

E. Narrative History

In 1841, the Republic of Texas granted a "land patent" totaling 3,129 acres to William Davis in return for his participation in the new nation's battle for independence. In 1849, he donated 120 acres to Collin County officials for the creation of the City of McKinney. The town planners laid out the city into 87 blocks known as the Original McKinney Donation.

Brothers James and William Rhea were successful mill owners from the town of Rhea Mills northwest of McKinney, named for their father. The two brothers were also partners in buying and selling land. In 1891, the brothers purchased from the estate of Abraham Rhine a 10.5 acre tract of land between College and Bengel Street.

In 1884, the Rhea brothers subdivided this tract into several lots. The subdivision became known as the W.A. Rhea Addition. The home at 506 West Hunt occupies the east portion of Lot 11 of this subdivision. William Rhea died in 1906 with many of his property holdings transferring to his surviving brother James.

In 1909, banker Fred Emerson purchased a 1.13 acre parcel of land along Hunt Street from James C. Rhea. At the time of the purchase, Fred's ex-wife Fannie was the niece of the Rhea brothers through marriage. That same year, Fred contracted with W.J. Higgins to build a ten-room, two-story house on the eastern portion of the parcel. Fred paid \$3,500 for the new home which the *Weekly Democrat Gazette* called "one of the handsomest and most attractive homes in the city." This edifying language was commonly applied to any new home in McKinney during this period but given the home's stately size and construction, the reporter's description was more than merely obligatory.

When the home was completed in 1909, Fred and his second wife Laura along with their daughter Sarah and infant Fred junior moved in. For the next several years, the Emersons hosted frequent social events in the home, often celebrating musicians and artists. In 1929, Fred died at the age of 57. Laura maintained the home for three years following the husband's death before selling it to the First Baptist Church in 1932 for \$4,500.

The First Baptist Church used the home as a parsonage for the next 24 years. The pastors who lived in the house include J.H. Cozad, R.A. Clifton, D.D. Seger and Charles Myers. It is believed that during this period that the stained glass windows were added to the house.

In 1956, the First Baptist Church sold the house to grocer Nelson P. Judd for \$7,500 who owned the home for the next 27 years. When the current owners purchased the home in 2018, the house was in need of repair but the exterior and nearly all of the interior were as originally built.

F. Drawings

W.A. Rhea Addition

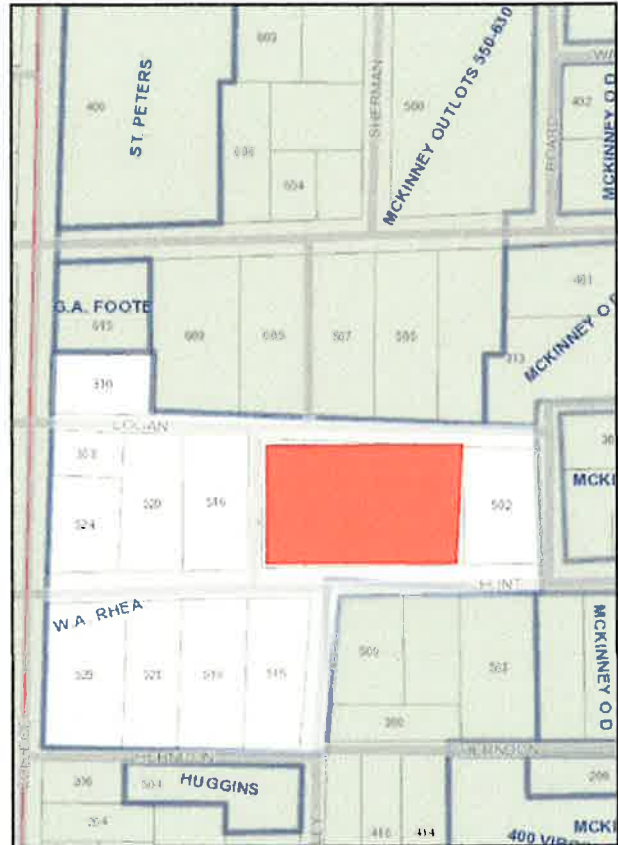
Brothers James and William Rhea were successful mill owners who purchased many tracts of land in Collin County. The brothers were responsible for creating subdivisions on both Church and Hunt Street.

In 1891, the Rhea Brothers purchased 10.47 acres from the heirs of Abraham Rhine and later subdivided part of Block 49 of the Original McKinney Donation.

In 1909, Fred Emerson purchased a portion of the W.A. Rhea Addition shown in red in the diagram at right.

Mr. Emerson hired W.J. Higgins to build a house for him on the east portion of the property at what is now known as 506 Hunt Street.

During the years Mr. Emerson lived on Hunt Street, he sold portions of his property.

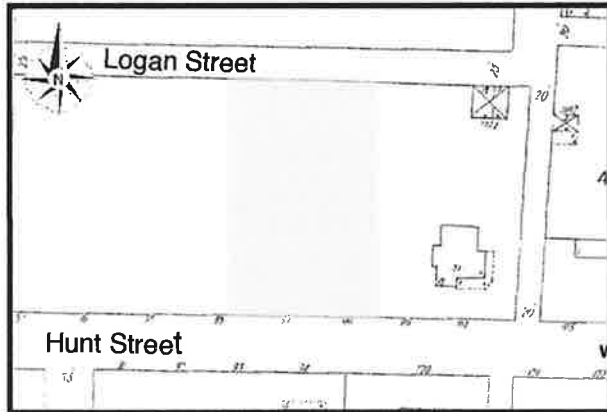


This map shows the Davis land patent and adjacent surveys. The eastern most edge of the Davis survey is now College Street. The shaded rectangle in the diagram indicates City boundaries beyond the original 120 acre donation.

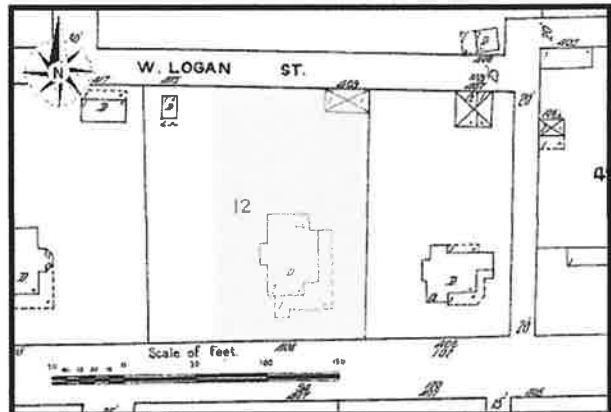
Sanborn Maps (1908-1927+)

This series of Sanborn maps shows the evolution of the area around 506 W. Hunt Street. The blue highlighted area below shows the lot that became 11b following previous subdivisions of the block. The Fred J. Emerson House first appears in the 1914 map. Fred Emerson originally owned the property to the west of lot 11b but sold it during the years he lived on Hunt Street.

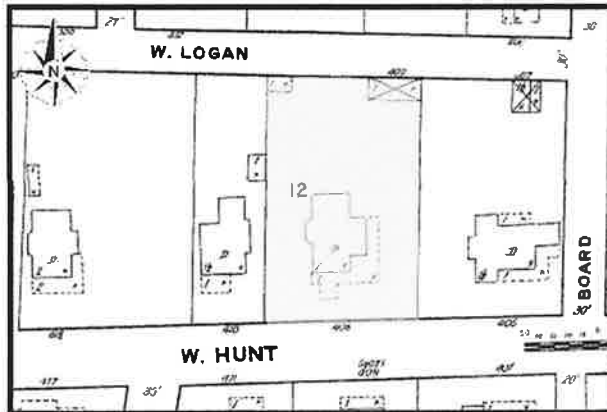
1908



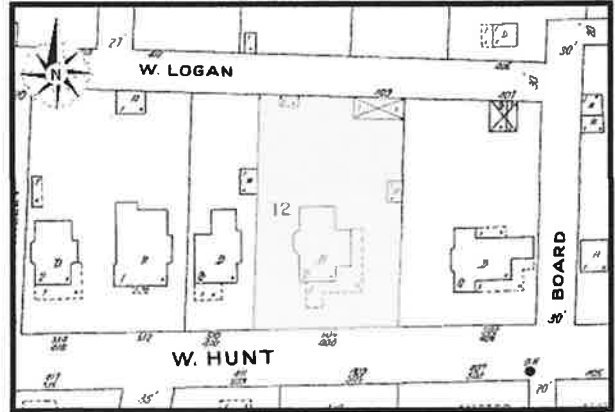
1914



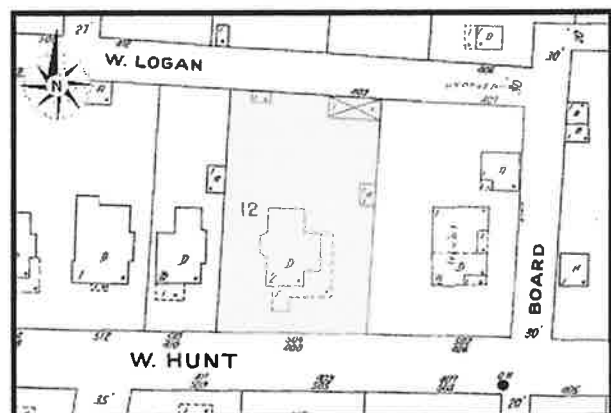
1920

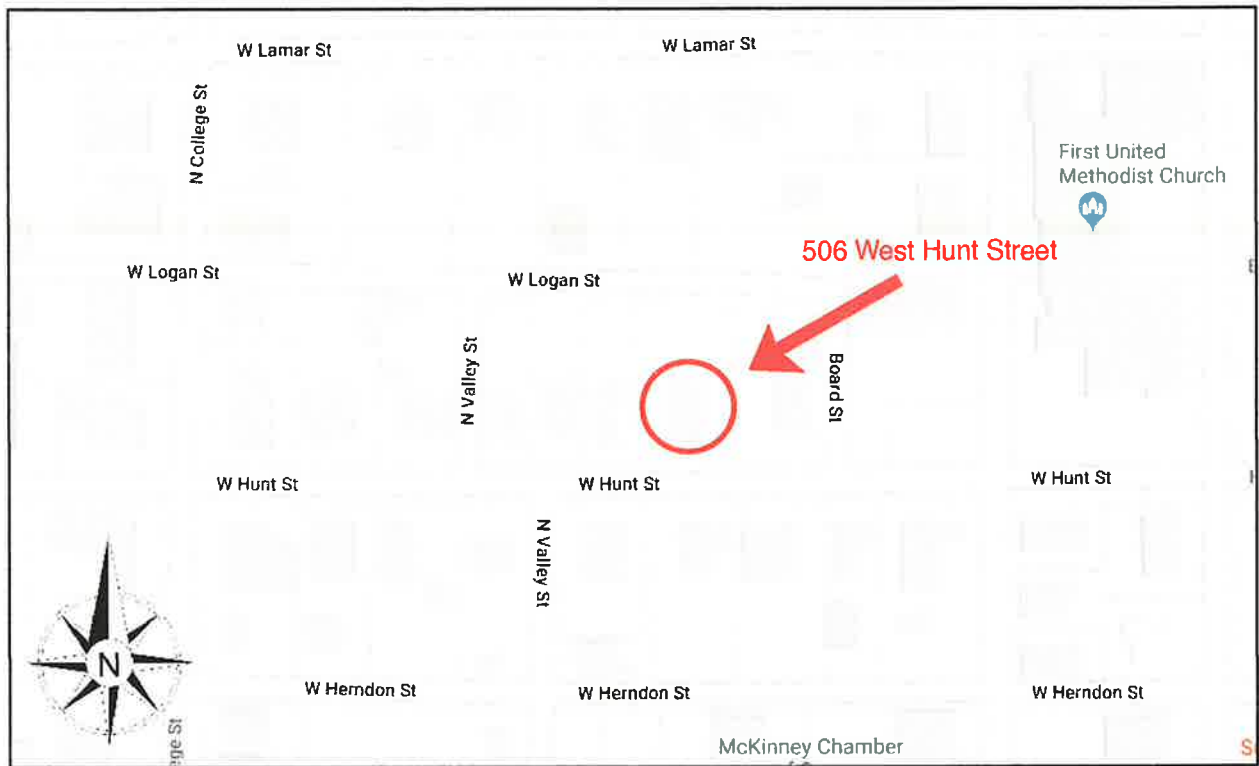


1927

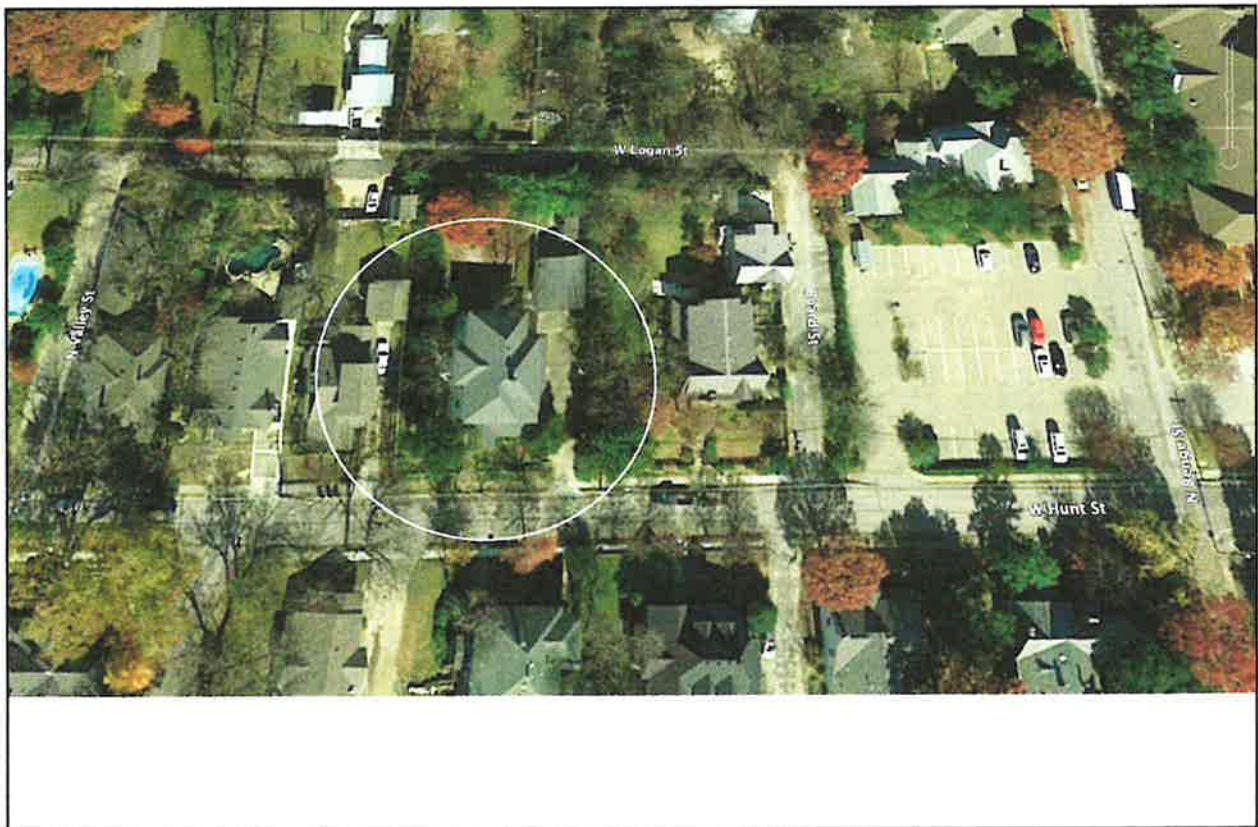


1927+

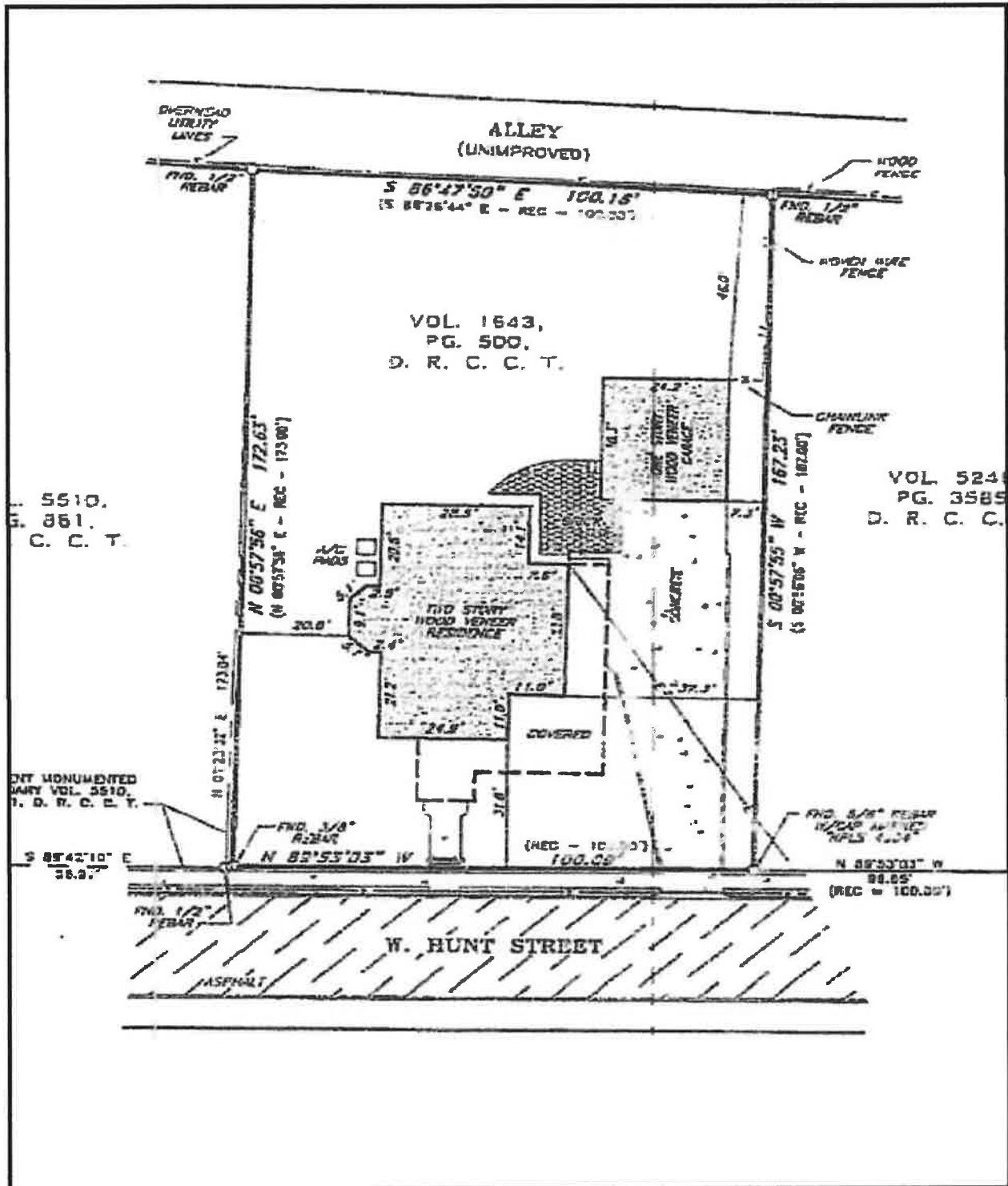




The map above shows the neighborhood around 506 West Hunt Street. The aerial photo below shows the immediate neighborhood at the intersection of West Hunt and Board Streets.



Site Plan for 506 West Hunt Street (2004)

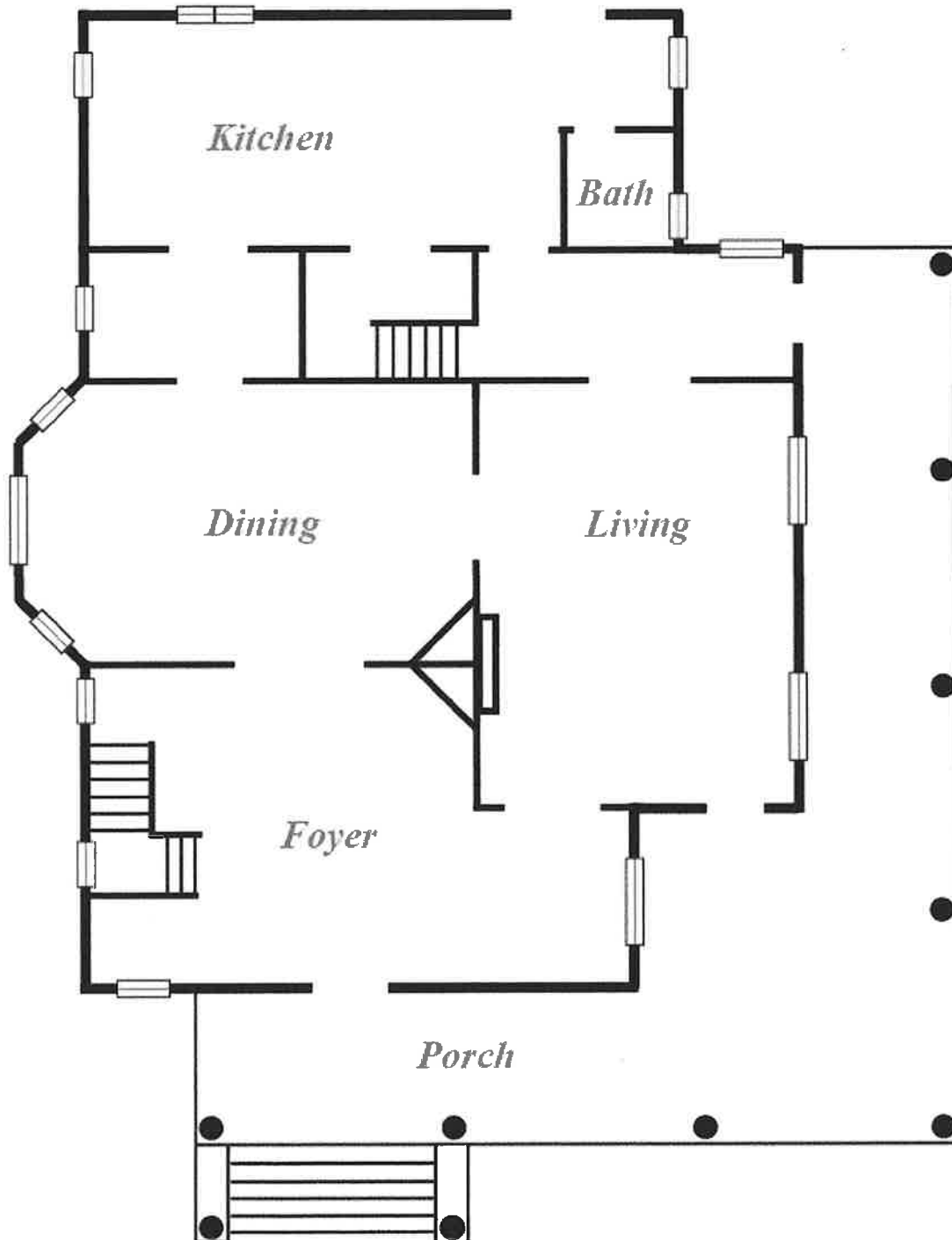


2004 site plan for 506 West Hunt Street

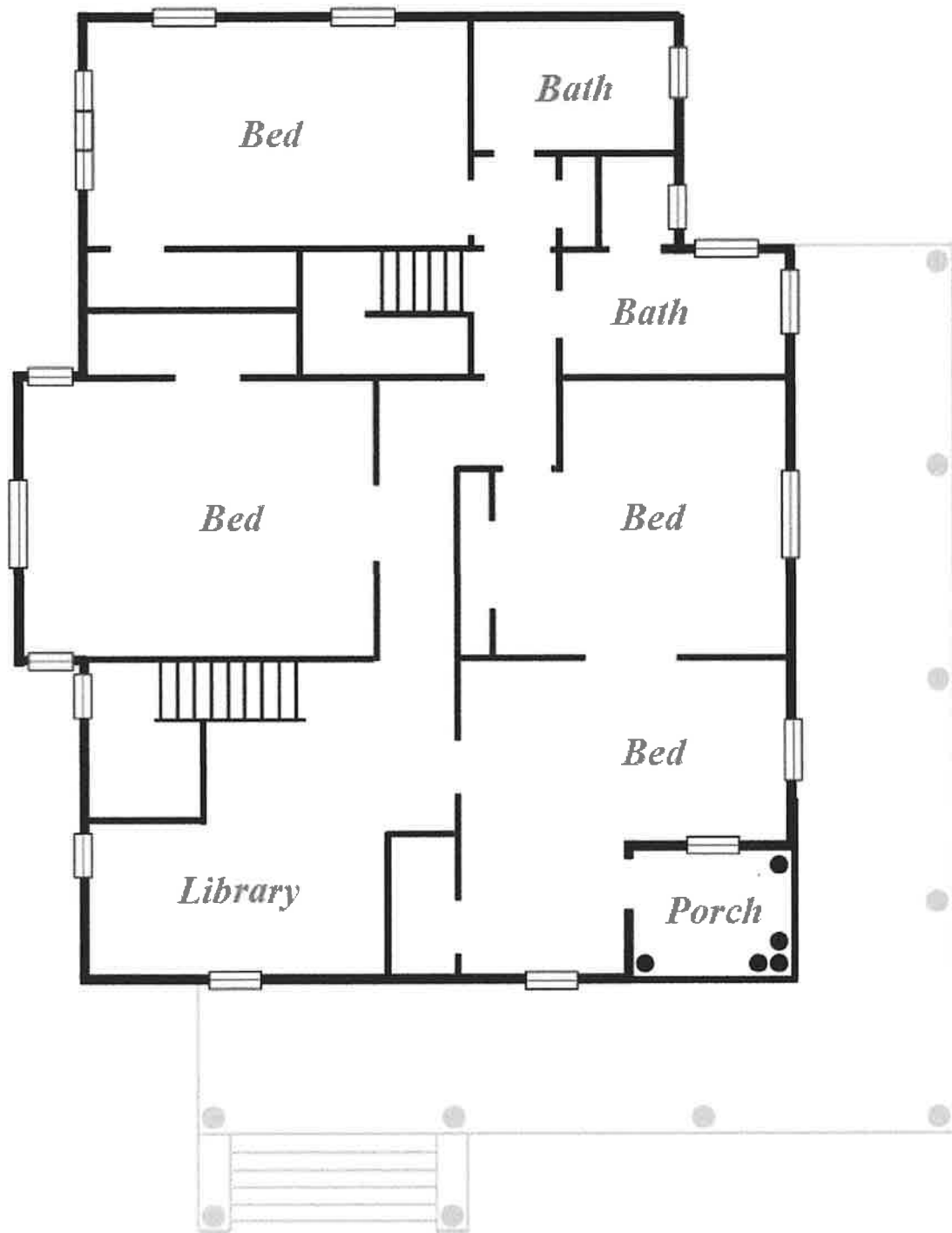
Floor Plan

This plan shows the Fred J. Emerson House prior to its current renovation.

First Floor



Second Floor



G. Photographs

William A. Rhea (standing) with his brother **James C.** 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. The Rhea brothers established two residential subdivisions near the McKinney Square, one on Church Street, the other on Hunt Street.

In 1861, James became a member of Company D, South Texas Cavalry and was wounded at the Civil War 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 a woman named Ella Foote, the daughter of Dr. Gerald A. Foote, a prominent McKinney doctor and business man. Ella's niece Fannie married Fred Emerson in 1894. This means that, by marriage, William A. Rhea was Fred Emerson's uncle.

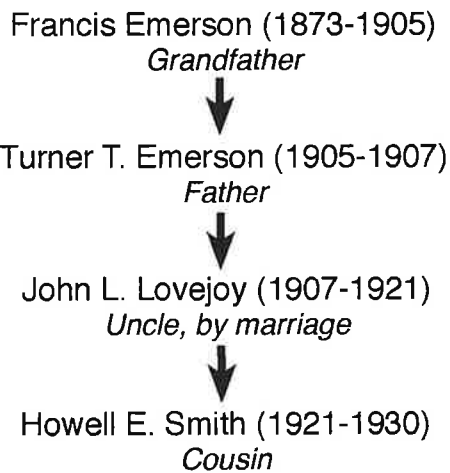


Fred Emerson's first wife was Fannie Foote (bottom row, far left) seen here in a photo of the Edelweiss Club from around 1910. When this photo was taken she was remarried to William G. Harris.



Fred Emerson joined the family banking business when he was 16 years of age. From the banks founding in 1872 until 1930 the president of the bank was a member of the Emerson family, even if by marriage.

*First National Bank Presidents
(relationship to Fred Emerson)*



PROMINENT CITIZEN
CALLED BY DEATH



FRED EMERSON.

FIRST NATIONAL BANK

McKinney, Texas.

Capital and Surplus \$115,000.00

This bank always has money to loan to the people of Collin county and offers to depositors every facility which their business and responsibility warrant.

OFFICERS:

T. T. EMERSON, President.	HOWELL E. SMITH, Cashier.
FRANCIS HORACE WELCH, Vice-President.	FRED EMERSON, Ass't Cashier.

I Buy Liberty Bonds

Any issue. Will take care of your partial payments.

Fred Emerson

Office in North Side Drug Store, Phone 480, McKinney, Texas.

Auction Sale!

Monday, July the 7th, at one o'clock p. m. I will sell to the highest bidder for cash at Barnes & McDonald's mule barn in McKinney, Texas, thirty head of the best horses that have ever been offered for sale on this market. These horses are sound, broke, ready for the work and MUST sell regardless of price. This will be a straight legitimate sale with no by bidding which means if you bid you own a horse. If you want to make money—don't fail to attend this sale.

Darrell Hirsch, Sales Manager
Fred Emerson, Clerk
Jack Sportsman, Auctioneer

Collin County Boys and Girls Jersey Calf Club

WORTH JERSEY CALVES FOR MOTHERS BOYS AND GIRLS OF THE COUNTY.

OUR OBJECT—We believe that the most of a herd is measured by the amount of milk and butter produced in one year. And the Jersey cow is the most economical producer of both and hence, of the breed in the United States—she gives the most milk and butter in the least amount of space and she is the most economical to keep and to care for. We believe that the best and truest of Jersey cows will give good and pure milk and butter in the greatest amount of space. We believe in promoting the best and purest milk and butter and we are determined to help you do so.

HOW TO OBTAIN INFORMATION
FIRST—We will send to the best and truest of Jersey cows and we will send you information about the breed and the best and truest of Jersey cows and we will send you information about the breed and the best and truest of Jersey cows.

SECOND—The calves will be sold to you from the best and truest of Jersey cows and we will send you information about the breed and the best and truest of Jersey cows.

THIRD—Judgment judges will select the calves on the basis of their size and an estimate of their milk and butter production.

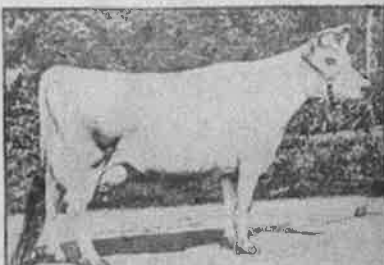
FOURTH—The calves will be sold to you from the best and truest of Jersey cows and we will send you information about the breed and the best and truest of Jersey cows.

FIFTH—The calves will be sold to you from the best and truest of Jersey cows and we will send you information about the breed and the best and truest of Jersey cows.

SIXTH—We reserve the right to accept or reject any application, those who are not selected will have their names on the address list.

Collin County Jersey Club

Dr. A. T. Ryan, McKinney, Pres. J. H. Green, Mckinney, Vice-Pres. C. W. Smith, McKinney, Secy-Treas. Ed. (Ed) Gammeter, Fred Kammara, McKinney, W. M. (Hans), Mckinney, Walter B. Wilson, McKinney.



THE BUYERS WILL BE RECEIVED AT NINE O'CLOCK THE DAY OF APRIL 1918.

The calves will be selected on the basis of their size and an estimate of their milk and butter production.

FINAL OF THE BREED

And such as to be the best and truest of Jersey cows and we will send you information about the breed and the best and truest of Jersey cows.

Write to become a member of the Collin County Jersey Club and we will send you information about the breed and the best and truest of Jersey cows.

APPEAL TO PATRIOTISM OF LABORERS!

Men wanted to work on Government plant at Muscle Shoals, Alabama. Pay \$3.85 for 10 hours day. Transportation furnished. Board and lodging \$5.25 per week. Leave McKinney every Wednesday and Saturday morning. Absolutely necessary that Collin County furnish her quota of this labor.

See or address

FRED EMERSON

Local Agent of Business Men's Association, McKinney, Tex.

Fred Emerson resigned from the First National Bank in 1916 due to health concerns. After his exit, he became deeply involved in the War effort, buying bonds and promoting the cause. His brother John had been an early casualty. The balance of Mr. Emerson's career was spent in finance, real estate and agriculture. Along with work as a Federal Reserve representative providing managerial services to struggling area banks, Mr. Emerson was also a successful Jersey cow breeder.

FRED EMERSON JOE E. LARGENT

Emerson & Largent

Real Estate and Loans

In addition to buying and selling on real estate, we handle City Property and Water on a commission basis. If you wish to buy or sell, call on us. We will estimate value and make conditions made for your convenience. Let your property and we will estimate value. Office in Newcomb Building, P. O. Corner Agents, Phone 915.

C. C. Harris Funeral Home, McKinney, Tex., 11/11/1929

7883 TEXAS STATE BOARD OF HEALTH

BUREAU OF VITAL STATISTICS
STANDARD CERTIFICATE OF DEATH

Reg. Dia. No. _____ Registered No. _____

(1) PLACE OF DEATH
County McKinney City McKinney (No. _____ St. _____ Ward _____)

(2) FULL NAME Fredrick James Emerson (If death occurred in a hospital or institution, give its NAME instead of street and number.)

PERSONAL AND STATISTICAL PARTICULARS			MEDICAL PARTICULARS	
(3) SEX <u>Male</u>	(4) COLOR OR RACE <u>White</u>	(5) SINGLE, MARRIED, WIDOWED OR DIVORCED (write the word) <u>Married</u>	(16) DATE OF DEATH <u>Nov. 8, 1929</u> (Month) (Day) (Year)	
(6) DATE OF BIRTH <u>Aug 8, 1879</u> (Month) (Day) (Year)			(17) I HEREBY CERTIFY, That I attended deceased from <u>Nov 8, 1929</u> to <u>Nov 8, 1929</u> , that I last saw him alive on <u>Nov 8, 1929</u> , and that death occurred, on the date stated above, at <u>12-M-P.</u>	
(7) AGE If less than 2 years state if breast fed. <u>57</u> yrs. <u>4</u> mos. <u>4</u> ds. If less than 1 day _____ hrs. _____ mins.			The CAUSE OF DEATH was as follows: <u>Lysol Poisoning, Accidental</u> (duration) _____ yrs. _____ mos. _____ ds.	
(8) OCCUPATION (a) Trade, profession or particular kind of work <u>Retired Banker</u> (b) General nature of industry, business or establishment in which employed (or employer)			CONTRIBUTORY _____ (duration) _____ yrs. _____ mos. _____ ds.	
(9) BIRTHPLACE (State or country) <u>Texas</u>			(Signed) <u>Mrs. Sargent F. Largent, M.D.</u> 19 _____ (Address) <u>McKinney, Tex.</u>	
PARENTS	(10) NAME OF FATHER <u>J. J. Emerson</u>		*Use International List of Cause of Death—State the Disease Causing Death, or in Deaths from violent causes, State (1) Means of Injury; and (2) whether Accidental, Suicidal or Homicidal.	
	(11) BIRTHPLACE OF FATHER (State or country) <u>Ohio</u>		(18) LENGTH OF RESIDENCE (For Hospitals, Institutions, Transients, or Recent Residents.) At Place of death _____ yrs. _____ mos. _____ ds. In the State _____ yrs. _____ mos. _____ ds.	
	(12) MAIDEN NAME OF MOTHER <u>Emma Hudson</u>		Where was disease contracted If not at place of death? _____ Former or usual residence _____	
(13) BIRTHPLACE OF MOTHER (State or country) <u>Ohio</u>		(19) PLACE OF BURIAL OR REMOVAL <u>Home Grave</u> DATE OF BURIAL <u>Nov 9, 1929</u>		
(14) THE ABOVE IS TRUE TO THE BEST OF MY KNOWLEDGE (Informant) <u>Mrs. Emerson</u> (Address) <u>Wallas, Texas</u>			(20) UNDERTAKER <u>Cranch, Wood & McKinney, Tex.</u>	
(15) Filed <u>1-20</u> 19 <u>30</u> by <u>J. J. Taylor</u> L. C. Clifton Registrar.				

7883 TEXAS STATE BOARD OF HEALTH

It can not be ignored that there was some tragedy and mystery surrounding the death of Fred Emerson. His death certificate (above) indicates that he died from accidental Lysol poisoning. Though he had not been in the best of health prior to his death, he was able to manage his business affairs on a daily basis. It is quite possible that the 1929 stock market crash may have weighed on Fred Emerson's mind and finances.

An excerpt from **Fred Emerson's** obituary shows the high regard the citizens of McKinney held for the former banker. The list of pallbearers reads like a Who's Who of McKinney. Along with the active pallbearers the obituary lists over 40 prominent leaders of McKinney and the region, including U.S. Rep. Sam Rayburn.

C. C. Harris Funeral Home.
Active pallbearers—Howell E. Smith, Dr. C. G. Comegys, Joe H. Largent, Benjamin Smith, Tip Furgell, F. D. Perkins, Dr. Ben F. Largent and Henry W. Warden.
Honorary pallbearers: Fitzhugh Newsome, Will R. Abernathy, Don O. Davis, Alfred M. Scott, Tony McDonald, Frank Kerby, Hubbard Kerr, D. C. Hill, Walter B. Wilson, A. J. Commons, H. H. Neilson, Dr. E. L. Burton, Dr. J. Knight, Dr. W. S. Wysong, Jewell E. Abernathy, J. Ed Rhea, Tom W. Perkins, John S. Heard, H. A. Finch, T. F. Everett, Roy Kirkpatrick, Dr. H. F. Wolford, S. Weizman, Roy Brockman, W. D. Smith, F. Dinsmore, Vernie Graves, B. Pope, W. H. Knott, Dr. J. L. Gossett, A. H. Eubanks, W. A. Dowell, Dan W. Scott, Jim P. Dowell, T. M. Scott, C. J. Smith, H. A. Finch Jr. and following out-of-town friends: J. Perry Durrus, Chas. Abbott, Cebe A. Houston, Buck McKinney, Hugh Bass, Lynn Talley all of Dallas; R. D. Wilbur, Oklahoma City; S. E. McDonald, Wylie, Texas and Congressman Sam Rayburn of Bonham.

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Frederick Emerson Entertains.

Mr. and Mrs. Fred Emerson complimented their young son, Frederick, with a dinner party on Saturday night in their pretty home on West Hunt street. The table appointments were in sweet peas in variegated shades and the nut holders and favors were in keeping with the color scheme. Following the dinner hour, the guests went to the "Theater" where they completed a most delight evening.

◆ ◆ ◆


Club Notices.

The Emersons hosted parties frequently, often honoring artists and actors. Laura belonged to several social service clubs which promoted literature and the arts.

Herald-Post SPORTS

Page 12 Thursday, Dec. 8, 1938

Davey O'Brien Gets Heisman Trophy



—Acme Telephoto

Davey O'Brien, "The Mighty Mile" from Texas Christian who was picked as the most valuable football player of the year, was awarded the John W. Heisman Memorial Trophy in the Downtown A. C. at a dinner in his honor. Walter P. Holcomb, president of the A.C. is shown congratulating O'Brien. The trophy is in the foreground.



Laura O'Brien Emerson was the aunt of famed T.C.U. quarterback Davey O'Brien who lead the team to a national championship in 1938.



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. Four of its pastors called 506 West Hunt their home.



Dr. J.H. Cozad
(1884-1944)



R.A. Clifton
(1891-1967)



D.D. Seger
(1908-1992)



Charles Myers
(1918-2013)



This photo from around 1910 shows the First Baptist Church as looking west on Louisiana Street from the southwest corner of the McKinney Square.

Banks of McKinney

In McKinney's early years, a few wealthy individuals opened private banking firms to loan money to farmers and entrepreneurs. Irish-borne Francis Emerson was one of the first. In 1872, he began doing business as Emerson & Company on the west side of the Square. The arrival of rail lines in 1882 boosted economic activity and demand for borrowing followed. In order to meet this growing demand, Mr. Emerson solicited and acquired stockholders and nationalized his enterprise as the **First National Bank of McKinney**. The bank operated in the building now occupied by the Red Canoe on the Square. The bank later moved from Kentucky Street to a newly constructed Neo-Classical building on the east side of the Square in 1915. In 1932, the Collin County National Bank purchased the First National Bank and moved into the building on Tennessee Street. Some of the founders associated with the FNB include: Francis Emerson, T.T. Emerson, T.H. Emerson, John L. Lovejoy, and C.H. Welch. Newton Burkett began working for the FNB in 1925 and stayed on when the CCNB bought it.

Another private firm to emerge as a bank was the **Collin County National Bank**. It organized as a bank in 1881 but did not nationalize until after its competitor. Even so, it is often cited as McKinney's first bank. The bank first operated on Louisiana Street just east of the Square but in 1891 moved into the Richardsonian Romanesque building that once stood on the southwest corner of the intersection at Tennessee and Louisiana Street. Some of the founders associated with this bank include: I.D. Newsome, G.A. Foote, W.L. Boyd, Z.E. Ranney, W.A. Rhea, J.A. Aston, H.M. Markham, J.W. Throckmorton, and T.B. Wilson.

The third bank to open in McKinney was the Continental Bank and Trust Company of McKinney in 1906, a subsidiary of a Fort Worth bank. In 1909, a local group acquired the assets and changed the name to the Continental State Bank. The name changed again in 1920 to the Central State Bank. The bank received a new charter in 1934 and changed the name to the **Central National Bank**. The original bank operated in the Estes Building (currently the Little Red Hen). In 1918, the bank moved to a newly constructed building which replaced a building that collapsed on the site in 1913 killing eight people. Some of the organizers who purchased the bank in 1909 include: T.B. Wilson, James W. Field, Jesse Atkinson, Lee Elliott, F.E. Wilcox, and John H. Ferguson.



First National Bank



Collin County National Bank



Central National Bank



Collin County National Bank, Est. 1881

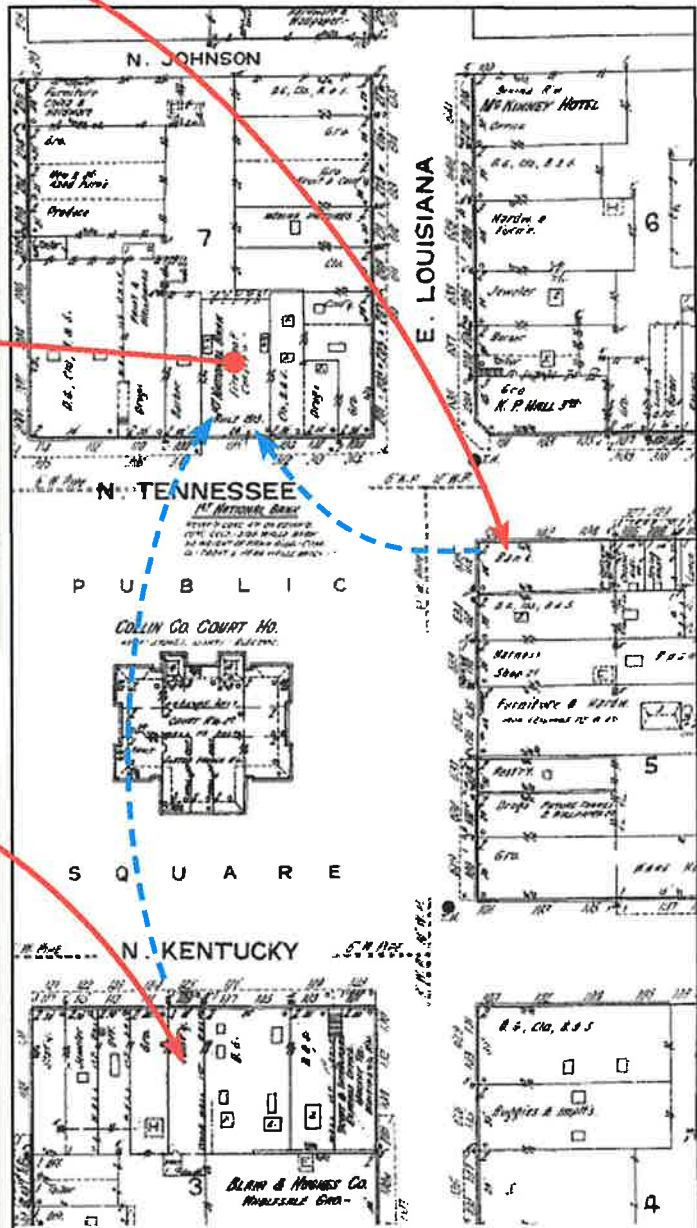
The **First National Bank** began on the west side of the Square but moved to the Neo-Classical building on the east side in 1915. The Collin County National Bank began in a Richardsonian-style building which was subsequently demolished when the bank bought out and moved its operations to the First National Bank building in 1932. In 1956, the bank moved two blocks north on Tennessee Street into the building that is now the home of the McKinney City Hall.



First National Bank, 1915-1932
Collin County National Bank, 1932-1956



First National Bank, Est. 1882



Evolution of Style

The first decade of the 20th Century witnessed a huge shift in architectural styles. This shift paralleled the cultural shift that saw improving labor conditions and a growing middle class that had enough money to spend on property and homes, modest though they may be. This new culture had little affinity, for the older aesthetic which valued ornamentation and grandiosity. This change is clearly apparent in the architecture of McKinney.

Before the turn of the Century, the preferred style was what we now call the Queen Anne Style. This style is characterized by complex gabled roofs, asymmetry, turrets, and an abundance of elaborate ornamentation. The Striker House in Michigan is a good example of this period. Locally, the Aron House at 523 W. Hunt Street exhibits this same architectural vocabulary.

Just before the turn of the Century, however, new architectural forms offered by the Prairie, Craftsman, and Foursquare Styles began appearing in home construction. The Bristol House at 508 Tucker Street was one of the first homes in McKinney to incorporate the deep eaves, hip roofs, and the sprawling geometry these new styles offered.

The Heard-Craig House at 205 W. Hunt Street designed by Dallas architect J.E. Flanders incorporates many of the new forms into a home that is still essentially Queen Anne but mimics the symmetry of the American Foursquare Style (see 801 N. Church St.). Five years later, Flanders moved closer to creating a pure Prairie Style home when he designed the Brown House at 509 N. Church Street.

By the early 1900s, not all builders and clients were ready to abandon the old familiar style and the



prestige it conveyed. This resulted in many homes becoming an eclectic mixture of new and old styles.

McKinney builder W.J. Higgins built the Brooke House at 608 W. Hunt Street in 1910. It appears that neither the builder nor the client was ready to embrace the “modernness” of Flander’s designed. Instead, the Brooke house preserves the gabled pavilions and proportions of the Queen Anne Style while adding sprawling porches on the first and second floors. The result is a marriage of two styles with a practical solution to ventilation.

The Davenport House which sits across the street at 613 W. Hunt Street was probably built by Higgins in the same year as the Brooke House. Higgins was an accomplished builder of American Foursquare homes and incorporated its boxy, pyramidal forms into many of the homes he built. The pavilion which had a gabled roof in the Brooke House now has a hip roof. Though Davenport house moves further away from the Queen Anne Style, the builder put an ornamental finial at the apex of the roof to remind us of the home’s (and the client’s) appreciation of tradition.

Elsewhere in McKinney, builders and clients were warming up to the new style. The home at 510 Foote Street build for F.E. Wilcox in 1910 is decidedly in the Prairie Style with its wide eaves, square columns, and hip roof. Still, the window treatment lacks a complete expression of the style.

Finally, in 1911 J.P. Burrus spent \$30,000 dollars on a house at 405 N. Waddill that was unabashedly in the Prairie Style. The Queen Anne vocabulary is completely gone. Thus, a new design paradigm became the mode of the day in McKinney.





1205 Tucker Street

The Work of W.J. Higgins

The pictures on this page are known structures built by W.J. Higgins. He was born in Arkansas in 1850 and began his carpentry career in McKinney around 1900. He was a skillful builder of wood-frame homes in the American Foursquare style and applied its characteristics to nearly everything he built. His larger homes often have both Victorian and Foursquare elements in them. However, the Bush House at 211 N. College Street shows that he was capable of building structures that clearly expressed the Prairie Style.



506 W. Hunt Street

W.J. Higgins is also known as the builder of the Foote Baptist Church which he built in 1908. This building was moved from its original location in 1994 to be a part of Chestnut Square Complex.



608 W. Hunt Street



620 N. Church Street



306 Davis Street



Bush House

211 N. College Street

Pecan Grove Cemetery

This map of Pecan Grove Cemetery in McKinney shows the final resting places of people associated with 506 W. Hunt Street.



*Fred Emerson 1872-1929
Laura (O'Brien) Emerson 1888-1989*



*William J. Higgins
1850-1927*



*John H. Cozad
1884-1944*

Current Photos (2019)



Neighborhood Context (2019)

506 West Hunt Street neighborhood context



View looking East on W. Hunt Street



View looking West on W. Hunt Street

Nearby Homes on West Hunt Street



510 West Hunt Street



502 West Hunt Street



503 West Hunt



505 West Hunt Street

Architectural Accents



Fireplace



Door knob



Built-in Hutch



One-Over-One sash windows



*Hardwood Flooring
Pine*



Pocket Door



Staircase

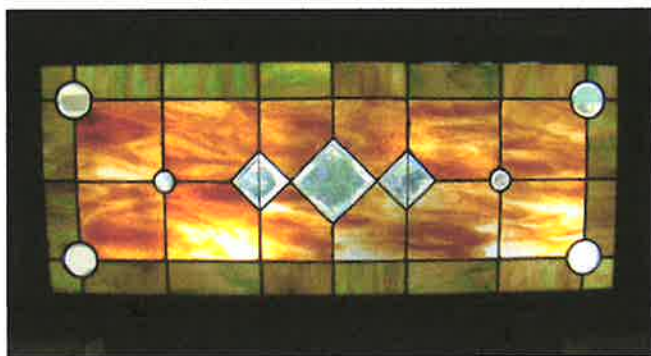


Wood Paneling on Staircase



Pine Jamb and Molding

Stained Glass

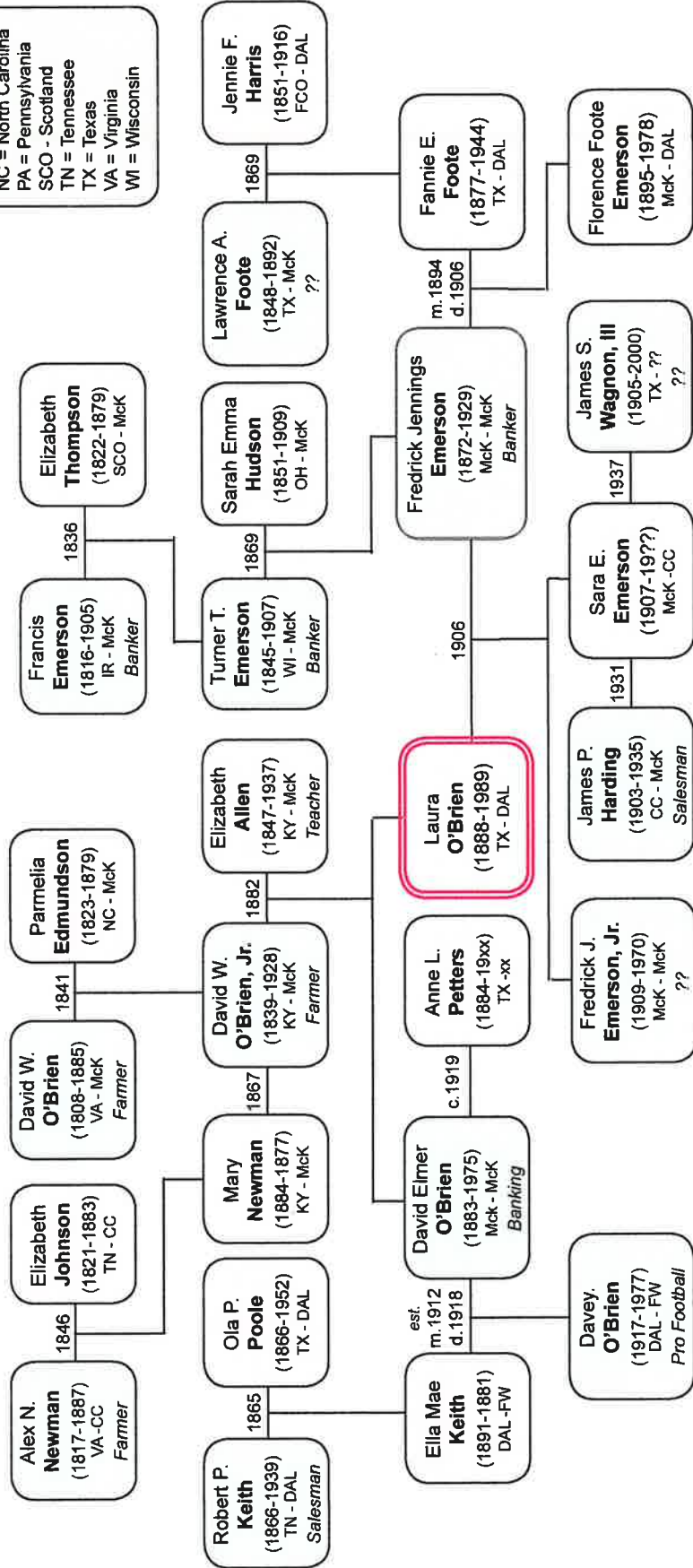


H. Additional Information

O'Brien Family of Early McKinney*

Legend

- CC = Collin County
- DAL = Dallas
- DE = Delaware
- FCO = Fannin Co.
- FW = Fort Worth
- IR = Ireland
- Mck = McKinney
- MO = Missouri
- OH = Ohio
- OK = Oklahoma
- NC = North Carolina
- PA = Pennsylvania
- SCO = Scotland
- TN = Tennessee
- TX = Texas
- VA = Virginia
- WI = Wisconsin



* Not all family members are included.

I. References & Resources

Collin County Deeds Records Office.

Courier-Gazette, published by Perkins and Wilson, McKinney, Texas.

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Collin County, Texas, Families, by Alice Pitts and Minnie Champ, Curtis Media, 1994.

The First 150 Years, by Julia L Vargo, Downing Co. Publisher (1997).

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