostly of former slaves recruited by the North. The battle was violent with each side reporting casualties of nearly 50% killed or wounded. It was one of the first Civil War battles involving African-American troops, demonstrating how well free and former slaves could perform as soldiers.

James and Sarah had eight children. They lived and farmed in Weston until moving to Princeton, Texas around 1910 with four of their children, Lela, Monnie, Roberta, and Wilma. Around that time, James became associated with the J.T. Couch Music Company in McKinney as one of the firm's outside sales representatives responsible for selling the Gulbransen player pianos among other brands. Gulbransen was the largest manufacture of player pianos in American and the first to make an upright piano with player-piano action. James' experience as a farmer allowed him to be an effective salesman as he traveled around North Texas. A 1926 article in the *McKinney Courier-Gazette* claimed "he has the distinction of having sold more Gulbransen pianos to the country trade than any other man in the United States." The writer of this article also

revealed Jame's strategy for success.

Mr. Copeland says that no real piano man will leave a piano on trial. He takes a Gulbransen on his wagon (pulled by a mule team) to the farm home and eats chicken and dumplings, ham and hominy or hog jowl and turnip greens with the farmers until he closes the sale.

James' business success allowed him to purchase the seven-room home at 1108 West Virginia in 1925. He and Sarah moved in with their oldest daughter Lela, 41, and youngest daughter Wilma, 18.

While calling McKinney home, Wilma received a degree from East Texas State Teacher's College in 1935 and later a Master's degree from Texas A&M in 1937. She left home when she married fellow teacher Thomas B. Cathey in 1939. She taught school in Texas, California, and Alabama for nearly forty years. She died in 2005 and is buried along with her husband in the Copeland family plot at the Pecan Grove Cemetery.

John's eldest daughter Lela taught music before accepting an assistant cashier position with dry-goods store owner Morgan Weaver in 1919. A few years later she began working as a stenographer in the Collin County Tax Office. By the early 1930s, she was elected to the County Treasurers Office, a position she held for four years before making a failed attempt to run in the Democratic primary for County Clerk in 1938. In the mid 1940s, she regained her original position as County Treasurer but lost that position in a re-election bid to Jack Ray in 1948.

James C. Copeland died in 1944 at the age of 90 after a long bout of senility caused by arteriosclerosis. Lela, who had continued to live with James following her mother's death, took care of him during his decline. She died in 1951.

C. Property Ownership

Address: 1108 West Virginia Street, McKinney, Texas 75069

Legal Description: Waddill Addition, Blk 6, Lot 4c

Purchase Date	Seller	Buyer
July 31, 1855 ¹	State of Texas	Thomas T. Bradley
Jan. 31, 1855	Thomas T. Bradley	Andrew J. Tucker
Sept. 27, 1855	Andrew J. Tucker	Robert L. Waddill
Oct. 2, 1897	(subdivided)	
Jan. 3, 1900	George S. Morris ²	J.E. & Mary Gough
Feb. 24, 1900	J.E. & Mary Gough	F.F. Christie
Sep. 9, 1905	F.F. Christie	Mary C. King
Nov. 26, 1905	Mary C. King	A.C. & Lenora King
Oct. 21, 1909	A.C. & Lenora King	J.D. Harris
Mar. 21, 1910	J.D. Harris	M.L. Phillips
Oct. 7, 1912	M.L. Phillips	Mary Burrage
Jul. 23, 1919	J.E. & Mary Burrage	Chas. A. Emerson
Apr. 3, 1925	Chas. A. Emerson	D.L. Watkins
Apr. 6, 1925	D.L. Watkins	J.C. Copeland
Mar. 3, 1943	J.C. Copeland	Lela & Wilma Copeland
May ?, 1951	Heirs of Lela Copeland	Ralph & Anjennel Bloss
Nov. 21, 1977	Ralph & Anjennel Bloss	Michael Chase
Sep. 1, 1982	Michael Chase	William C. Haight
Nov. 12, 1987	William C. Haight	Merabank FSB
Sep. 9, 1988	Merabank FSB	Douglas F. Royer
Feb. 15, 2005	Douglas F. Royer	Craig Lemp
Sep. 7, 2010	Craig Lemp	J.P. Morgan Chase
Jan. 26, 2011	J.P. Morgan Chase	Robert & Sandra Spencer
Aug. 12, 2016	Robert & Sandra Spencer	Keith Pearce & Tress Gardarian

¹ Date of patent by the State of Texas. Ownership of property predates this.

² Heir of R.L. Waddill

D. Tenant History

Tenant history follows ownership history until 1956. The following people are known to have rented the house at sometime between 1956 and 1975: J.C. Redden (1956), A.R. Kinslow (1960), R.A. Murphy (1964), R.F. Taylor (1968), C.D. Chaffin (1971), Mickey Eveans (1975).

E. Narrative History

In 1855, the State of Texas, with Elisha M. Pease as Governor of Texas, granted Thomas T. Bradley title to 291 acres of land a half mile west of the city of McKinney. Andrew J. Tucker bought a portion of this acreage but soon sold it to R.L. Waddill. When Mr. Waddill died in 1867, he owned about 108 acres of the Bradley tract. His widow Sarah died in 1896. The following year, the surviving children subdivided the land into 28 blocks (divided into four lots each) which became known as the Waddill Addition. George Morris, R.L. Waddill's stepson, received 18 lots in the new subdivision. One of these was Lot 4 in Block 6 located at the northeast corner of what is now the intersection of Waddill and West Virginia Streets. In 1900, Mr. Morris sold the lot to lawyer John R. Gough for \$350.

Mr. Gough lived in the attractive Queen Anne Style house that was on the lot diagonally across Virginia Street. He held onto Lot 4 for five years and in February of 1905 he divided the lot in half sold the west half to grocery man F.F. Christie for \$850. Oddly, the consideration for purchase required no cash. Instead, Mr. Christie was to make payment by two installments, \$425 is due in February of 1906, \$425 due a year later.

Seven months later in September, Christie sold the west half of Lot 4 to 44-year-old widow Mrs. Mary C. King for \$2,325 dollars. Mrs. King paid \$1,475 in cash while borrowing \$850 from J.R. Gough with repayment due on January 1, 1906. The price inflation of the west half of Lot 4 that occurred while F.F. Christie owned the property indicates that a house was built during this time. Mrs. King owned the property for three months. In December of 1905, she sold the property to grocery man Augustus C. King (no relation to Mary C. King) for \$2,000 cash. Mr. A.C. King worked for the wholesale grocery company Boren & Stewart and needed a home after being relocated to McKinney by his employer.

Mr. A.C. King and his wife Lenora lived in the house for four years before selling it in 1909 to J.D. Harris for \$3,000 cash. Mr. Harris owned it for only five months before selling it to traveling salesman M.L. Phillips for \$2,000, \$1,400 cash and two \$300 notes. The notes were to be paid in two installments, \$300 due on March 21, 1911 and \$300 due on March 21, 1912. Mr. Phillips lived there just long enough to pay off his two notes.

In September of 1912, Mr. Phillips sold the property to grain dealer's wife Mary Burrage for \$3,000, \$500 in cash and three notes due thusly, \$900 on November 1, 1913, \$800

on November 1, 1914 and \$800 on November 1, 1915. Mrs. Burrage was also required to buy insurance from a "solvent" insurance company. She and her husband John E. Burrage lived on the property to nearly seven years.

In July of 1919, Mary and John Burrage sold the property to drug merchant Charles A. Emerson for \$5,000, \$2,000 in cash and \$3,000 in notes (\$800 due on September 1, 1919, \$1,100 on July 22, 1920 and July 22, 1921). Mr. Emerson and his wife Mossie lived there for almost six years.

In April of 1925, Mr. Emerson sold the property to automobile dealer D.L. Watkins for \$5,000, \$2,500 in cash a \$2,500 note due to the United Savings Bank of Detroit.

In April of 1925, D.L. Watkins split the west half of Lot 4 into a north half and a south south half. He sold the south half to music salesman J.C. Copeland for \$4,000 in cash. A month later Mr. Watkins sold the north half to Miss Lela Copeland (J.C.'s daughter) for \$1,000 (\$500 cash, \$500 note). The note was due May 26, 1926. J.C. Copeland lived in the house 18 years with his wife Sarah and daughter Lela.

In March of 1943, J.C. Copeland sold his house to daughters Lela and Wilma for "love and affection." He continued to live there until his death the following year. In 1947, Lela sold the northern lot she purchased from Mr. Watkins to insurance salesman J. Lovejoy Comegys for \$1. Lela continued living in the house until her death in 1951. Her heirs sold the property to Ralph and Anjennel Bloss.

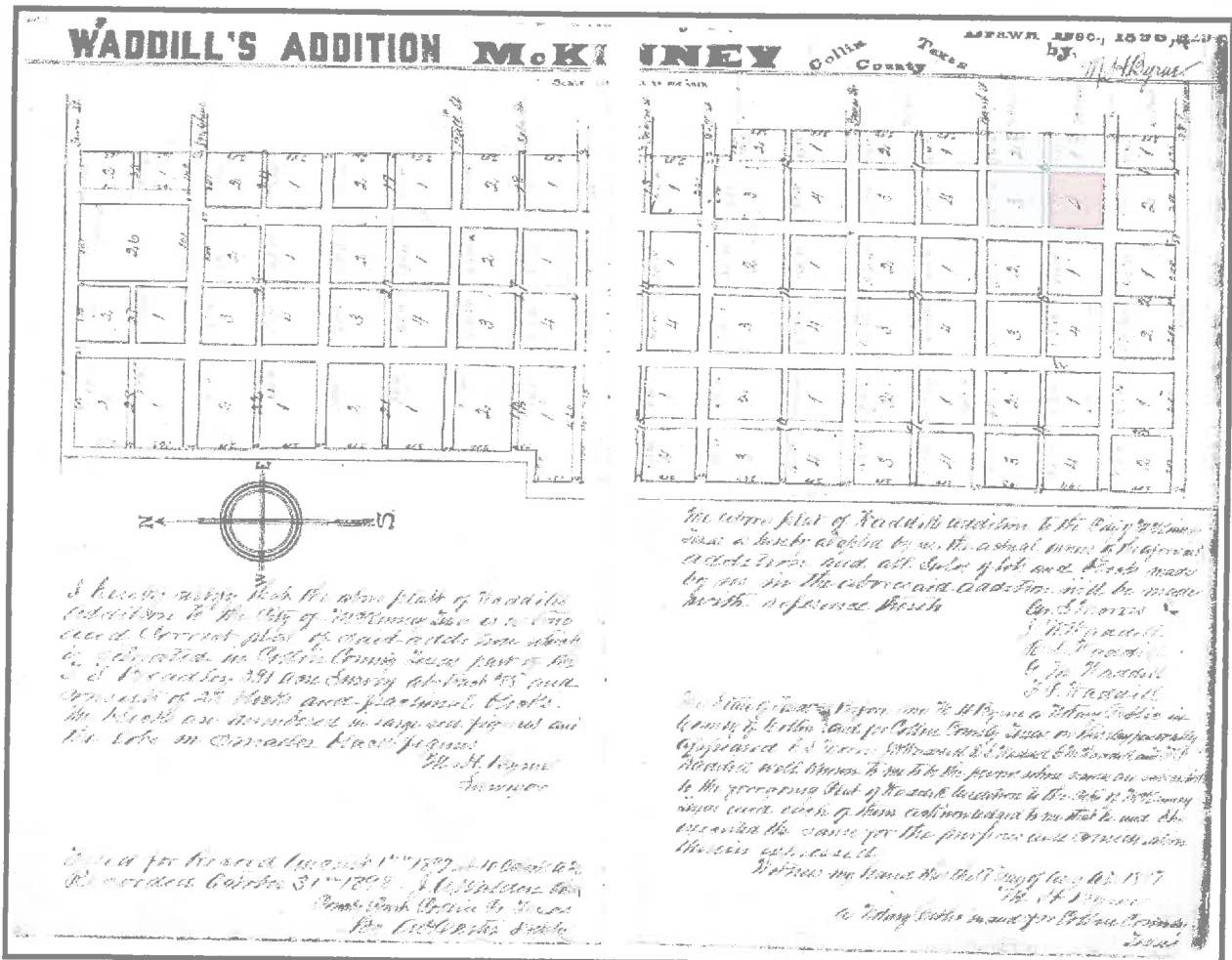
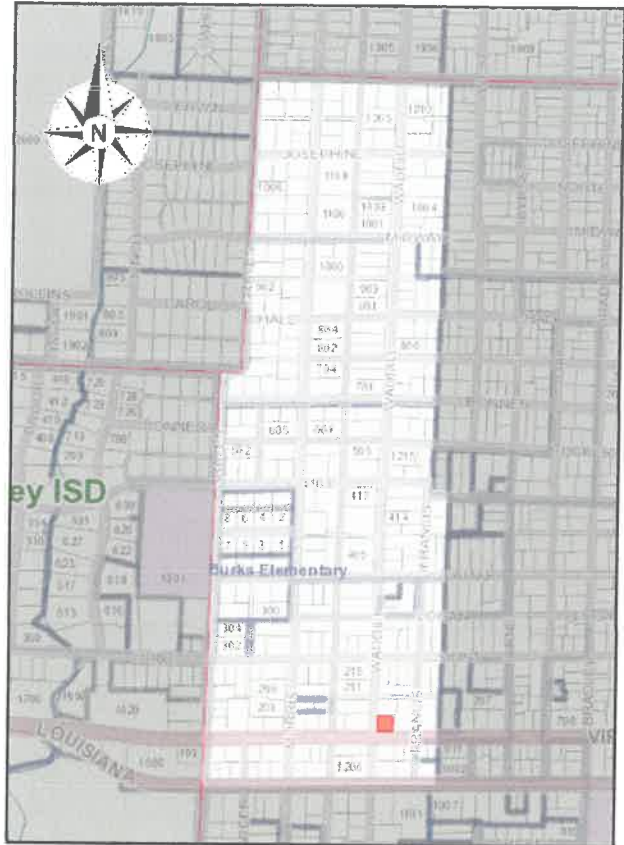
F. Drawings

Waddill Addition

When Mrs. R.L. Waddill died in 1896 her heirs received undivided ownership of the land her husband had accumulated. The heirs subdivided the land into 28 blocks and deeded separate ownership to themselves. George Morris, Mrs. Waddill's son from a previous marriage, received Block 6, Lot 4 as a portion of his allotment.

The map at right shows the boundaries of the Waddill Addition in context to the current city streets. Lot 4 in Block 6 is highlighted in red.

The item below is the original subdivision map drawn up in 1897. Block 6 is highlighted in light blue. Lot 4 is in red.

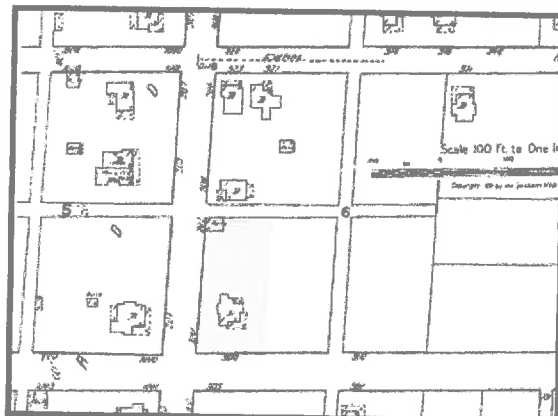


Sanborn Maps: 1920 & 1927+

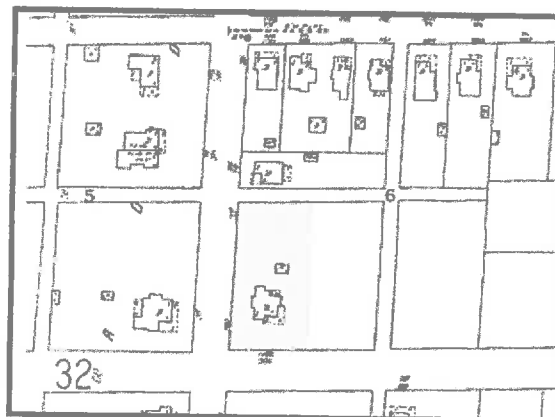
The scope of the Sanborn Maps prior to 1920 does not extend far enough west of McKinney to include the Waddill Addition. However, the 1920 map shows a structure on the southwest corner of Lot 4. At this time, the house the address was known as 818 West Virginia. By 1930, the street number had changed to its current number, 1108.

Lela Copeland lived with her father James in the house on the south half of the west half of Lot 4 (aka 4C). Meanwhile, Lela owned the north half (aka 4A). She sold her lot to J.L. Comegys in 1947.

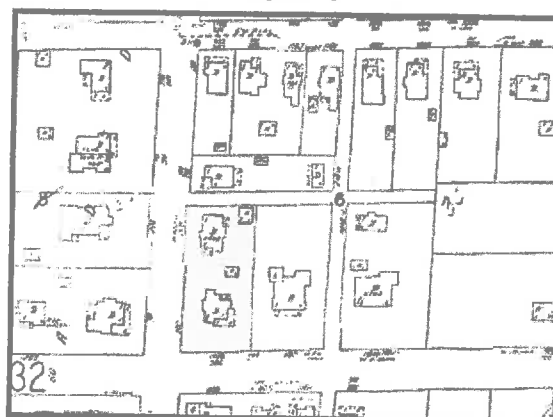
1920



1927



1927+

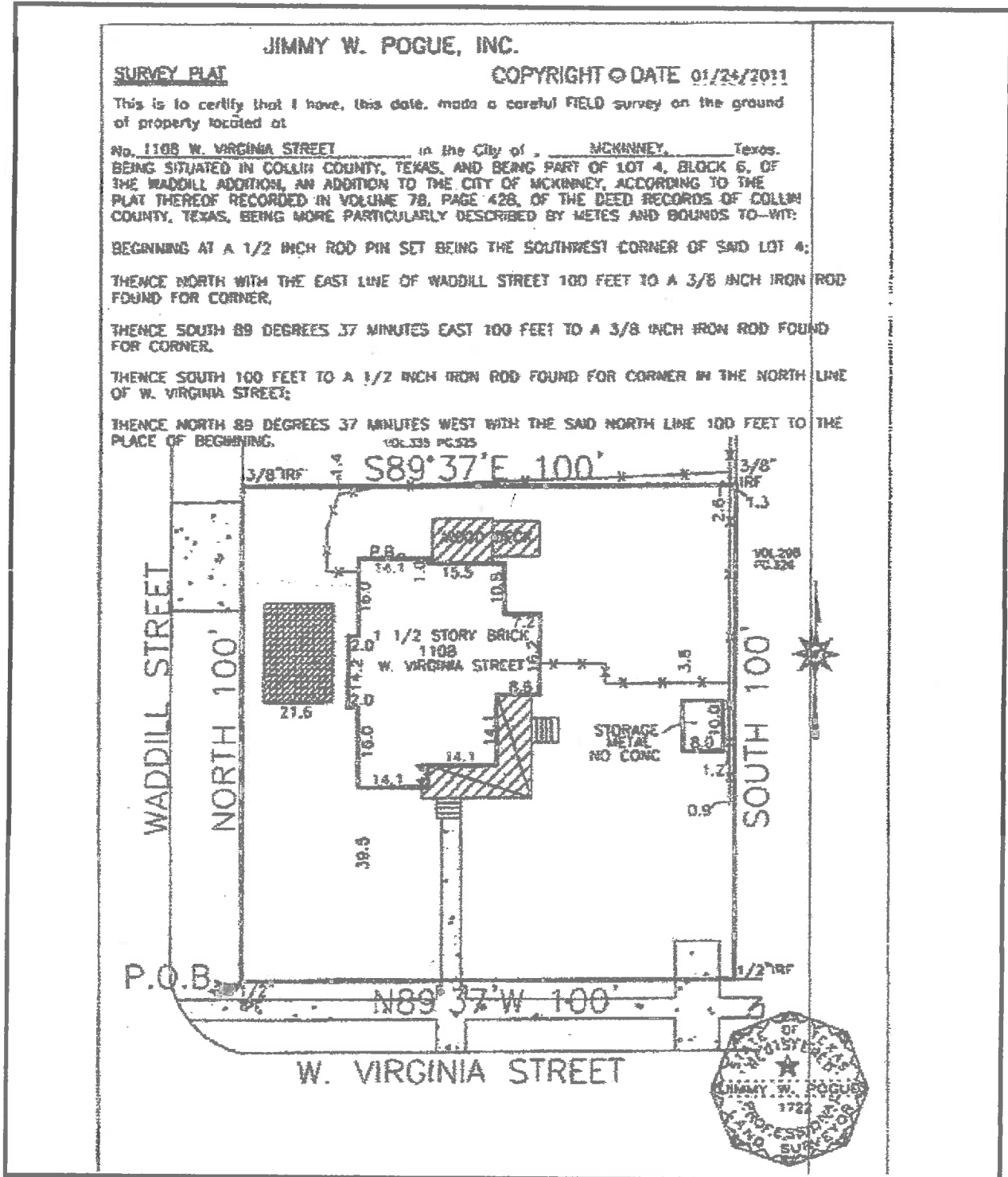




The map above shows the neighborhood around 1108 West Virginia Street. The aerial photo below shows the immediate neighborhood at the intersection of North Waddill and West Virginia Streets.



Site Plan for 1108 West Virginia Street (2016)

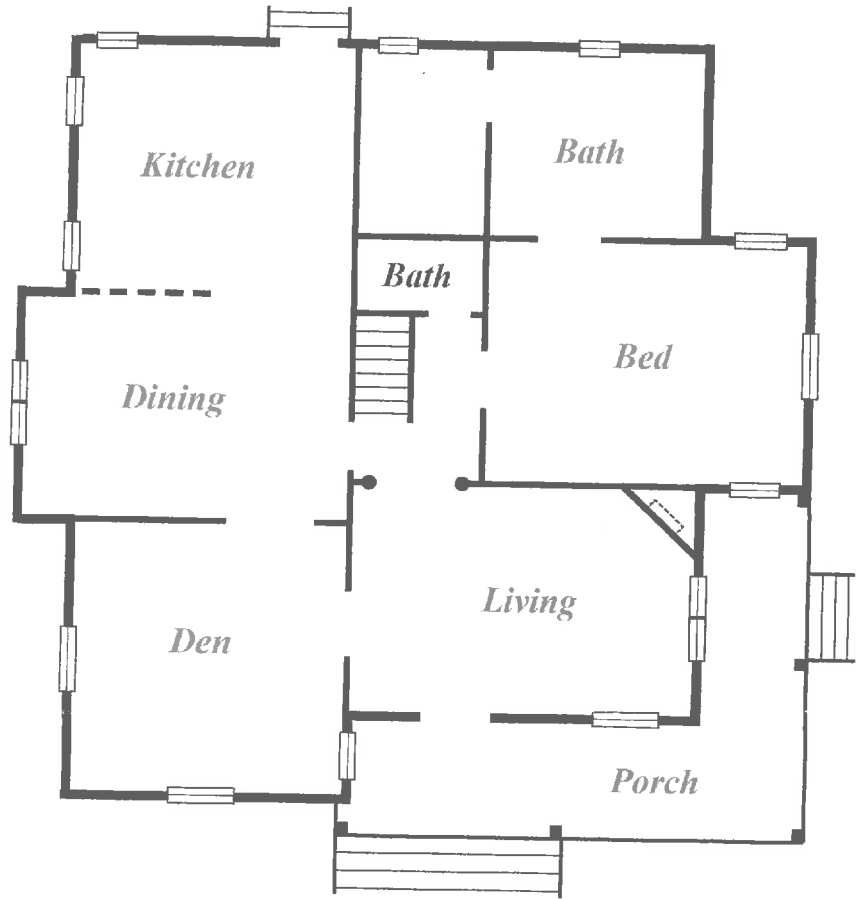


2016 site plan for 1108 West Virginia

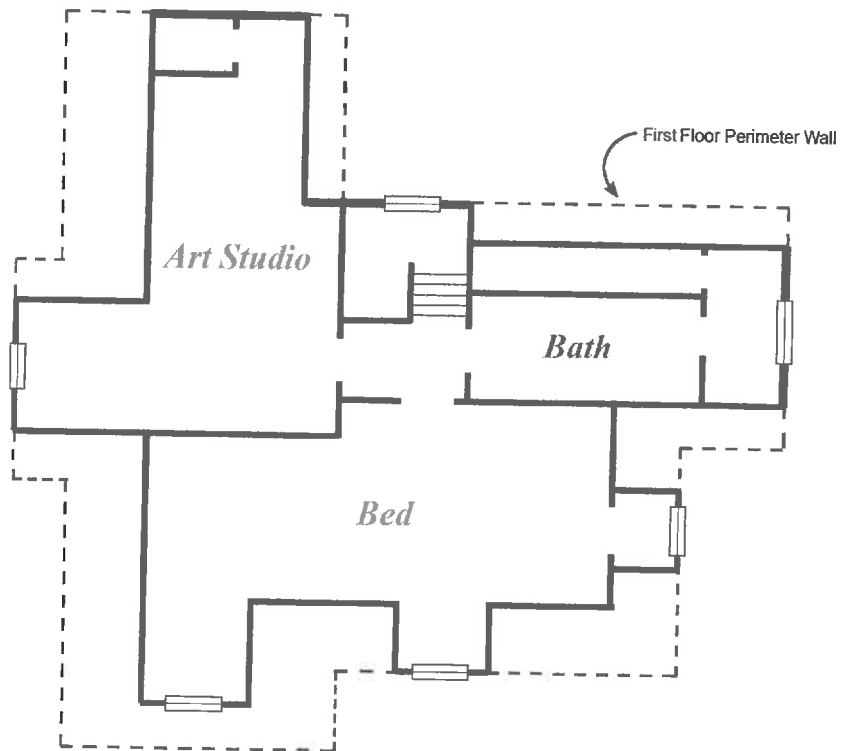
Floor Plan

This plan shows the Copeland House as it currently exists.

First Floor



Second Floor



G. Photographs

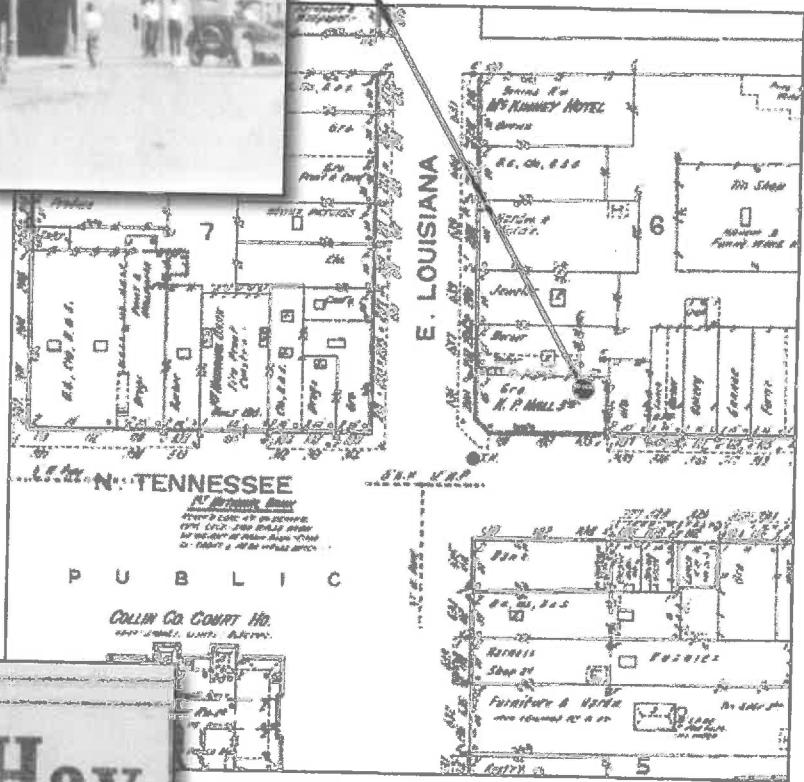


When **John E. Burrage** married **Mary Wilson** in 1903, he joined one of the most prominent families in McKinney. The Wilson family was involved in farming, real estate, and banking. The photo above shows the Wilson family at the funeral of Augustus "Uncle Gus" Wilson in 1935. Augustus lived simply but during his lifetime gave away more than \$800,000 to help others. The photo shows the family standing in front of Gus' cabin near town.

The inset in the above photo shows what is suspected (but not confirmed) to be John and Mary Burrage. Mary would have been the youngest of Gus' six nieces. The man next to her would be her husband John. The man to John's right would be Mary's brother George M. Wilson. John and George were business partners for a while.

The photo at right is Mary's father **George A. Wilson** (1828-1895).





Hay, Hay, Hay

Prairie Hay for Sale

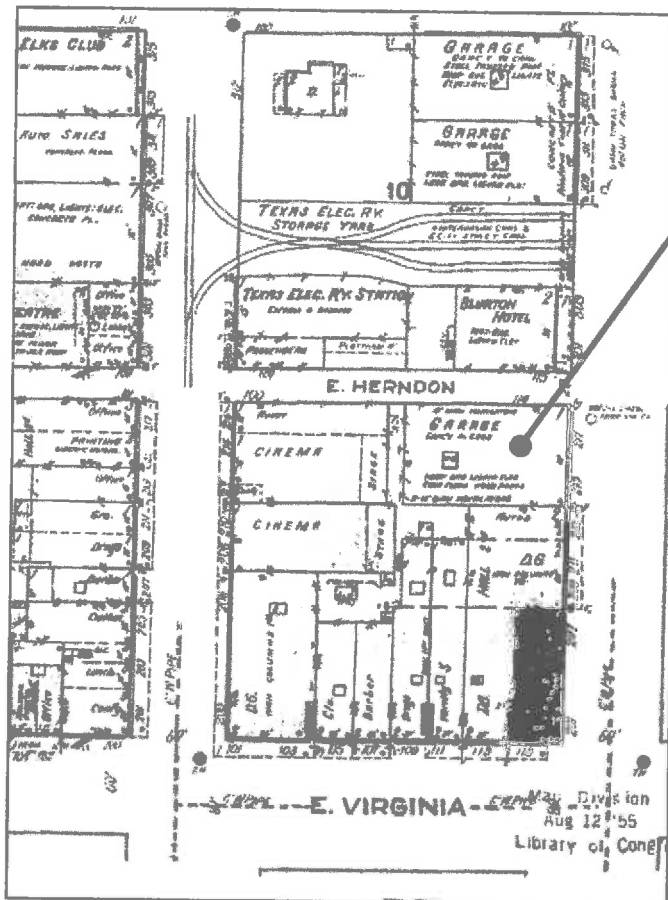
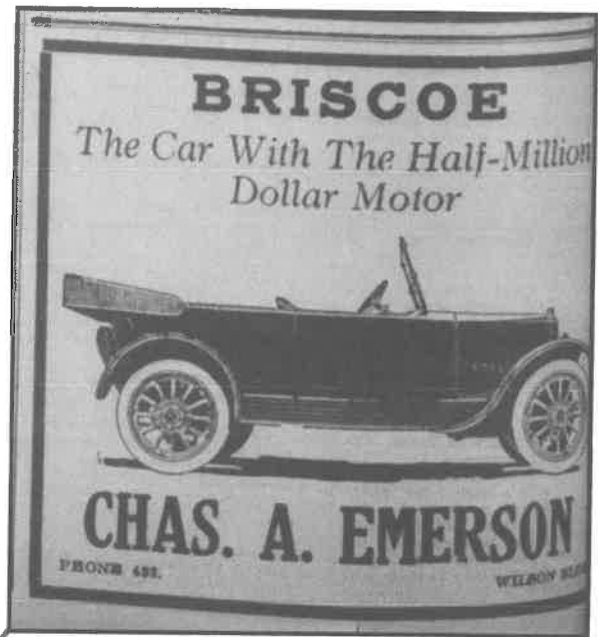
I have about 100 tons prairie hay in my warehouse in McKinney, for sale cheap in any quantity. Apply to me or George M. Wilson.

John E. Burrage

Office Up-stairs, Newsome Building, Southeast Cor-Square, McKinney, Texas.

John E. Burrage was a traveling salesman for the Patty-Joiner Eubanks Wholesale grocery Company of Sherman while at the same time owner of a grain business in McKinney. Earlier in his career around 1909, he and his brother-in-law George M. Wilson had an office in the Newsome Building at the corner of Tennessee and Louisiana Streets. The building, in its present form, is unrecognizable from the original building built in 1892.

Charles A. Emerson started Emerson Drug Store on the south side of the McKinney Square. He owned the business for exactly one year when he sold it in 1906. Later, he worked for the Hood & Curlin Drug Store in Waxahachie. After a couple of years he managed his farm in Celina, he turned to McKinney to start an auto business selling Briscoe automobiles.



The above photo is of Laura M. Morris and her siblings around 1893. Laura (bottom left) married Charles A. Emerson in Waxahachie in 1910.

Chas. Emerson Buys North Side Drug Store

Having purchased the North Side Drug Store I desire to announce that the business will be conducted at the same stand in the future and will receive my personal attention. It will be our sincere desire and intention to keep the stock at its best at all times. None but the purest, freshest and best drugs and drug merchandise will be sold and every patron will receive the best of service and courteous treatment. The prescription department will receive SPECIAL ATTENTION. A registered pharmacist of years of experience will have charge of this department. You may bring your prescriptions here with positive assurance that they will be FILLED ACCORDING TO THE DOCTOR'S ORDERS.

I most earnestly solicit a share of your future business.

Chas. A. Emerson, Prop.
North Side Drug Co.



Charles A. Emerson returned to the drug business in 1918 when he purchased the North Side Drug Store, the very business he began in 1905. Three years later, he sold it to H.A. Finch, Jr. and J.L. Davis and moved to Dallas. After several changes in ownership, in 1964 a second store opened on University Drive giving rise to one of McKinney's most iconic neon signs.



A
master
masterpiece
the
GULBRANSEN
GRAND



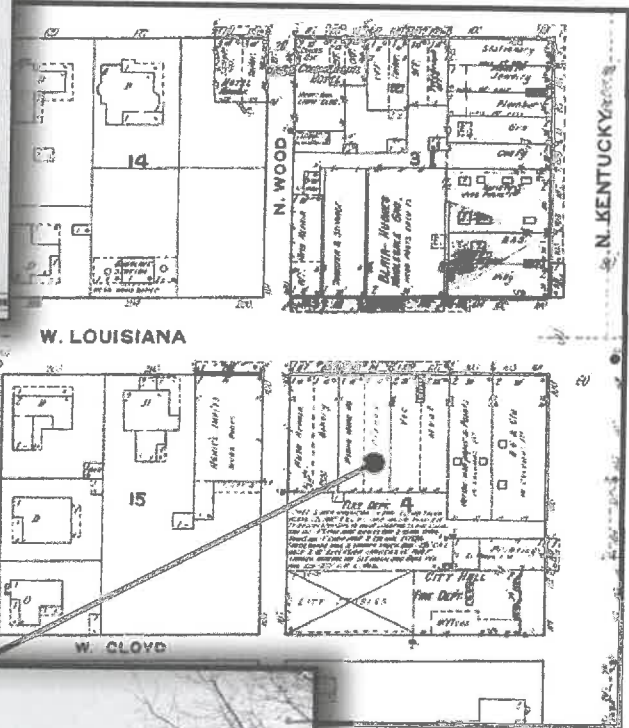
THROUGH the Gulbransen Research Laboratories, working for perfection with every dimension for the A. G. Gulbransen Organ Piano master, represents true grand in the Art Grand. Crafted in line with scientific design, Gulbransen true quality - it is but one of 14 distinctive Gulbransen features. Art, style and standard models in a wide variety of finishes are recognized. A. G. Gulbransen offers them to you today after 30 years of service to music.

Music helps children. Mothers and child psychiatrists have found that boys and girls who study music from the highest, music is artistic, graceful, and other virtues. Parents are treated to all we do for the sake of the children.

GULBRANSEN
Pianos

James T. Couch Music House
McKINNEY, TEXAS

James C. Copeland was a Princeton farmer for many years before becoming a traveling piano salesman. He joined the Couch Music House around 1910 and moved to McKinney around 1913. Couch Music, located on West Louisiana, was a dealer for Gulbransen, the originator of the first upright player piano. The Gulbransen Company was established in 1904 by Axel Gulbransen in Chicago, Illinois and one of the best known brands of piano in America. In March of 1926, Mr. Copeland sold nine pianos in his territory winning him company sales awards. The pianos cost from \$450 to \$700, roughly the price of a new car.



For nearly 50 years, the Couch Music business occupied the building where McKinney Office Supply is now located on West Louisiana Street.

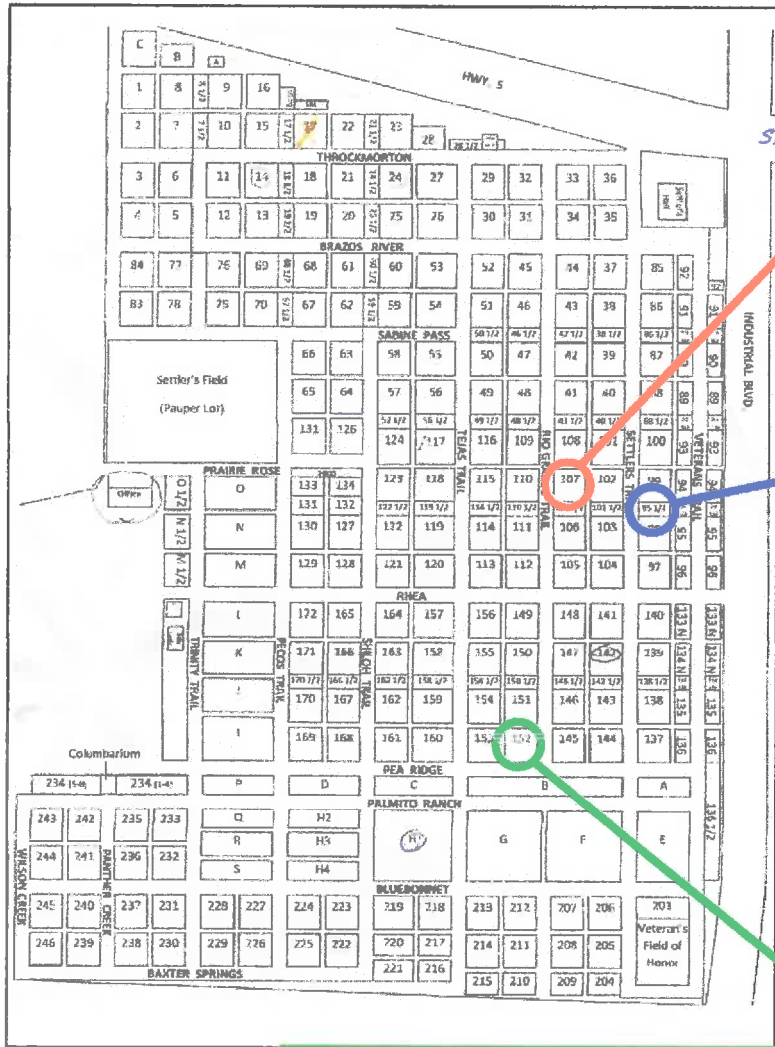


*These two photos were taken in front of the Copeland House at 1108 West Virginia St. The above photo shows Sarah and **James C. Copeland** with their children. Back row (left to right): Paul, Roberta, Sadie, Jimmie, Lela, Ellen, Monnie. Front row (left to right): Sarah (Fannie), Wilma, James. The photo below shows the extended family posing in front of the porch while revealing some architectural details about the house.*



Pecan Grove Cemetery

This map of Pecan Grove Cemetery in McKinney shows the final resting places of the Emersons, John Burrage, and the Copelands.



Folk Victorian

The elements that characterize the Folk Victorian Style are:

- moderately-sloped gabled roof
- dormers
- porches with decorative spindlework
- lace-like spandrels and column brackets
- large stand-alone sash windows
- simple massing & construction
- dominant gabled-front “pavillion”
- wood plank combined with shingle siding
- square or L-shaped floor plan
- decorative detailing on the gable ends

The Folk Victorian style was widely popular between 1870 and 1910. Though it is sometimes considered to be a simplification of the Queen Anne Style, it is more of a dressed up version of “everyman’s” basic shelter.

Before railroads could reach remote farm regions, there was little concern for stylistic expression. Neither the materials, the money, nor the manpower existed for creating anything other than a practical dwelling. However, advances in distribution and mechanization gave builders even in rural areas access to inexpensive Victorian detailing. These manufactured elements could be applied easily to a structure to add a bit of Victorian “sophistication.”

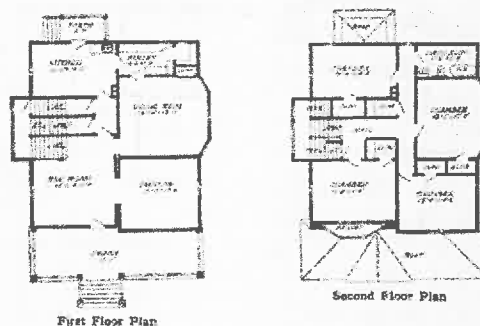
With the advent of railroads, home owners could build more house with less money and began morphing their vernacular rural styles into forms that looked more Victorian. While wealthier home owners could opt for the “full-monty” Queen Anne style with towers and turrets, those of more modest means could apply its decorations to their more basic structures.

What began as a decorated shed matured into a unique style with its own distinct architectural vocabulary that was neither Queen Anne or vernacular. It was a style for the people... and a popular one at that.



Design No. 7054

Size: Width, 38 feet, Length, 36 feet 6 inches, exclusive of porches



The above illustration is from a 1908 Wilson & Girod pattern book by William A. Radford Company showing a Folk Victorian home.



Railroads could ship architectural detailing that local carpenters could not produce. These elements were often applied to vernacular structures in an attempt to enhance their appearance.

Folk Victorian Style in McKinney

Victorian architecture in McKinney owes much of its development to the railways that served the town. The first rail line into McKinney was the Houston & Texas Central Railroad which arrived in 1872. Prior to that, domestic structures were barely anything more than wooden sheds. The railroads brought plenty of building materials and boosted economic development which gave residents the money necessary to construct homes with stylistic expression.

The early home of wealthy stockman Tuck Hill is a good example of a simple, vernacular structure conveying no discernible style. Except for the mismatched Victorian elements applied to the porch, this house is merely an I-house. An I-house is a vernacular dwelling whose floor plan is a simple elongated rectangle. Supposedly, the name I-house comes not from the shape of the house but from the fact that these houses were popular in Indiana, Iowa, and Illinois in the late 1800s.

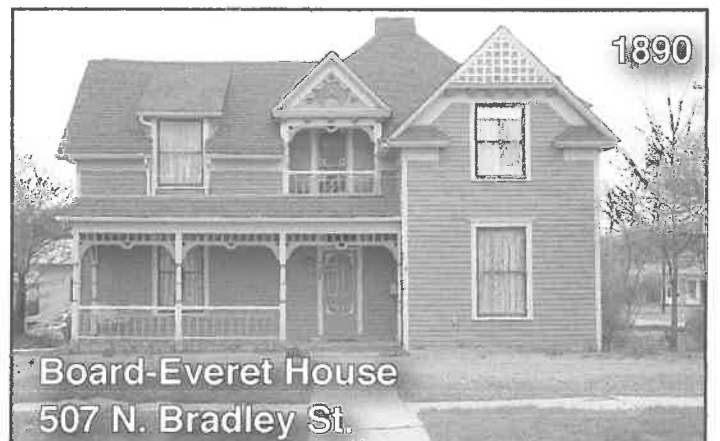
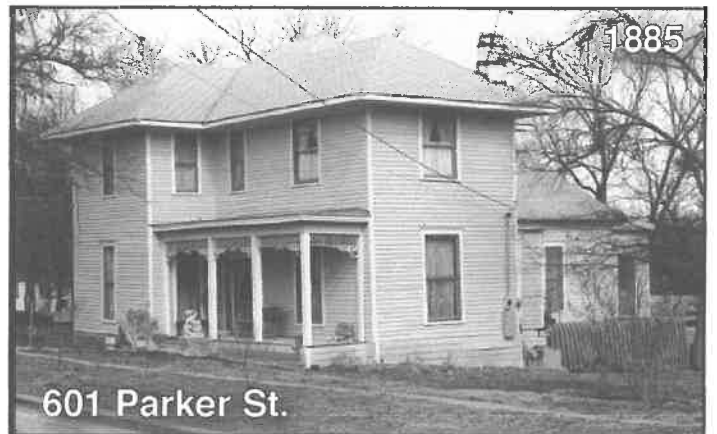
A few years later in 1885, the house at 601 Parker St. which has the popular vernacular L-plan form attempts to claim Victorian pedigree with the placement of Queen Anne looking porch made up of jig-saw cut brackets and spindlework spanning between columns. As with the Tuck Hill House, the overall vernacular structure remains unaltered.

In 1890, the builder of the Board-Everet House skillfully integrates Victorian decoration into a home-design to produce a style that transcends the vernacular but is neither Queen Anne in style. This house is a good example of how "stylish" Folk Victorian was becoming in McKinney.

For those, like State Senator James R. Gough, who wanted a truly Queen Anne Style home, that was still an acceptable choice. The house he built on West Louisiana in 1898 is one of the last purely Queen Anne Style homes to be built in McKinney. However, the Folk Victorian Style with its simpler styling was starting to look more modern than its ornate big sister.

When J.R. Gough built his house in 1898, there was already growing interest in newer styles like the Prairie and the American Craftsman. The emerging styles were less ornate and sported cleaner lines. This is exactly what the folk vernacular structures had always been.

Around the beginning of the 20th century, Folk



Victorian became more sophisticated to the point that it was blurring the lines that separated it from Queen Anne. Designers were incorporating more Victorian decoration but the basic confirmations of the homes they built shared more with American agrarian structures than they did with aristocratic European ones. Gone are the towers, turrets, half-timbering, and bay windows.

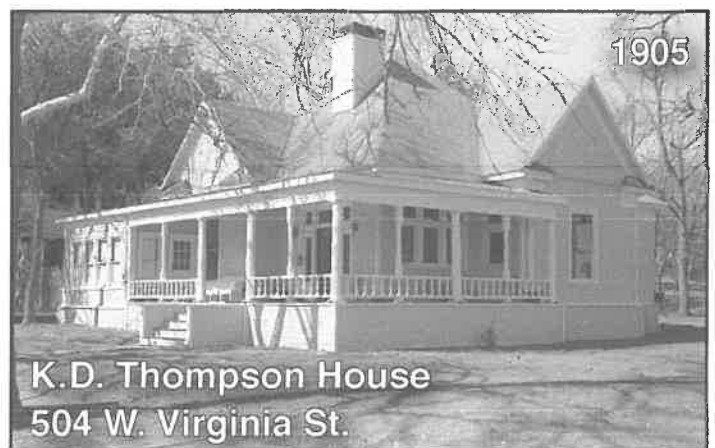
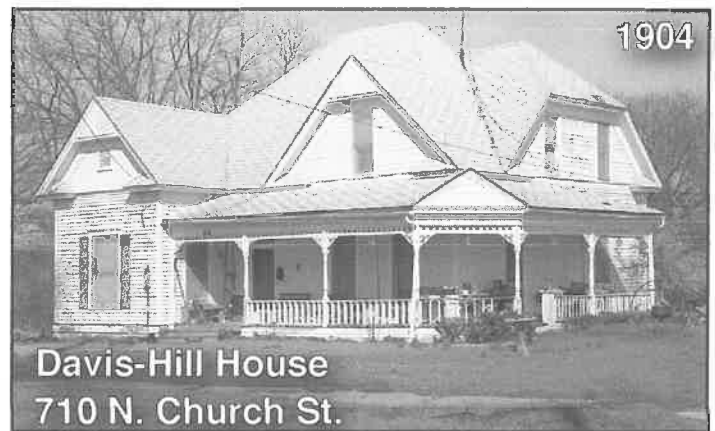
The Cline-Bass House shows how sophisticated the Folk Victorian Style could be. The typical L-plan structure has been manipulated to accommodate a pyramidal hip roof. The wrapping porch with the spindlework between the delicate columns lightens the massing of the house. Still, the overall effect is a stylized farm building rather than a simplified English castle.

There were several other examples of the Folk Victorian Style built in McKinney at the beginning of the 20th Century. One of these is the Davis-Hill House on North Church Street. It freely borrows Queen Anne decoration and combines gable treatments with aspirations of being a Queen Anne design. It only falls short by virtue of the fact that the designer does not balance these elements with Queen Anne precision.

An example of a house that skillfully expresses Folk Victorian as a style of its own is the house at 504 W. Virginia. Built in 1905, this structure applies Victorian ornament with restraint and playfully places turned wooden columns on top of the porch balustrade. The gables are well-proportioned to the size of the hip roof with the chimney at its apex. The door treatments with transoms and sidelights show a design sophistication not seen in vernacular structures. This house is as far from being Queen Anne Style as it is from being a pre-railroad farm house.

The designer of the house at 1108 W. Virginia takes Victorian Folk Style in a slightly different direction eschewing all Victorian decoration except for the scale-like shingles on the gable ends and dormers. This house does not hide its vernacular origins as the designer is able to combine the gables and dormers in a way that balances the whole. Again, it is not Queen Anne nor is it a house built with only shelter as its goal.

By the 1910s, Folk Victorian fell out of style in favor of Craftsman and revival styles.



Current Photos (2017)



Neighborhood Context (2017)

1108 West Virginia Street neighborhood context



View looking South on North Waddill Street



View looking North on North Waddill Street



View looking East on West Virginia Street



View looking West of West Virginia Street

Homes near 1108 West Virginia Street



1102 West Virginia Street



201 North Waddill Street

Architectural Accents



Interior columns at hallway



Convexed molding



Fish-scale shingles



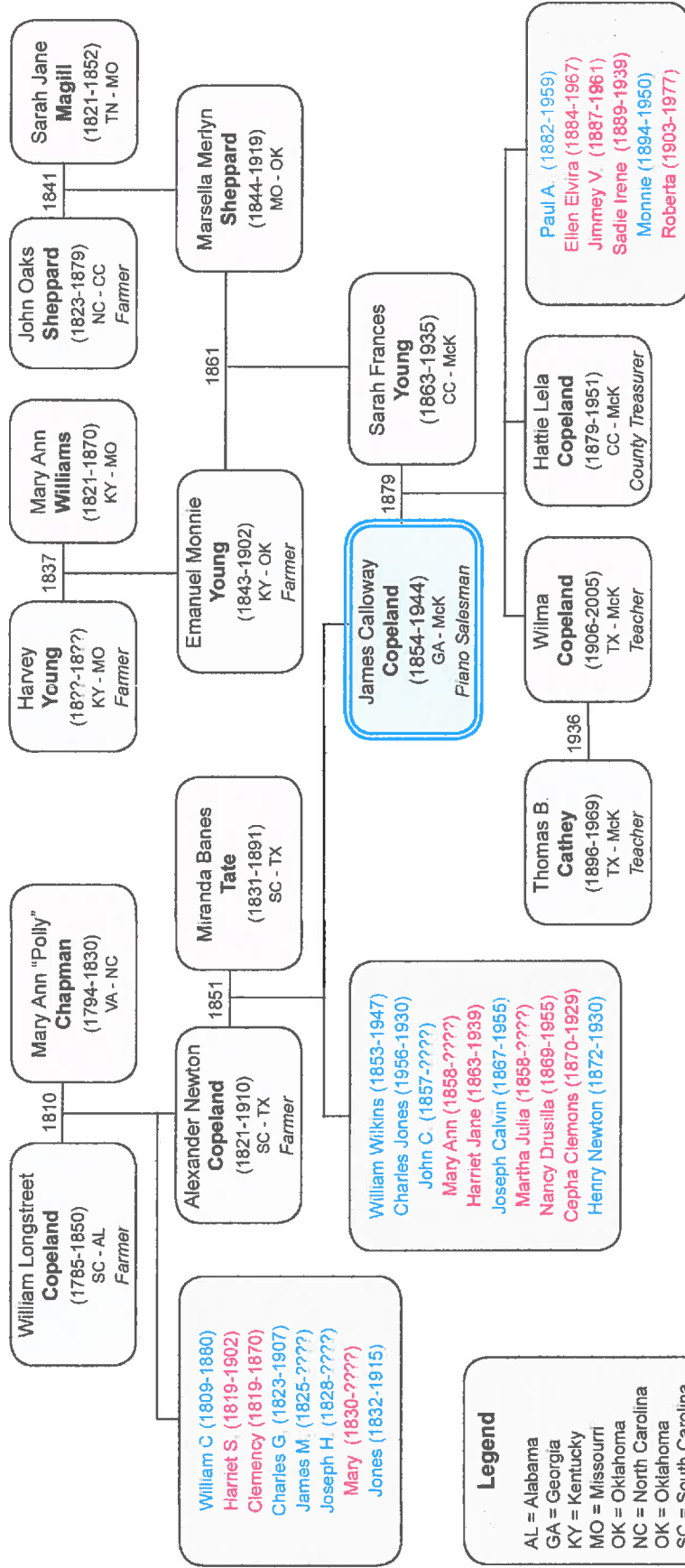
Mixed shingle pattern



Transoms above double windows

H. Additional Information

Copeland Family of Early McKinney*

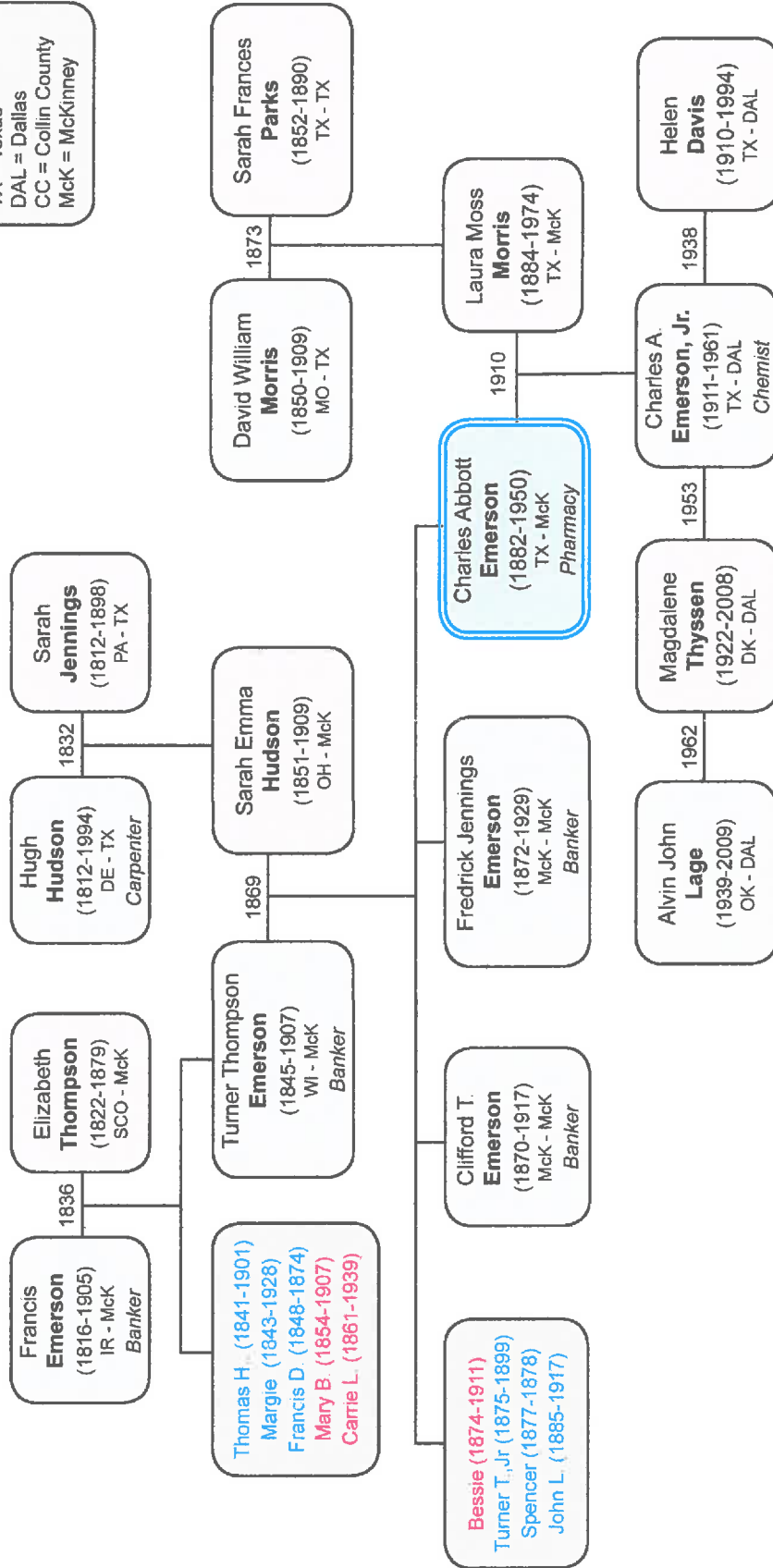


* Not all family members are included.

Emerson Family of Early McKinney*

Legend

IR = Ireland
 SCO = Scotland
 DE = Delaware
 MO = Missouri
 OH = Ohio
 OK = Oklahoma
 PA = Pennsylvania
 WI = Wisconsin
 TX = Texas
 DAL = Dallas
 CC = Collin County
 McK = McKinney



* Not all family members are included.

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Research assistance provided by Tom Michero

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