

**HISTORIC LANDMARK COMMISSION  
MARCH 28, 2016  
DEMOLITION AND RELOCATION PERMITS  
HDP-2016-0034  
2102 RIO GRANDE STREET**

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**PROPOSAL**

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Demolish a ca. 1917 house.

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**ARCHITECTURE**

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Two-story, hipped-roof, stuccoed frame house with both stories of the full-width inset front porch enclosed with modern metal-framed commercial fenestration; single 1:1 fenestration elsewhere on the house.

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**RESEARCH**

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The house appears to have been built in 1917 by Walter S. and Maggie Brown, who had previously lived next door at 2100 Rio Grande Street. Walter S. Brown was a merchant at Anderson, Grimes County, Texas, who moved back to Grimes County around 1921 after living here for about 4 years. The house was then purchased by Harvey S. and Sallie Ratliff, who lived here until around 1935. Harvey Ratliff was born in Williamson County, Texas, and was a ranch owner in West Texas. The Ratliffs moved out to rural Odessa in 1935; Harvey Ratliff died in Mineral Wells in 1943.

The Ratliffs' daughter, Ruth, married Francis L. McNamara, the son of William McNamara, a pioneer confectioner in Austin, who had his candy manufacturing company at 318 Congress Avenue. Francis McNamara worked as salesman for a music company in 1920, according to the census report, and then went to work as a shipping clerk for his father before his marriage to Ruth Ratliff around 1928. After his marriage, Francis McNamara and his older brother, William, purchased the Dr. Pepper Bottling Company at 607 Red River Street. After around 1936, Francis McNamara ran the business on his own until his retirement in 1964. He and Ruth moved from this house around 1965.

The house was converted to a mixed-use building in the late 1960s, housing the Ralph McElroy Company, a publishing house, as well as providing residential quarters for Eleanor McElroy, the manager of the business.

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**STAFF COMMENTS**

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The house is listed in the Comprehensive Cultural Resources Survey (1984) but without a priority for research.

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

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

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Release the permit upon completion of a City of Austin Documentation Package, consisting of photographs of all elevations, a dimensioned sketch plan, and a narrative history, for archiving at the Austin History Center. The house has been significantly modified over the years, and no longer retains its integrity of materials and design.

## LOCATION MAP



-  SUBJECT TRACT
-  PENDING CASE
-  ZONING BOUNDARY

1" = 208'

## NOTIFICATIONS

CASE#: HDP-2016-0034  
2102 RIO GRANDE ST

This product is for informational purposes and may not have been prepared for or be suitable for legal, engineering, or surveying purposes. It does not represent an on-the-ground survey and represents only the approximate relative location of property boundaries.

This product has been produced by CTM for the sole purpose of geographic reference. No warranty is made by the City of Austin regarding specific accuracy or completeness.



2102 Rio Grande Street  
ca. 1917



## OCCUPANCY HISTORY

### A. 2102 Rio Grande Street

From City Directories  
Austin History Center  
Prepared by City Historic Preservation Office  
February, 2016

1992	Ralph McElroy Translation Company Debbi Cooper, director
1985-86	Ralph McElroy Translation Company Debbi Cooper, office manager
1981	Ralph McElroy Company, publishers Eleanor McElroy, renter Manager, Ralph McElroy Company
1977	Ralph McElroy Company, publishers Eleanor McElroy, renter Manager, Ralph McElroy Company
1973	H.L. and Eleanor McElroy, renters No occupation listed NOTE: The directory indicates that H.L. and Eleanor McElroy were new residents at this address.

1968	Vacant
1962	Francis L. and Ruth R. McNamara, owners Proprietor, Dr. Pepper Bottling Company, 718 W. 5 <sup>th</sup> Street.
1959	Francis L. and Ruth R. McNamara, owners Proprietor, Dr. Pepper Bottling Company, 718 W. 5 <sup>th</sup> Street.
1955	Francis L. and Ruth R. McNamara, owners Proprietor, Dr. Pepper Bottling Company, 718 W. 5 <sup>th</sup> Street.
1952	Francis L. and Ruth R. McNamara, owners Proprietor, Dr. Pepper Bottling Company, 718 W. 5 <sup>th</sup> Street.
1949	Francis L. and Ruth R. McNamara, owners Proprietor, Dr. Pepper Bottling Company, 718 W. 5 <sup>th</sup> Street.
1947	Francis L. and Ruth McNamara, owners Proprietor, Dr. Pepper Bottling Company, 718 W. 5 <sup>th</sup> Street.
1944-45	Francis L. and Ruth R. McNamara, owners Proprietor, Dr. Pepper Bottling Company, 718 W. 5 <sup>th</sup> Street.
1941	Francis L. and Ruth R. McNamara, owners Proprietor, Dr. Pepper Bottling Company, 718 W. 5 <sup>th</sup> Street.
1939	Francis L. and Ruth R. McNamara, owners Proprietor, Dr. Pepper Bottling Company, bottlers of Dr. Pepper, Delaware Punch, and soda water, 607 Red River Street.
1937	Francis L. and Ruth R. McNamara (not listed as owners) Proprietor, Dr. Pepper Bottling Company, bottlers of Dr. Pepper, Cascade ginger ale, and soda water, 607 Red River Street.
1935	Harvey S. and Sallie Ratliff, owners Ranchman Also listed are Frances L. and Ruth R. McNamara as renters; he was the proprietor (with William F. McNamara), of the Dr. Pepper Bottling Company, bottlers of Dr. Pepper, Cascade ginger ale, and soda water, 607 Red River Street.
1932-22	Francis L. and Ruth R. McNamara, renters Proprietor (with William F. McNamara), Dr. Pepper Bottling Company, bottlers of Dr. Pepper, Cascade ginger ale, and soda water, and distributors of XXX Pearl Beer, 607 Red River Street.
1930-31	Francis L. and Ruth McNamara, renters Proprietor (with William F. McNamara), Dr. Pepper Bottling Company, bottlers of Dr. Pepper, Cascade ginger ale, and soda water, 607 Red River Street.
1929	Francis L. and Ruth McNamara, renters Salesman, McNamara Bros., (William J. McNamara, proprietor), wholesale confectioners, 318 Congress Avenue.

- 1927 Harvey S. and Sally Ratliff, owners  
Ranchman  
NOTE: Francis L. McNamara (no wife listed) was a shipping clerk residing at the home of his parents, William J. and Fidelia McNamara, at 807 W. 19<sup>th</sup> Street. His father was the proprietor of McNamara Bros., wholesale confectioners, 318 Congress Avenue.
- 1924 Harvey S. and Sallie Ratliff, owners  
Ranchman  
Also listed are Mary Ratliff, a student at the University of Texas; and Ruth Ratliff, a student at the University of Texas.
- 1922 Harvey S. and Sallie Ratliff, owners  
No occupation listed  
Also listed is Mary Ratliff, a student at the University of Texas.
- 1920 Walter S. and Maggie Brown, owners  
Farmer  
NOTE: Harvey S. and Sallie Ratliff are not listed in the directory.
- 1918 Walter S. and Maggie Brown, owners  
Farmer
- 1916 The address is not listed in the directory.  
NOTE: Walter S. Brown is listed at 2100 Rio Grande Street; he was a farmer.

## **BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES**

### **Walter S. and Maggie Brown (ca. 1917 – ca. 1921)**

The 1920 U.S. Census shows S.W. and Maggie W. Brown as the owners of this house. S.W. Brown was 54, had been born in Texas, and was a merchant. Maggie Brown was 49, had been born in Texas, and had no occupation listed. They had 2 children: Stella, 17; and Walter, 12, both of whom had been born in Texas.

The 1910 U.S. Census shows Walter S. and Maggie Brown in Grimes County, Texas. Walter S. Brown was 44, had been born in Texas, and was a retail merchant of dry goods. Maggie Brown was 40, had been born in Texas, and had no occupation listed. They had 4 children: Lizzie, 19; Leona, 13; Stella, 9; and Walter S., 2. All the children had been born in Texas.

The 1900 U.S. Census shows Walter S. Brown as a 34-year old general merchandise merchant in Grimes County, Texas. Maggie Brown was 31. Their 2 children were Lizzie, 8; and Leona, 2.

Walter Scott Brown died in Grimes County, Texas in 1941. He was born in 1865 in Anderson, Grimes County, Texas, and was a retired farmer. Maggie Uzzell Brown died in Grimes County, Texas in 1962. She had been born in 1870 in Grimes County, and was a housewife.

### **Harvey and Sallie Ratliff (ca. 1921 – ca. 1935)**

The 1920 U.S. Census shows H.S. and Sallie Ratliff as the renters of the house at 1806 [?] Lavaca Street in Austin. H.S. Ratliff was 63, had been born in Texas, and was a ranch owner. Sallie Ratliff was 43, had been born in Texas, and had no occupation listed. They had 2 daughters: Mary, 17; and Ruth, 14, both of whom had been born in Texas. Mary Ratliff is listed as a student; Ruth Ratliff had no occupation listed. There is also a listing for a nephew Cubes [?] Ratliff, 17, who had been born in Texas, and was a student.

The 1930 U.S. Census shows H.S. and Sallie Ratliff as the owners of this house, which was worth \$6,500. H.S. Ratliff was 73, had been born in Texas, and had no occupation listed. Sallie Ratliff was 52, had been born in Texas, and had no occupation listed. Additionally in the house was their daughter, Ruth, and Ruth's husband, F.L. McNamara. F.L. McNamara was 27, had been born in Texas, and was a salesman in a music store. Ruth McNamara was 24, had been born in Texas, and had no occupation listed. Sallie Ratliff's mother, Mary K. Whittenberg, also lived in the house. She was an 80-year old Kentucky-born widow with no occupation listed.

By 1940, according to the census report of that year, H.S. and Sallie Ratliff were living north of Odessa, Texas. H.S. Ratliff was 83, and is listed as a ranch owner. Sallie Ratliff was 62, and had no occupation listed. With them lived their daughter, Mary Hurt, 37; and Mary's husband, Sam F. Hurt, 42, as well as Sam and Mary Hurt's two children, Sam, Jr., 13; and Buzzy, 10. Sam F. Hurt was born in Texas and is listed as a ranch owner. Also in the household was Sallie Ratliff's mother, Mary C. Whittenburg, 90.

## Pioneer Odessa Cattleman Dies

MINERAL WELLS, June 20.—(AP) H. S. Ratcliff, pioneer cattleman of Odessa, died in his hotel room here at 9 a. m. Tuesday after a heart attack. He was 86 years of age.

He arose at his usual time, had breakfast with his wife and returned to his room, where he was found dead a few minutes later. The Ratcliffs were here on one of their frequent visits to Mineral Wells.

The body was at a local funeral home, awaiting arrival of two daughters, Mrs. Sam Hurt of Odessa and Mrs. F. L. McNamara of Austin.

Ratcliff, former associate of George W. Littlefield of Austin, was born Oct. 28, 1856, in Williamson county.

Ratcliff and his family lived for a number of years in Austin, but in recent years he had spent a part of his time at his ranch home north of Odessa and the remaining months of each year at Mineral Wells and San Antonio.

Survivors include his widow; two daughters, Mrs. Sam Hurt of Odessa and Mrs. F. L. McNamara of Austin.

Obituary of Harvey S. Ratliff  
Austin American, June 30, 1943

**Francis L. and Ruth Ratliff McNamara (ca. 1928 – ca. 1965)**

The 1920 U.S. Census shows Francis McNamara as the 16-year old son (although the census reports shows him as the daughter) of William and Fidelia McNamara, who lived at 406 W. 5<sup>th</sup> Street in Austin. Francis McNamara had been born in Texas, and had no occupation listed. His father, William McNamara, was 47, had been born in Texas to Irish-born parents, and was a candy manufacturer. His mother, Fidelia McNamara, was 43, had been born in Kansas, and had no occupation listed. Francis had 2 older siblings: William 20; and Ruth, 19, both of whom had been born in Texas. Neither had an occupation listed.

The 1930 U.S. Census F.L. and Ruth McNamara living in this house with Ruth's parents, H.S. and Sallie Ratliff. F.L. McNamara was 27, had been born in Texas, and was a salesman in a music store. Ruth McNamara was 24, had been born in Texas, and had no occupation listed.

The 1940 U.S. Census shows F.L. and Ruth McNamara as the renters of this house, but shows that they paid 0 in rent. F.L. McNamara was 37, had been born in Texas, and was the proprietor of a bottling works. Ruth McNamara was 34, had been born in Texas, and had no occupation listed. They had 2 children: Ruth, 9; and Francis, Jr., 5, both of whom had been born in Texas. The McNamara family had a live-in maid, Lena Fischer, 23, who had been born in Texas, and is listed as a housekeeper.

## **Francis L. 'Babe' McNamara**

Francis L. 'Babe' McNamara, 81, of 1208 Rockcliff Road died Wednesday.

He was the owner and manager of the Dr. Pepper Bottling Company of Austin for many years until he retired from business in 1964. He was a member of the Knights of Columbus and St. Theresa's Church. He attended St. Edward's University and Texas A&M.

Surviving are his widow, Ruth R. McNamara; his daughter, Ruth M. Sprague; his son, Francis L. 'Hank' McNamara Jr.; grandchildren, Francis L. McNamara III, Mark Dashiell Chambers Jr., Michael McNamara Chambers, Mary Victoria McNamara, Willard Mills McNamara, James Johnson McNamara, Claire Elizabeth McNamara, David C.C. Sprague and Charlotte C.R. Sprague; and great-grandson, Brian Manning Chambers.

A rosary service was held on Wednesday evening at Weed-Corley Funeral Home. Funeral services will be held Thursday at 2:00 PM at Assumption Cemetery Chapel with Reverend Richard E. McCabe officiating.

Pallbearers will be Mr. McNamara's grandsons.

Obituary of Francis L. McNamara  
Austin American-Statesman, April 26, 1984



## Ruth Ratliff McNamara

Ruth Ratliff McNamara, 1208 Rock-cliff Road, and for many years at 2102 Rio Grande Street. Born June 7, 1905, the daughter of pioneer West Texas rancher, Harvey Stewart Ratliff and Sallie Whittenburg Ratliff, died June 7, 1996.

She was a graduate of the University of Texas at Austin where she received her B.S. in Home Economics, and was a Bluebonnet Belle and a member of Phi Mu sorority.

She was the widow of Francis Leo McNamara (1984), and beloved mother of Ruth McNamara Sprague and Francis L. ("Hank") McNamara, Jr.

She was predeceased by her sister, Mary Ratliff Hurt McCollum, of Odessa, Texas.

Grandchildren, Mark D. Chambers, Jr., David Chase Cameron Sprague, Charlotte Clare Ratliff Sprague, Francis L. ("Dub") McNamara, III, Mary Victoria McNamara Clifford, Willard Mills McNamara, James Johnson McNamara, Claire Elizabeth McNamara, Carolyn McKeown Bargsley and Quin John Sprague.

Great-grandchildren, Brian Manning Chambers, Katharine Ratliff Chambers, Lauren Michelle McNamara and Kelly McNamara Clifford.

Her church affiliation was with Our Lady Queen of Peace Chapel at St. Edward's University.

She was a member of the Settlement Club and the Austin Country Club, Dance Club, and Baby Home Guild.

Mrs. McNamara's family wishes to express its gratitude to Moira L. James, Melinda Williams, Janice Worthen, Sandra Henry, Shirley James, Carolyn Wright, Marilyn Crider, and Joyce Phillips, and the staff of Heartland Health Care Center.

Rosary service 7:00 p.m., Tuesday, June 11, 1996, Weed-Corley-Fish Funeral Home.

Funeral services 2:00 p.m., Wednesday, June 12, 1996, St. Edward's University Chapel.

Arrangements by Weed-Corley-Fish Funeral Home, 3125 N. Lamar, 452-8811.

Obituary of Ruth Ratliff McNamara  
Austin American-Statesman, June 10, 1996

Receipt No. ....

## Application for Sewer Connection

Nº 37989

Austin, Texas, .....

7-24 1917

To the Superintendent of Sanitary Sewer Division, City of Austin, Texas.

Sir:—

I hereby make application for sewer connection and instructions on premises owned by

at

2102 Rio Grande Street,

further described as Lot 64.25x110' Block 24 Outlot ..... Division .....

subdivision Div 12 Plat, 46 which is to be used as a .....

In this place there are to be installed ..... fixtures. Plumbing Permit No. ....

I agree to pay the City of Austin, the regular ordinance charge.

Depth at Prop. Line .....

Respectfully,

Stub Out  
Connected }

Located old Tap 4" VC.

(Location)

Date .....

4 8 1/2' W of W 12' Red Dr St  
in Alley 2' deep @ 12.  
12-20-63

By .....

NOTE: Connection Instruction

6" Sewer in Alley

A-659

Sewer connection application for this house (1917)