

**HISTORIC LANDMARK COMMISSION  
JULY 25, 2016  
DEMOLITION AND RELOCATION PERMITS  
HDP-2016-0458  
901 WEST AVENUE**

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**PROPOSAL**

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Almost total demolition of a ca. 1902 house to construct a second story addition and additional ground-floor space.

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**ARCHITECTURE**

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The existing house is a one-story, square-plan, pyramidal-roofed frame house with what appears to be a non-historic gabled entry hood on the West Avenue side; single 1:1 fenestration; diamond-paned sidelights and transom at the main door. City building permits show that a full-width porch on the south side of the house was enclosed around 1945.

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**RESEARCH**

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The house is believed to have been built around 1902, and the 1900 Sanborn map appears to show another house on this site. The history of this site prior to 1902 is unknown. The first known occupants of this house were Charley and Mary Schwarzer, who lived here until 1908. Both Charley and Mary Schwarzer had been born in Germany, and immigrated to the United States with their oldest child in 1881. Charley Schwarzer is listed as a draftsman. An adult son, George, lived with his parents in this house; George Schwarzer was a pressman for Von Boeckmann-Jones, a local printing and bookbinding company.

Jeff S. Wimbish, who owned a drug store on Congress Avenue, and his wife, Sadie, lived here from around 1911 to around 1919. The Wimbish family then moved to Dallas by 1920, where Jeff Wimbish died in 1922.

Arno W. Brill, Jr. and his wife, Kathleen, owned and occupied this house in the 1930s. Arno W. Brill, Jr. was the son of A.W. Brill, a leather maker and dealer (whose home on W. 9<sup>th</sup> Street is a city landmark). Arno W. Brill, Jr. worked for his father as a salesman, both in the store at 302 E. 6<sup>th</sup> Street, and traveling.

From around 1951 until his death in 1999, the house was occupied by Edward and Helen Nassour. Ed Nassour had a number of jobs while living in this house, including work for the IRS, while Helen worked for the telephone company as an operator. Ed eventually went to work in his family's liquor business as a salesman and distributor.

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**STAFF COMMENTS**

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The house is listed in the Comprehensive Cultural Resources Survey (1984) as a Priority 2 for research.

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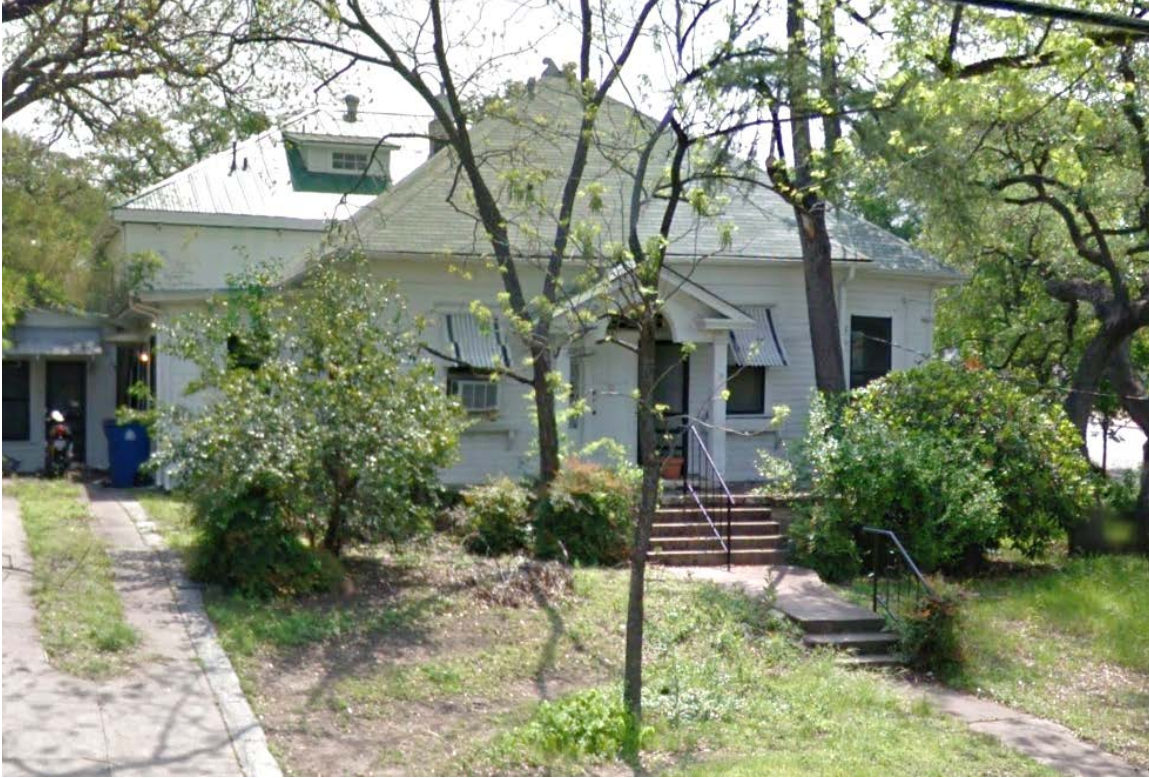
**STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

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While staff contends that the proposed building project violates almost every philosophy of historic preservation in its obliteration of this house, we have to look at whether the house truly qualifies as a historic landmark, and staff does not believe that does. The house has some architectural significance, but has been modified over the years to its current configuration, it is in poor condition, and the historical associations do not appear to rise to the level of individual designation as a historic landmark, so staff must reluctantly recommend release of 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, and to counsel the owner to seriously reconsider his plans for this house to design an addition that will complement rather than obliterate the existing house.

901 West Avenue / 706 W. 9<sup>th</sup> Street  
ca. 1902



### OCCUPANCY HISTORY

901 West Avenue / 706 W. 9<sup>th</sup> Street

City Directory Research, Austin History Center  
By City Historic Preservation Office  
July, 2016

1992	901 West Avenue:	Edward J. and Helen Nassour, owners Retired
	706 W. 9 <sup>th</sup> Street:	The address is not listed in the directory.
1985-86	901 West Avenue:	Edward J. and Helen Nassour, owners Retired
	706 W. 9 <sup>th</sup> Street:	The address is not listed in the directory.
1981	901 West Avenue:	Edward J. and Helen Nassour, owners Retired
	706 W. 9 <sup>th</sup> Street:	No return
1977	901 West Avenue:	Edward J. and Helen Nassour, owners Retired
	706 W. 9 <sup>th</sup> Street:	Vacant

1973	901 West Avenue:	Edward J. and Helen Nassour, owners Salesman, Bargain Corner, liquors, 1130 W. 6 <sup>th</sup> Street.
	706 W. 9 <sup>th</sup> Street:	Vivian Etier, renter Waitress, Piccadilly Cafeteria, 801 Congress Avenue.
1968	901 West Avenue:	Edward J. and Helen Nassour, owners Salesman
	706 W. 9 <sup>th</sup> Street:	Vivian Etier, renter Waitress, Piccadilly Cafeteria, 801 Congress Avenue.
1965	901 West Avenue:	Edward J. and Helen Nassour, owners Edward: Clerk, IRS Helen: Service assistant, Telephone Company
	706 W. 9 <sup>th</sup> Street:	No return
1962	901 West Avenue:	Edward J. and Helen Nassour, owners Edward: Salesman Helen: Operator, Telephone Company
	706 W. 9 <sup>th</sup> Street:	Clyde and Shirley Krenz, renters U.S. Air Force
1959	901 West Avenue:	Edward J. and Helen Nassour, owners Edward: Salesman Helen: Operator, Telephone Company
	706 W. 9 <sup>th</sup> Street:	Alice Meiske, renter Operator, Telephone Company
1955	901 West Avenue:	Helen Nassour, renter Operator, Telephone Company
	706 W. 9 <sup>th</sup> Street:	Edward J. Nassour, renter Salesman, Pilot Distributing Company (not listed in the alphabetical section of the directory).
1952	901 West Avenue:	Edward J. and Helen Nassour, renters Edward: Manager, Abe's Place (Abraham Nassour, proprietor), beer, 709 E. 6 <sup>th</sup> Street. Helen: Operator, Telephone Company
	706 W. 9 <sup>th</sup> Street:	Vacant
1949	901 West Avenue:	Tom and Joyce Attra, renters Tom: Manager, Blue Bird Package Store, liquors, 221 Congress Avenue. Joyce: Assistant manager Blue Bird Package Store, 221 Congress Avenue.
	706 W. 9 <sup>th</sup> Street:	Ray L. and Janet Anderson, renters Carpenter
1947	901 West Avenue:	Dixie and Isabel Schuessler, renters Driver, Davidson Sash & Soor, 500 San Marcos Street.
	706 W. 9 <sup>th</sup> Street:	E. Wayne and Lily Wilson, renters Student, University of Texas
1944-45	901 West Avenue:	Helen Miles, renter No occupation listed

	706 W. 9 <sup>th</sup> Street:	The address is not listed in the directory.
1941	901 West Avenue:	Elvie Claybrook, owner Widow, John D. Claybrook No occupation listed
		Arthur and Marguerite Flenniken, renters Photographer
	706 W. 9 <sup>th</sup> Street:	The address is not listed in the directory.
1939	901 West Avenue:	Vacant
	706 W. 9 <sup>th</sup> Street:	The address is not listed in the directory.
1937	901 West Avenue:	Arno W., Jr. and Kathleen Brill, owners With A.W. Brill, leathers, 302 E. 6 <sup>th</sup> Street.
	706 W. 9 <sup>th</sup> Street:	The address is not listed in the directory.
1935	901 West Avenue:	Arno W., Jr. and Kathleen Brill, owners With A.W. Brill, leathers, 302 E. 6 <sup>th</sup> Street.
	706 W. 9 <sup>th</sup> Street:	The address is not listed in the directory.
1932-33	901 West Avenue:	Arno W., Jr. and Kathleen Brill, owners Salesman, A.W. Brill, leathers, 302 E. 6 <sup>th</sup> Street.
	706 W. 9 <sup>th</sup> Street:	The address is not listed in the directory.
1930-31	901 West Avenue:	Arno W., Jr. and Kathleen Brill, owners Traveling salesman
	706 W. 9 <sup>th</sup> Street:	The address is not listed in the directory.
1929	901 West Avenue:	W. Willis and Erie Carson, renters Engineer NOTE: A.W. Brill, Jr. and Kathleen Brill are listed at 903 Baylor Street; he was a traveling salesman.
	706 W. 9 <sup>th</sup> Street:	The address is not listed in the directory.
1927	901 West Avenue:	W. Willis and Erie Carson, renters Engineer, State Highway Department
	706 W. 9 <sup>th</sup> Street:	The address is not listed in the directory.
1924	901 West Avenue:	Bedford F. and Mabel Rowe, renters Agent, Japan Cotton Trading Company, 901 Littlefield Building.
	706 W. 9 <sup>th</sup> Street:	The address is not listed in the directory.
1922	901 West Avenue:	The address is not listed in the directory.
	706 W. 9 <sup>th</sup> Street:	William W. and Pearl Boyd, renters Commissioner, State Game Fish and Oyster Commission NOTE: Bedford F. and Mabel Rowe are not listed in the directory.
1920	901 West Avenue:	The address is not listed in the directory.
	706 W. 9 <sup>th</sup> Street:	Unknown – the page is missing from the city directory.
1918	901 West Avenue:	The address is not listed in the directory.

	706 W. 9 <sup>th</sup> Street:	Jeff S. and Sadie Wimbish, owners Drugs, 308 Congress Avenue
1916	901 West Avenue: 706 W. 9 <sup>th</sup> Street:	The address is not listed in the directory. Jeff S. Wimbish Druggist, 308 Congress Avenue
1914	901 West Avenue: 706 W. 9 <sup>th</sup> Street:	The address is not listed in the directory. Jeff S. Wimbish Druggist, 308 Congress Avenue
1912-13	901 West Avenue: 706 W. 9 <sup>th</sup> Street:	The address is not listed in the directory. Jeff S. Wimbish Druggist, 308 Congress Avenue
1910-11	901 West Avenue: 706 W. 9 <sup>th</sup> Street:	The address is not listed in the directory. Vacant NOTE: Jeff S. Wimbish is listed at 1103 W. 9 <sup>th</sup> Street; he was a druggist at 308 Congress Avenue.
1909-10	901 West Avenue: 706 W. 9 <sup>th</sup> Street:	The address is not listed in the directory. John H. Bond Accountant, Railroad Commission of Texas
1906-07	901 West Avenue: 706 W. 9 <sup>th</sup> Street:	The address is not listed in the directory. Charlie Schwarzer Draftsman Also listed is George Schwarzer, a pressman for Von Boeckmann-Jones, printers and bookbinders, 811 Congress Avenue.
1905	901 West Avenue: 706 W. 9 <sup>th</sup> Street:	The address is not listed in the directory. Charlie Schwarzer Draftsman
1903-04	901 West Avenue: 706 W. 9 <sup>th</sup> Street:	The address is not listed in the directory. Charlie Schwarzer No occupation listed Also listed is George Schwarzer, a press feeder for Von Boeckmann-Jones, printers and bookbinders, 811 Congress Avenue.
1900-01	Unknown.	NOTE: Charlie Schwarzer is listed at 609 W. 16 <sup>th</sup> Street; he was a draughtsman.

## BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

### Charlie and Mary Schwarzer (ca. 1902 – ca. 1908)

The 1900 U.S. Census shows Charles and Mary Schwarzer at 609 W. 16<sup>th</sup> Street. Charles Schwarzer was 51, had been born in Germany, and was a draughtsman. Mary Schwarzer was 53, had been born in Germany, and had no occupation listed. They had 4 children: George, 30, who had been born in Germany, and was printer; Annie, 17, who had been born in Texas; Willie, 15, who had been born in Texas; and Elizabeth, 7, who had been born in Texas. The German-born members of the family had immigrated to the United States in 1881.

The 1910 U.S. Census shows Charley and Mary Schwarzer at 506 W. 10<sup>th</sup> Street. Charley was a 61-year old turfsman [?]. None of their children still lived with them.

**Jeff and Sadie Wimbish (ca. 1911 – ca. 1919)**

The 1910 U.S. Census shows Jeff S. and Saidie Wimbish at 1113 W. 9<sup>th</sup> Street. Jeff Wimbish was 33, had been born in Texas, and was a druggist with his own drug store. Saidie Wimbish was 32m was born in Mississippi, and had no occupation listed. They had 2 children: Ellen, 3; and John W., 1, both of whom had been born in Texas. In addition, they had a servant, John A. Hood, an 18-year old African-American who had been born in Texas, and is listed as their yard boy.

His 1918 World War I draft registration card shows that Jeff Shirley Wimbish was born in 1876, and was living in this house. He was in the drug business at 308 Congress Avenue. He was of medium height and had a slender build, blue eyes, and brown hair.

The 1920 U.S. Census shows Jeff S. and Sadie Wimbish living in a rented house in Dallas, where Jeff was a druggist. In addition to Ellen and John, they had 2 younger children: Francis, 7; and Mary, 5.

Jeff Wimbish died in 1922 and is buried in Carthage, Mississippi.

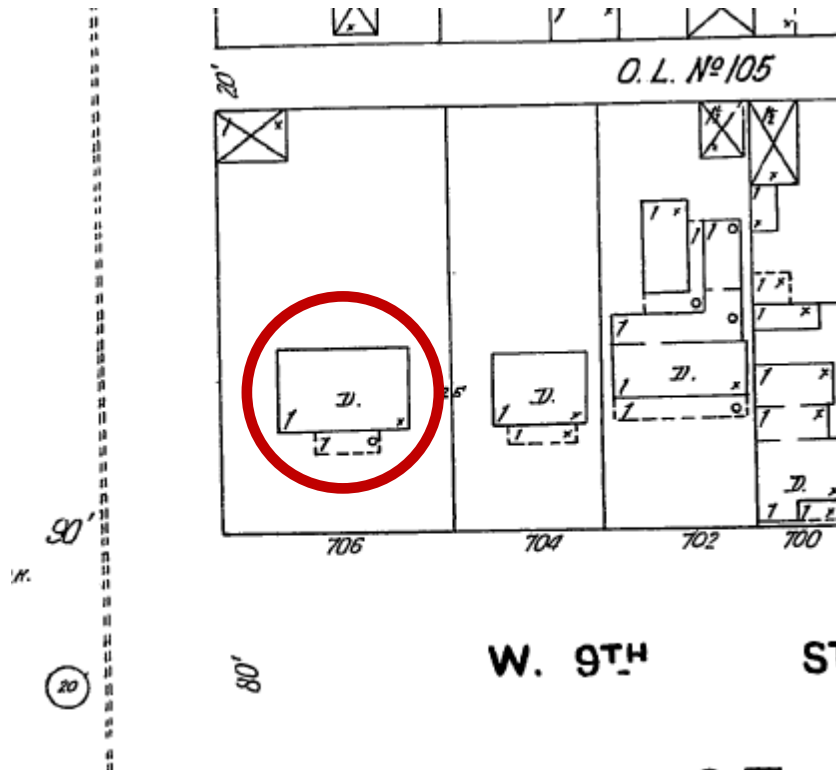
**Arno W., Jr. and Kathleen Brill (ca. 1930 – ca. 1938)**

The 1930 U.S. Census show Arno and Kathleen Brill as the owners of this house with its address of 901 West Avenue. The house was worth \$5,000. Arno Brill, Jr. was 33, had been born in Texas, and was a wholesale leather dealer. Kathleen Brill was 30, had been born in Texas, and had no occupation listed. They had 5 children: Ida Nell, 11; Billie, 9; Sheba, 6; Bob, 4; and A.W, III, 1. All the children had been born in Texas. The family had a maid, Olivia Dremwelge, 17, who had been born in Texas.

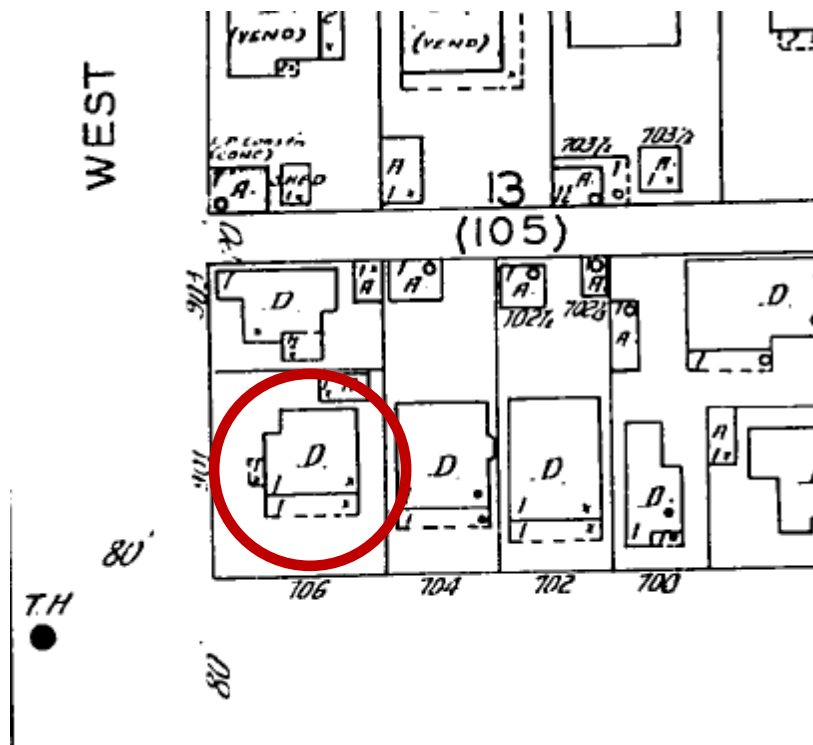
The 1940 U.S. Census shows Arno W. and Kathleen Brill at 713 W. 14<sup>th</sup> Street in Austin. Arno W. Brill was 43, had been born in Texas, and was a wholesale and retail leather salesman. Kathleen Brill was 40, had been born in Texas, and had no occupation listed. They had 4 children: Idanell, 21; Sheva (Kathleen), 16; Bob, 14; A.W., 11; Bill, 19, and Bill's wife, Mary Jo, 20. Bill and Mary Jo had a daughter, Barbara Ann, 1. All of the children had been born in Texas, and none had an occupation listed. In addition, Kathleen Brill's mother, Nellie Inks, a 78-year old Arkansas-born widow, lived with them, as did Kathleen's brother, Lee O. Inks, 37, who had been born in Texas, and had no occupation listed.

**Edward and Helen Nassour (ca. 1951 – ca. 1999)**

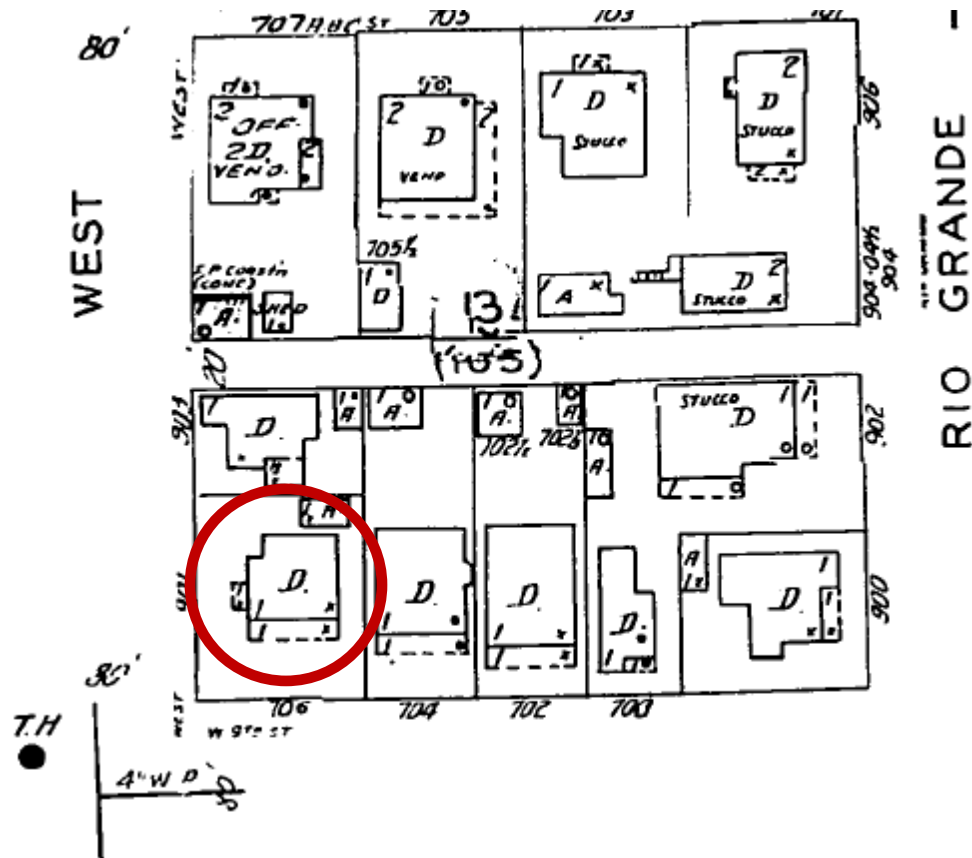
Edward Nassour appears in the 1940 U.S. Census as the 22-year old son of Abraham and Amelia Nassour, who lived at 407 E. 7<sup>th</sup> Street. Edward Nassour was born in Texas and had no occupation listed. His father, Abraham, 57, had been born in Syria (now Lebanon), and was the owner of a retail grocery store. His mother, Amelia, 48, had also been born in Syria (now Lebanon) and was a saleslady in a retail grocery store. Edward was the second oldest of the couple's 4 children, all of whom had been born in Texas.



The 1900 Sanborn map shows a house with the address of 706 W. 9<sup>th</sup> Street with a front porch facing 9<sup>th</sup> Street.



The 1935 Sanborn map shows a full-width front porch on the south side of the house and a smaller porch facing West Avenue. The footprint of the house is different from that shown on the 1900 map above.



The 1961 Sanborn map shows the same configuration as the 1935 map above, although city building permits indicate that the porch was glassed in in 1945.

Mrs. Clay Miles 901 West Ave.

7

105

1-A

Original City

glaze-in a screened sleeping porch

26699 2-10-45

\$200.00

day labor

None

Building permit to Helen Miles to glass-in the screened porch on the south side of the house  
(1945)