

City of McKinney

Historic Building Marker Application

(Supporting Documentation)

The Dr. J. Knight House
1208 Tucker Street



A. Alterations & Construction

Construction

In May of 1915 Dr. Jonas Knight and his wife Kathleen moved into their new home at 1208 Tucker Street. While it is predominately a Craftsman-style bungalow, it co-mingles an array of related architectural elements, such as shingles, false rafters, and knee-bracing. But above all, it is the clipped gables which give this house its unique character. During the construction of the home the *McKinney Courier-Gazette* claimed, "This home will be one of the most unique in its design of any in the city, and will contain all the provisions for comforts and conveniences that modern designing has brought forth."

The house is a two-story, wood-frame structure on a pier and beam foundation. The interior flooring is a combination of oak and pine depending on the room. The builder and designer are unknown but W.J. Higgins was known to have built several bungalows in McKinney, especially in the Fox Addition, including the home of Wick Graves who lived across the street.

Alterations

The house was occupied by the Knight family from its construction in 1915 until Kathleen's death in 1972. The home experienced little alteration in that time. However, in 1953, the *Courier-Gazette* mentioned that the Knights had completed some repairs and a new porch.

Sanborn maps from 1920 show the original porch wrapping around the southeast corner of the house. It appears that the new porch allowed the Knights to enclose part of the porch to become a study connected to the main living area.

Outside, this alteration involved the removal of columns and railing, perhaps to better display the front exterior. There is evidence to suggest that the original porch was supported by four pairs of columns. The column-pairs sported decorative brackets flanking their tops. A balustrade ran between the columns enclosing the porch area. The current owners have recently built a balustrade to mimic the one that was removed.

The extra wide front door with its sidelights appears to be original. There is a story that the door was made wide to accommodate stretchers and gurneys. This is possible since this was a doctor's home. Yet, there is no evidence that suggests he saw patients in his home.

Though many of the windows are not original, they imitate the style of the period. Several other original elements remain, including octagonal cut-glass windows, light fixtures, door knobs, and light switches.

B. Historical Figures

George W. Fox (1867-1924)

George Fox was born to pioneer settlers Samuel and Sallie (Barnes) Fox in 1867. George was an influential business man and civic leader. Early in his life he engaged in a retail grocery business under the name Fox & Love. Later, he expanded into the wholesale grocery business as well as real estate. He opened up the Fox Addition, an 11-block residential development northwest of downtown between Tucker Street and New Street. He was a director of the Collin County National Bank and county auditor. His building company was responsible for many McKinney homes and buildings including the Fox Building on E. Virginia where Dr. J. Knight had his office for 40 years.

Mr. Fox and his first wife Lula (Lillard) built the home at 311 N. College in 1915. The *McKinney Courier-Gazette* claimed George Fox “served his day and generation. He was justly regarded as one of the most successful, safe, conservative business men of our city or county.” At the time of his death, George resided with his second wife Ann (Taylor) at 301 N. College.

Jonas Knight (1884-1955)

Jonas Knight was born in 1884 to John T. and Susie Knight who owned a grocery store in Commerce, Texas. Jonas, at the age of seventeen, decided to take up the medical profession and enrolled in the American School of Osteopathy in Kirksville, Missouri. Osteopathy was originated in the late 19th century as a method of treating disease by manipulating the muscle and bones of the patient.

Jonas spent four years in Kirksville studying to become a doctor. While a student, he fell in love with the daughter of Wilson E. Lampton, a much older classmate. Mr. Lampton entered Kirksville as a 42-year-old merchant from Missouri. His daughter Lorena was a year younger than Jonas. Both Jonas and his older classmate Wilson graduated in 1904. As a doctor, Wilson Lampton returned to this hometown of Butler, Missouri to set up practices while Dr. Jonas Knight returned to Commerce.

Lorena and the newly licensed Dr. Knight married in 1906. That was the same year the couple moved to McKinney. Also in that year, Dr. Knight opened his first McKinney office above the Collin County National Bank on the southeast side of the Square. Four years later he moved his office to the Foote Building on the northwest corner of the Square.

Dr. Knight advertised daily in the *McKinney Courier-Gazette* and his practice was successful enough for him to own a home on W. Louisiana Street and have a live-in servant. His servant, Robert Willings, was white, literate, and took care of the stable and garden. However, amid his success tragedy struck.

On a summer day in 1912 Dr. and Mrs. Knight took Mr. and Mrs. Albert Smith for a Sunday drive to Dallas. While motoring around the downtown area, their car was struck by an Interurban streetcar killing Lorena and severely injuring Mrs. Smith. Lorena's body was transported to her family home of Butler, Missouri for burial. The outpouring of sympathy from their McKinney friends was so great Dr. Knight had his appreciative words posted in the *Courier-Gazette*:

"To the good people of McKinney who extended so many kindnesses in my recent terrible bereavement. I return the most heartfelt thanks. Words are inadequate to express my appreciation of the many kind acts. I hope that I may be able some day to more fittingly convey to you an idea how deep my gratitude is to each and all. In this I am joined by many relatives."

Dr. Knight was indeed a well-known and respected man in his community. He was a member of the First Methodist Church, the Rotary Club, the Epworth League, and a prominent Elk. He was also the team physician for the Boyd High School football team for over 25 years. During that time he missed only five games.

In the years following Lorena's death, Dr. Knight found love again at the age of 30. In a quiet ceremony in the presence of only the immediate family on a warm October evening in 1914, he and the 23-year-old Kathleen Abernathy married. The ceremony was conducted by Rev. H.B. Jamison of St. Peter's Episcopal Church and took place in the home of the bride's mother on North College Street. The occasion was a surprise to the many friends of the bride and groom. Given her prominent social standing, the reason for such a small gathering is a mystery. Afterwards, the couple honeymooned in New Orleans.

In 1915, seven months after their marriage, the couple built and moved into a house on Tucker Street they would live in until their death. The house design was unique in its blend of architectural elements.

That same year Dr. Knight moved his practice from the Foot Building to the Fox Building at 207 E. Virginia (current site of Gather). The Fox building was built by George W. Fox,

the same man Dr. Knight purchased his lot from a year earlier. Dr. Knight would make this his office for the next 40 years.

In February of 1955, Dr. Knight made news when he moved his practice from the Fox Building to the Thurman Building at 311 N. Tennessee. In a *McKinney Courier-Gazette* story he recounts how much change he has witnessed after four decades. "I can remember when four teams [of horse] were needed to pull an empty wagon through the mud and mire on East Virginia Street in front of my office," he said. Though he was sad to leave his familiar second-story perch above Virginia Street, the amenities his new office provided more than made up for it. His new suite included a large reception room, two operating rooms, a consultation room, and a restroom.

His office expansion at the age of 71 bespeaks of his success as a businessman and a healer. However, his new plans were cut short five months later with his death from a heart attack. He was buried in Pecan Grove Cemetery. His pallbearers included Roy Roberts, Tip Purnell, Byron Hope, Roy Kirkpatrick, Ludd Crockett, Dr. Scott Wysong, A.M. Scott Jr., Herbert Kerr, and Don O. Davis. The Knights had no children.

Dr. Knight played a prominent role in the social, civic and cultural life of McKinney but it was his upbeat outlook on life that was most unique about him. He approached life with a happy sense of adventure and enjoyed anything daring. The *Courier-Gazette* summed up Dr. Knight's personality in this excerpt from a 1921 article:

He is a disciple and exemplar of the sensible theory of a proper admixture in right proportion of hard work and intermissions of relaxation for both mind and body. "Keeping physically fit" is his favorite motto for both self and his many patients. Always wear a beaming smile and extend a cordial, vigorous, warm handclasp and look for the blessings of life to be thankful for, are also his precepts and practices.

Dr. Knight's personal credo could be interpreted in the words of Orison Swett Marden, an inspirational author and speaker of the day and founder of *Success Magazine*. "You cannot complain of your happiness, because it is your own child, the product of your own brain, your own effort. It has been made up of your motives, colored by your life aim. It exactly corresponds to the cause which produced it."

Dr. Knight was always up for a good adventure. He was one of the first people in Collin County to fly in a barning-storming bi-plane. In 1925, he took a month-long overland automobile trip through the western states in an Oakland automobile especially outfitted

for the trek, basically turning it into an RV. He was especially fond of hunting and made ample trips throughout Texas, returning with venison to share with his friends.

Dr. Jonas Knight's life in McKinney spanned its growth from a small farming town to a major manufacturing and distribution center. His upbeat personality and commitment to service made Dr. Knight one of McKinney's most well-known citizens.

Kathleen Abernathy (1891-1972)

Kathleen Abernathy was the daughter of the prominent Judge Mercer G. Abernathy and wife Arabella of McKinney. The Abernathy family produced some of the most influential lawyers in North Texas. In 1876, two Abernathy brothers, William and Mercer, migrated to McKinney from Mississippi. They started a law firm and practiced together until Mercer became an elected Collin County Judge in 1888. Mercer held that office for 10 years until he quit to start a private practice. Later, he and his brother reunited in practice and worked together until Mercer's death in 1911.

Kathleen's uncle, William M. Abernathy had a colorful experience in the Confederate Army. Not only was he wounded at the Battle of Gettysburg, but he served as a courier for General Robert E. Lee. He carried what was probably the last dispatch that passed between General Lee and General Grant concerning the details of the Confederate Army surrender.

Kathleen was active in several clubs and organizations, including the Red Cross and the Entre Nous Club, a 16-member ladies social group devoted to "improvement in knowledge and culture." One of the Club's accomplishments was raising \$50 for the creation of Finch Park. Many of their luncheons were hosted by Kathleen in the Knight home.

C. Property Ownership

Address: 1208 Tucker Street, McKinney, Texas 75069

Legal Description: Fox G W, Blk 3 Replat W 1/2, Lot 1

Purchase Date	Seller	Buyer
May. 23, 1914	George W. Fox	Dr. Jonas & Kathleen Knight
Oct. 18, 1972	Kathleen Abernathy Knight	Robert & Linda Binion
Sep. 19, 1990	Robert E. Binion	Warner & Janet Richeson
Sep. 22, 1994	Warner Richeson	Melvin & Janet Yarbrough
Jul. 6, 2004	Melvin Yarbrough	CitiFinancial Mtg. Co.
Apr. 5, 2005	CitiFinancial Mtg. Co.	Lee Fox
Jul. 12, 2007	Lee Fox	Mike & Karen Andries
Jul. 30, 2013	Mike Andries	James & Jamie deYong
Jul. 24, 2015	James deYong	Rico & Julia Munoz

D. Tenant History

Same as Ownership History

E. Narrative History

On May 25, 1915, Italian troops crossed into Austria and the U.S. State Department proclaimed neutrality in the burgeoning war in Europe. Meanwhile, in McKinney the Business Men's Association met to consider how to bring the M.O. & G. railroad to town.

That same day Dr. Jonas and Kathleen Knight moved into their newly constructed home at 1208 Tucker Street, seven months after their wedding. It was almost a year to the day that Dr. Knight had purchased from George W. Fox a desirable lot in his new subdivision northwest of downtown on Tucker Street.

Dr. Knight built a house that displayed an eclectic set of Craftsman-styling, including shingles, false rafters, and an exuberant use of knee-bracing to support the deep eaves. However, it is the clipped gables which punctuate the roof line which are most distinctive. The result is a structure unlike any its peers of the day. The *McKinney Courier-Gazette* declared, "It is one of the finest and most commodious in the entire city."

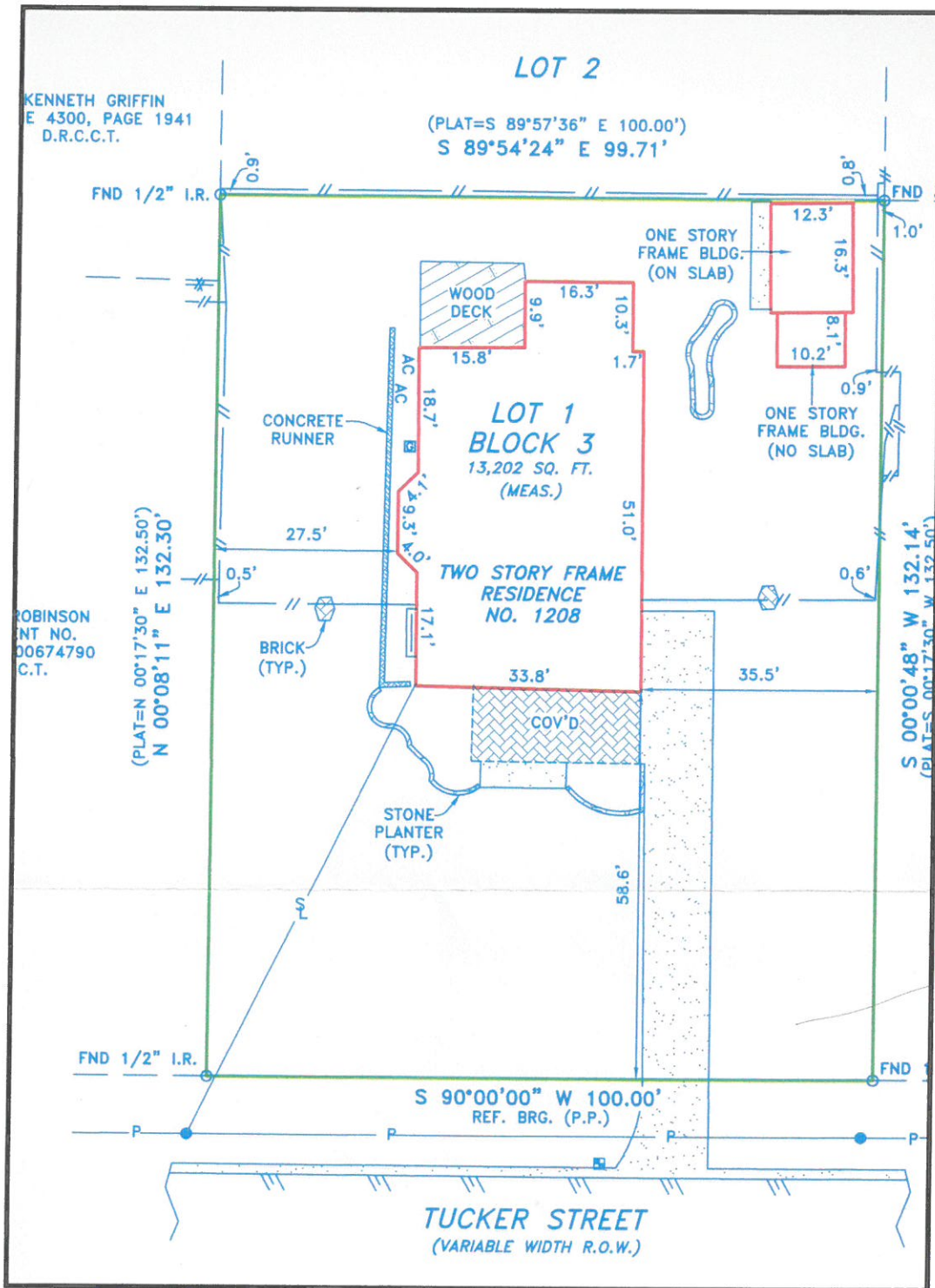
Dr. and Mrs. J Knight were active in McKinney's social circles. They hosted many groups in their home including the Elks, the Epworth Club, the Entre Nous Club, the Tuesday Card Club as well as church gatherings. Before the advent of radio and TV, there were at least two dozen social clubs or groups in McKinney that could provide an evening's entertainment. Each week the newspaper would typically post meeting times and places for these clubs.

Their neighborhood on the west end of Tucker Street included some of McKinney's notable citizens such as Wick Graves, W.D. Oates, Oran Hope, and Richard Bass. In fact, the well-known businessman Jesse Atkinson was Dr. Knight's next door neighbor for several years. When the Atkinson house came up for sale in 1951, the Knights bought it as an investment and enjoyed rental income from it for the next 21 years.

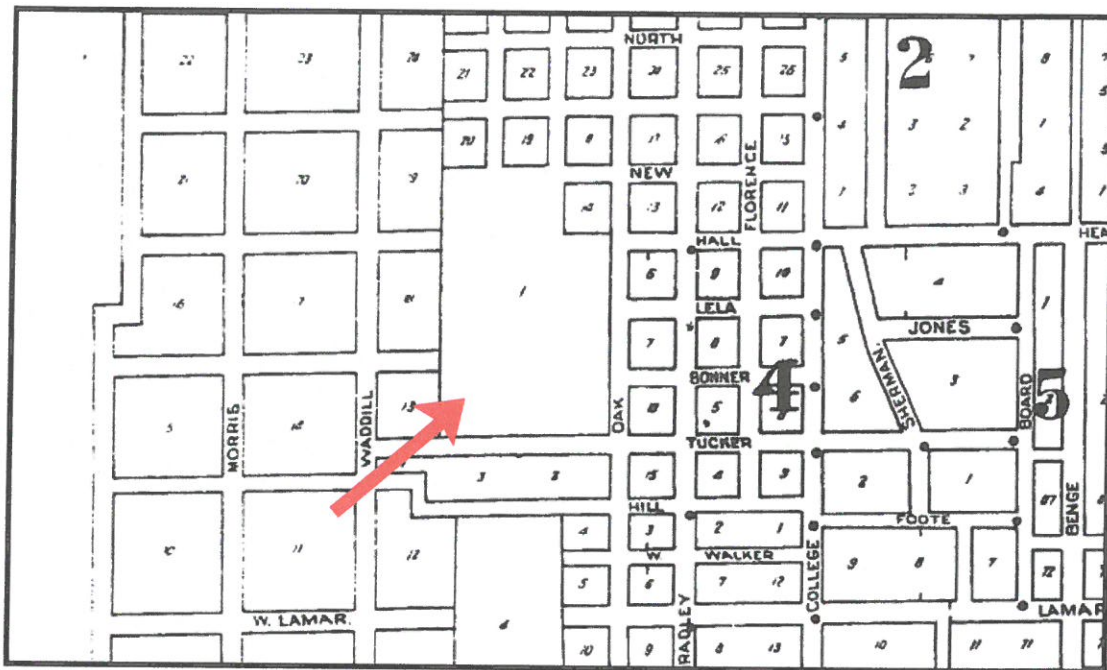
In 1953, the Knight's remodeled their porch by enclosing a portion of it and changing the original columns. The *McKinney Courier-Gazette* reported, "The new improvements to their already attractive residence, make it one of the pretties homes in the city."

The Knights enjoyed the home without interruption until Dr. Knight's death in 1955. Afterwards, his widow Kathleen would continue to live (and entertain) in the home until her death in 1972. She lived in the home a total of 57 years.

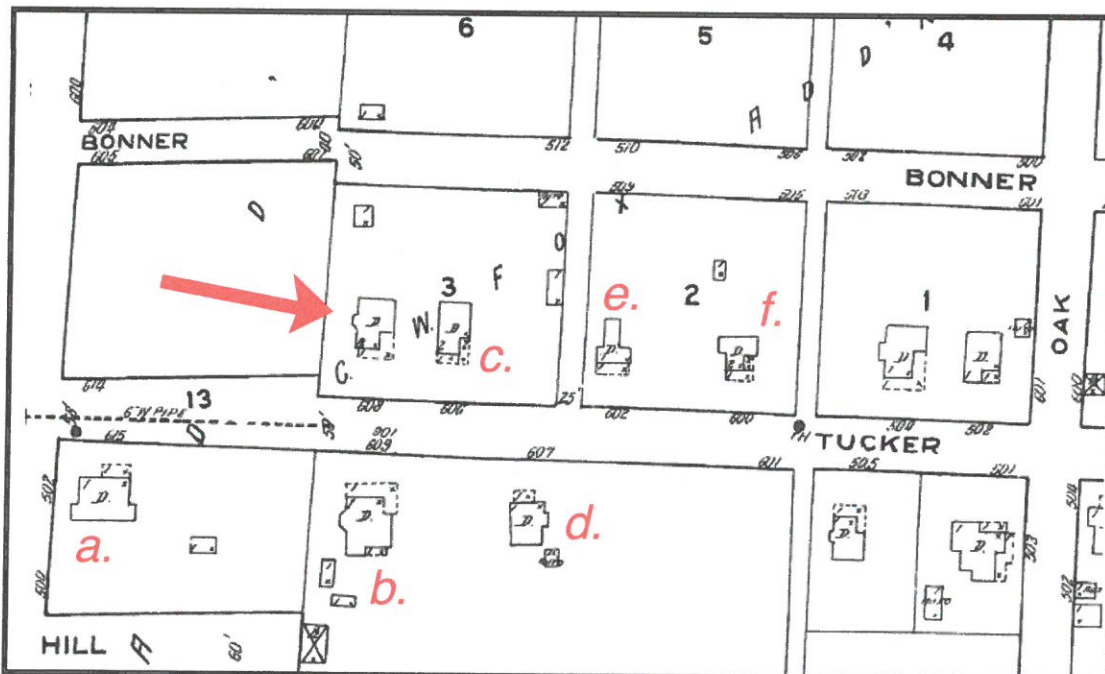
F. Drawings



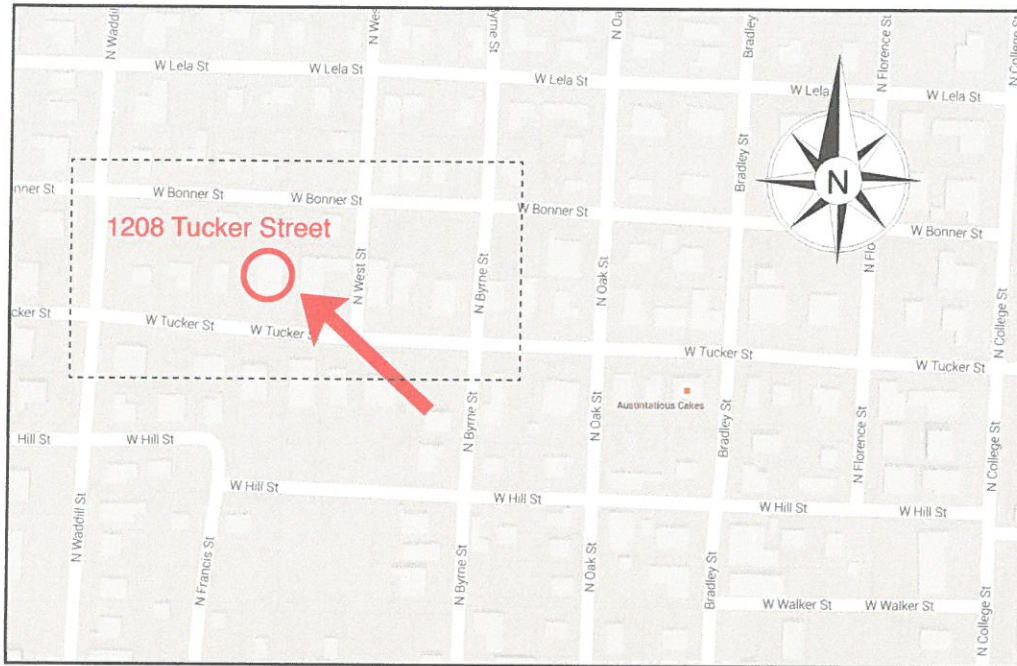
This survey plat dated from 2015 shows the Dr. J Knight House facing south onto Tucker Street.



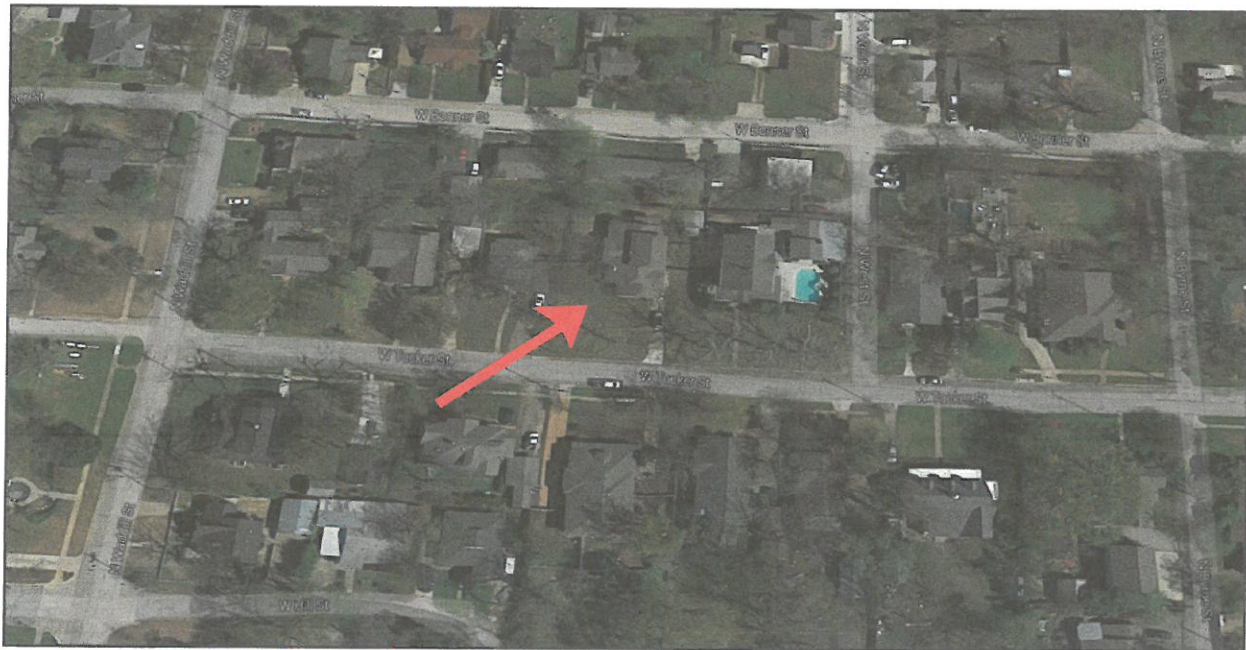
This Sanborn Map from 1914 shows no structures on the block that would later become the George W Fox Addition.



This Sanborn Map from 1920 shows Dr. J knight's house (arrow) and several other structures. Neighbors include a) Richard Bass, b) Wick Graves, c) Jesse Atkinson, d) A.L. Williams, e) L.C. Johnson, and f) William D. Oates.

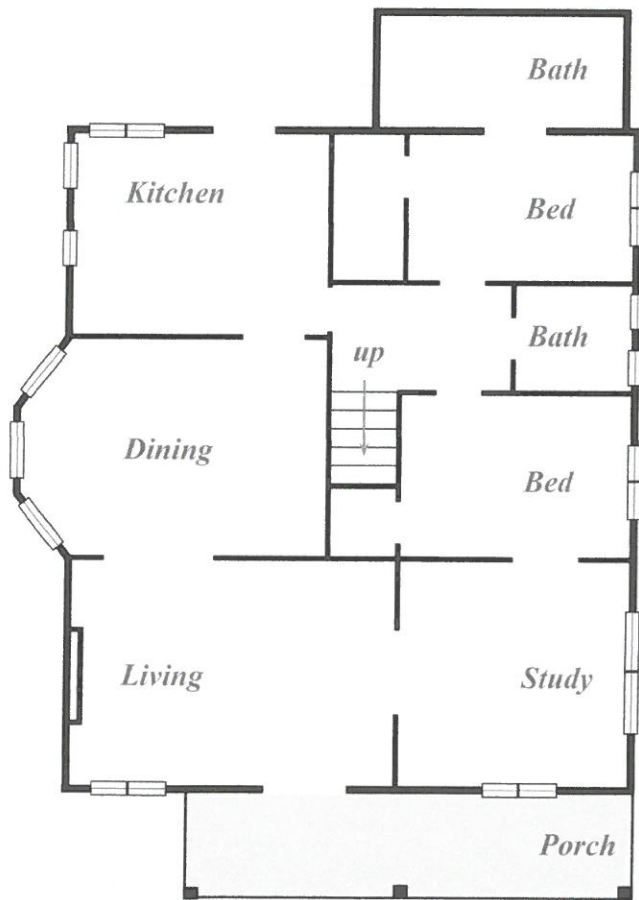


The map above shows the neighborhood around 1208 Tucker Street bounded by Waddill Street to the west and College Street to the east. The aerial photo below shows the immediate neighborhood near the intersection of Tucker and West Street.

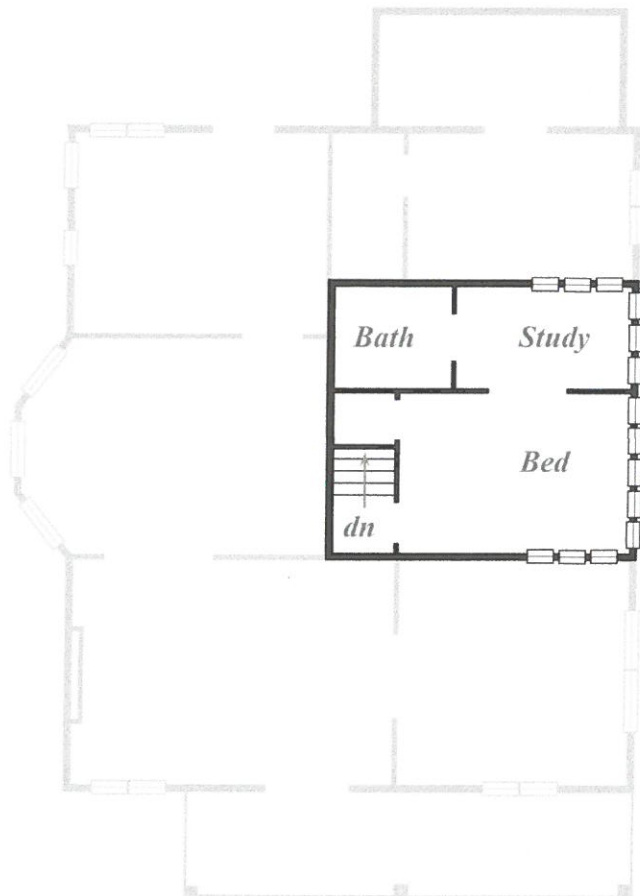


Floor Plan

This plan shows the Dr. J. Knight House as it currently exists. In 1953 the Knights altered the original porch, enclosing part of it to create a study adjacent to the living room. Sometime after 1972, an en suite bath was added to the bedroom at the rear of the house.



First Floor



Second Floor

G. Photographs

In 1906, Dr. Jonas Knight opened his practice in an office on the second floor of the Collin County National Bank building. This building was located on the southwest corner of the intersection at Tennessee and Louisiana Streets. It was torn down in the early 1930s and replaced with a two-story, art deco style building by F.B. Pope.



the Foote Building



Around 1910, Dr. Knight moved to the Foote Building located on the northwest corner of the intersection at Kentucky and Virginia Streets. This building was originally a hotel in 1877 but remodeled to accommodate offices about the time Dr. Knight moved in. He kept his office here until 1915. The building was destroyed by fire in 1929.



In 1915, Dr. Knight moved his office from the Foote Building to the newly constructed Fox Building on East Virginia Street. He kept his office here for the next 40 years. In 1955, he moved to the Thurman Building at 311 North Tennessee Street. Five months later he died of a heart attack.



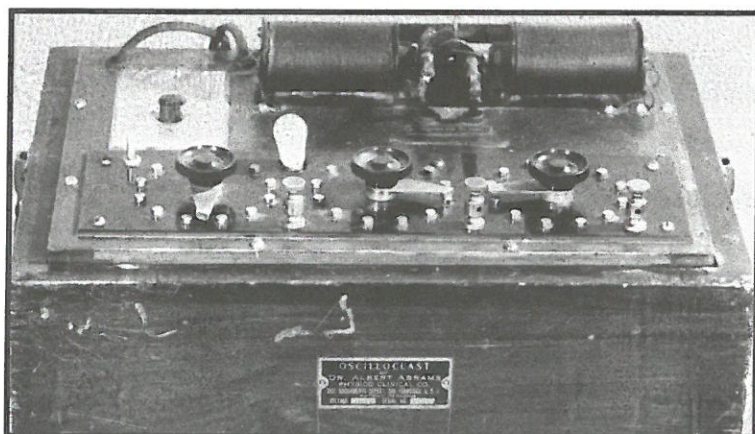
In 1904 at that age of 20, Jonas Knight graduated from the American School of Osteopathy in Kirksville, Missouri founded by Andrew Taylor Still in 1892. Osteopathy seeks to treat disease through the manipulation and adjustment of the patient's tissue and bones. Since this approach was outside the medical mainstream, it was not without its critics. There existed great enmity between osteopathy and the medical establishment. However, the movement received acceptance among the general public. Mark Twain was perhaps its best known and most vocal supporter.



This picture (at left) shows the graduating class of 1904. One of Jonas' classmates was Wilson Lampton from Butler, Missouri. He was 26 years older than Jonas and had a daughter that Jonas married two years after graduation.

Dr. Jonas Knight
(1884-1955)

Dr. Wilson E. Lampton
(1858-1921)

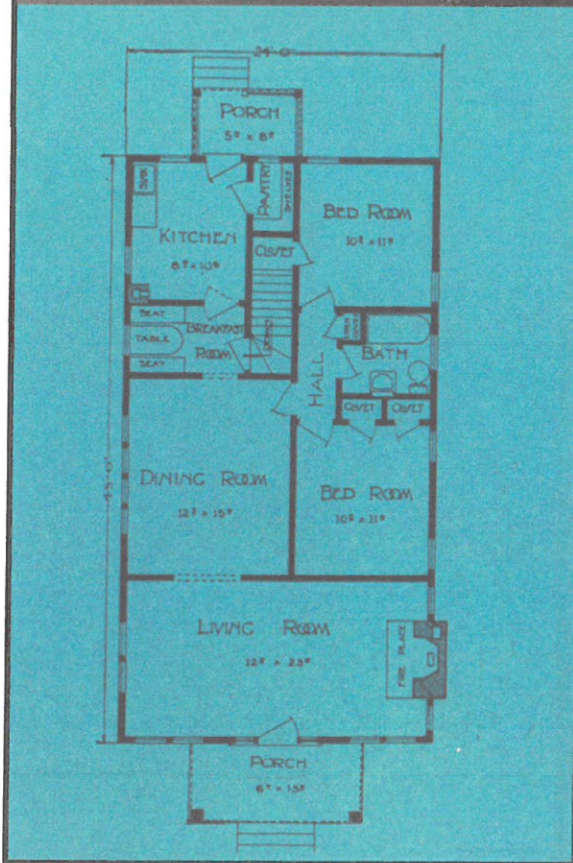


Dr. Knight used a device called a ossilloclast invented by Dr. Albert Abrams for the diagnosis and treatment of disease. It was intended to measure the disequilibrium in electronic harmony in the body.

The most distinctive design element of the Dr. J. Knight House is its application of the clipped gable, also known as a jerkin-head roof. On this page are two examples excerpted from pattern books from the early 1920s.

This type of roof was especially popular on Craftsman-style bungalows but it was also used with other styles including Queen Anne, Italian Renaissance, and Tudor.

It has been said that it "humbles" a dwelling by mitigating the soaring aspirations of a typical gable roof.



The Grayson

MY home! Delightfully attractive, substantially erected, practical in arrangement—nothing less could express the sentiments that form the tie between owner and home—the Grayson. A personality that is unusual, marks the designer's work on this bungalow. It is correct in line, and harmonious in detail.

Much thought was expended in planning the interior. Every room has an attraction in its careful layout for light and convenience. The living room and dining room are both at the front of the home, being divided by French doors. Butler's pantry between dining room and kitchen, is modern in thought and practical in effect. Both doors on butler's pantry are of the double action type. Large kitchen, well lighted, is another feature of the Grayson. Notice the efficient layout—from the kitchen, direct access may be had to rear porch, hall leading to living room and front entrance, cellar entrance, and to butler's pantry and dining room, and this with no sacrifice of necessary wall space for stove, work-table, kitchen cabinet, etc. The hallway from living room opens onto the large bedrooms, with closets, bathroom and linen closet.

For price of the Grayson, refer to inside of front cover. See General Specifications on pages 12 and 13, and Terms on page 2.

Floor Plan The Grayson

See prices on inside of front cover.



In an attempt to encourage people to buy war bonds, Lieut. Haig from Bar-ron Field near Fort Worth took sev-eral McKinney residents for airplane rides in a biplane similar to this in 1919. Dr. Knight was a passenger on one of these flights. Another passen-ger was Miss Ruth McKinney which gave her the distinction of being the first woman in Collin County to fly in an airplane.

Why it's True Blue

THE Oakland Six is true blue because it was designed with one very definite purpose in mind—to make it the finest light six in its class. Take Oakland closed cars for example. Here are real automobiles. They are true blue because their distinctive Fisher-built bodies are real closed car bodies—with no makeshifts nor compromises entering into their construction or appointments.

Oakland's Six-Cylinder Smoothness Means Greater Closed-Car Comfort

The Oakland engine is true blue because in it the natural advantages of a "six" have been developed to a remarkable degree. There is freedom from annoying vibration, which is essential to complete closed-car satisfaction; there is extreme flexibility which makes gear changing rarely necessary; there is a surprising ability to respond to unusual demands quickly and without fuss—all of which qualities you will surely seek in selecting your next closed-car.

Then there are four-wheel brakes (you cer-tainly should not buy a car without this proved essential); exclusive centralized con-trols on the steering wheel; a special body finish which retains its lustre indefinitely, and a dozen other features.

Isn't it true that the problem of choosing the right car is merely a matter of getting the most and the best for your money? Examine the True Blue Oakland Six. Drive it yourself. We welcome frank comparison.

Watkins & Cockrell Garage, McKinney, Texas

Sedan

\$1445

Price as shown

Coupe for three

\$1395

Price as shown

In 1925, Dr. Knight had an Oakland automobile modified in order to undertake a month-long road trip through the rugged terrain of the western states. He had Chas. A. Turrentine of the Scotty Forsyth shop construct a bed which carried all the conveniences of a modern apartment, including a kitchenette, cook stove, hot and cold water, bed room, and lounging room. The roof of the car could be raised so that one could walk about without difficulty.

Current Photos (2015)

Historic marker to be placed here.



South Front



Southeast Corner



East Side



Northeast Corner



Northwest Corner



Southwest Corner

Current Photos (2015)

1208 Tucker Street neighborhood context



View looking west



View looking east

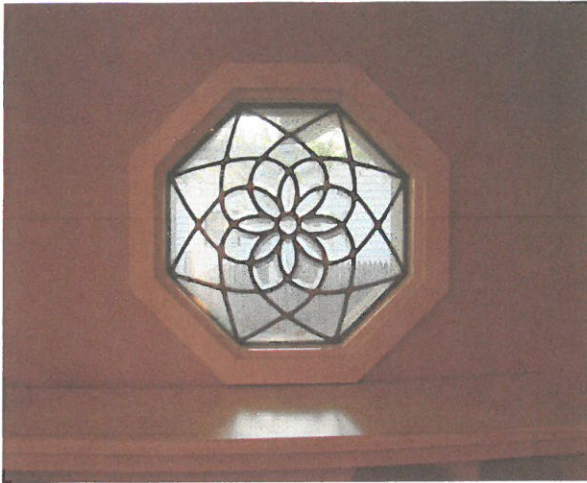


Creating a clipped gable on a wide overhang presents a difficult construction problem. The builder here addresses the weight of the eave with extra knee-bracing. This was not a common treatment of the day. Clipped gables were not typically applied to deep overhanging eaves.



Craftsman-style door plate on front door.

Architectural Accents



Octagonal cut-glass, fleurette windows flank the fireplace



Supporting the nature theme are ceiling mounted light fixtures.



Extra-wide door in the Craftsman style with sidelights.



Brass switch plate is framed by molding.



Brass door set with separate knob and key-hole plate.



Chandelier with stylized acanthus motif under a crescent moon.

H. Additional Information

"OSTEOPATHY."

It is not a system of rubbing as you are often told by the prejudiced or else ignorant. It is not Swedish movement as others might say. It is not Massage. It is not called Magnetic Healing by those that know any thing about it. It is not Christian Science nor does it bear any relation to it. It is not a faith cure as some imagine. An Osteopath does not give drugs for the purpose of curing diseases. When you are told that Osteopathy is any of the above methods you are either intentionally misinformed or else the individual does no more know what he is talking about than does a lunatic. Osteopathy is a science of less than twenty years of existence and is recognized in over forty states of these United States. It has been proven beyond a question of a doubt that it is a good thing for the ailments of humanity or else it could not have attained the recognition that it has. It is within the power of any sane person to learn it. It requires three years of nine months each to complete the course and with the old school practitioner it requires four years of six months each to complete the course. Every thing being taught in the Osteopathic schools except Materia-Medica. The Osteopathist is dependent upon a thorough knowledge of Anatomy and Physiology and claims that within every human body there are the proper elements to carry on life to a good ripe old age if kept in the proper shape and again he lays claim to the fact that if one part of the body gets out of order it is subject to put another part out and so on disturbing the functions and processes that is required to carry on good health and naturally disease sets in. The Osteopathic principle is to remove the interference as a mechanic would a piece of machinery that is out of alignment and in so doing he has established a cure, for when the cause of a trouble is removed the trouble can't exist and naturally resume their functioning power. These corrections are made by scientific methods of manipulation. If a physician knows the normal it is no trouble to find the abnormal and being able to find the abnormal it should not be a great task to correct it. Osteopathy is not a cure all, but its cures and benefits are of a very highly satisfactory percent. of the following troubles:

Nervous Diseases, Diseases of the Stomach and Bowels, Diseases of Women, Constitutional Disorders, Diseases of Childhood, Fevers, Diseases of the Circulatory system. The science of Osteopathy has in store cures and benefits for many of the afflicted who never receives same for the reason that they are often told that it won't do them any good by those that don't know any thing about it.

Being an Osteopath strictly I cannot condemn the practice of any school for I know no profession other than the Osteopathic and I do all the good possible therewith.

If you suffer with a chronic ailment consult me and I will give you my honest, sincere opinion as to whether my practice (Osteopathy) can cure or benefit you.

Dr. J. KNIGHT
OFFICE IN FOOTE BUILDING

In 1912 Dr. Knight placed this info-ad in the Courier-Gazette to mitigate criticism and educated people about the nature of osteopathy. It also was intended to remind people of his new office in the Foote Building at the corner of Virginia and Kentucky.

I. References & Resources

Collin County Deeds Records Office.

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

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

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The Way It All Began, by Helen Gibbard Hall, Collin County Historical Society, 2006.

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).

A History of Collin County, by J. Lee and Lillian Stambaugh (1958).

A Field Guide to American Houses, by Virginia and Lee McAlester, Knopf, (1984).

A History of Collin County, Texas, by Stambaugh and Stambaugh (1958).

Collin County History Website by Joy Gough, collincountyhistory.com

“Portal to Texas History,” texashistory.unt.edu

Ancestry.com

McKinney Public Library

Kirksville College of Osteopathic Medicine, atsu.edu

Research assistance provided by Tom Michero

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