

## ZONING CHANGE REVIEW SHEET

**CASE NUMBER:** C14H-2016-0099

**HLC DATE:**

October 24, 2016

**PC DATE:**

**APPLICANT:** Veronica Allbright, owner

**HISTORIC NAME:** Dawson-Tinnin House

**WATERSHED:** Lady Bird Lake

**ADDRESS OF PROPOSED ZONING CHANGE:** 905 Dawson Road

**ZONING FROM:** SF-3-NP to SF-3-H-NP

**SUMMARY STAFF RECOMMENDATION:** Staff recommends the proposed zoning change from single family residence, neighborhood plan (SF-3-NP) combining district to single family residence – Historic Landmark – neighborhood plan (SF-3-H-NP) combining district zoning.

**QUALIFICATIONS FOR LANDMARK DESIGNATION:**

Architecture and historical associations.

**HISTORIC LANDMARK COMMISSION ACTION:**

**PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION:**

**DEPARTMENT COMMENTS:** The house is beyond the bounds of the Comprehensive Cultural Resources Survey (1984).

**CITY COUNCIL DATE:**

**ACTION:**

**ORDINANCE READINGS:** 1<sup>ST</sup> 2<sup>ND</sup> 3<sup>RD</sup>

**ORDINANCE NUMBER:**

**CASE MANAGER:** Steve Sadowsky

**PHONE:** 974-6454

**NEIGHBORHOOD ORGANIZATION:** Bouldin Creek Neighborhood Association

**BASIS FOR RECOMMENDATION:**

**Architecture:**

One-story, roughly rectangular-plan, side-gabled stone veneered house with minimal Tudor Revival detailing, especially in the prominent front-gabled bay containing the principal entry. battered stone exterior chimney to the left of the principal entry, and single and paired 1:1 fenestration, some with a diamond-shape in the upper “sash.” The stone veneer on the house is said to have come from the Dawson family properties further south near Manchaca, Texas.

**Historical Associations:**

Staff believes the house was built around 1937, although the property owner believes it is earlier than that, and dates from before 1920. Staff's determination of the date of construction is based upon the occupancy records from city directories, the water service

permit for this address dating from 1937, as well as the architectural style of the house, which is consistent with a 1930s construction date.

N. A. Dawson

113

4

001-007 Dawson Road

11, 15, 16,  
19, 20, 21

Arboles Estate Sect. 3

Two stone-veneer residences & garages

117 December 1, 1936

4 and 4

Building permit to Nicholas A. Dawson for the construction of this house as well as the house at 901 Dawson Road.

However, the discrepancy in the possible dates of construction for this house do not overshadow its importance to the history of South Austin, as the house was built by the Dawson family, and remained in the family until being sold to the current owner in the 1970s.

Nicholas Dawson was born in Pennsylvania, and led a very colorful life. At the age of 19, he left home and moved to Lexington, Missouri, where he built a cabin and obtained work as a teacher. He then decided to go to California in 1841, then to Veracruz, Mexico in 1843 before returning to Pennsylvania. He moved to Arkansas to teach school in 1846, and married a former pupil named Margaret Wright. He and his brother-in-law then went to California again during the Gold Rush, but decided that he would rather live in Texas. He and Margaret moved to Austin in 1851 and purchased land out of the Isaac Decker League in South Austin.

Beginning in the 1880s, Dawson became a home builder, constructing homes in what is now the West Line National Register Historic District on W. 9<sup>th</sup> and W. 10<sup>th</sup> Streets, including several landmarked structures. Dawson's signature style was a one-story stone house with typical architectural embellishments of the time. His children got involved in the family business, and continued to build homes and develop new areas of the city after Nicholas Dawson passed away in 1903. In particular, the Dawson children focused on South Austin near Bouldin Creek, where they built several of the archetypal stone houses that are now city historic landmarks in the 1880s and 1890s. Dawson's son, Nicholas A. Dawson, who apparently went by Nick, was the principal force in the family's development of South Austin neighborhoods, including South Heights, which was platted in 1894, and is located where Dawson Road is now. Nick Dawson also got his children involved in the family enterprises, and gave them land for their livelihoods. Especially noteworthy was the fact that Nick Dawson gave land to his daughters as well as to his sons, ensuring that his daughters would have their own incomes from the sale or construction of rental properties on their land.

The house at 905 Dawson Road, which staff believes was built in 1937, was on property that was devised from Nick Dawson to his children, in particular, two daughters, Ruth Dawson (later Ruth Dawson Tinnin) and Jane Dawson (later Jane Dawson Parker). The

1937 water permit for this house shows N.A. (Nick) Dawson as the applicant; the 1939 sewer service application for this address references ownership by Jane D. (Dawson) Parker. At some point, Jane Dawson Parker turned over the ownership of this property to her sister Ruth, in whose family the property remained until the 1970s, when it was purchased by the current owner.

This house, as well as the house at 901 Dawson Road (demolished in 2015) were two of the Dawson family houses that were built as rental properties. Both houses featured a stone veneer exterior, harkening back to the stone houses built by Nicholas Dawson in Old West Austin and by N.A. and Nannie Dawson in South Austin at the turn of the century. Ruth Dawson Tinnin lived in Louisiana and San Antonio for much of the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century, but retained this house as a rental property, providing her with income. It is important to note that the Dawsons built (and rented) these houses for middle class families. Their earlier houses in Old West Austin were large houses for the upper class, but these houses in South Austin were smaller, more modest, and more suited for working- and middle class families. A review of the occupancy history of this house from 1937 onward reflects the family's philosophy – their tenants, some of whom stayed renters in this house for long periods of time, included a mail carrier, a painter and his beauty-shop owning wife (she had her beauty shop on this property), carpenters, and plumbers. Beginning around 1943, the house was rented by Catherine A. Hamilton, who was probably either separated or divorced, and worked as a telephone operator for many years. Catherine Hamilton lived here until the mid-1950s. A contractor for Nash-Phillips-Copus rented the house in the late 1950s, the then from around 1960 until around 1970, it was rented by Lee S. and Mary A. Lewis. He was a heavy equipment operator for a construction company. There were other renters in the 1970s, including the current owner, who purchased the house from the niece of Ruth Dawson Tinnin, in 1977.

**TINNIN, Mrs. Ruth Dawson, 84, 7709 Manchaca Road, died Tuesday. Graveside services 2 p.m. Thursday at Masonic Cemetery. Survivors: daughters, Mrs. Elizabeth Tinnin Moore, Mrs. J.S. (Mary Jane) Ramsey, both of Austin; son, Dawson Tinnin of Austin; brother, Joe J. Dawson of Austin; six grandchildren; ten great-grandchildren. (Wilke-Clay)**

Obituary of Ruth Dawson Tinnin  
Austin American-Statesman, September 16, 1976

**PARCEL NO.:** 0102020801

**LEGAL DESCRIPTION:** LOT 19-21 BLK 4 ARBOLES ESTATE SEC 3

**ESTIMATED ANNUAL TAX ABATEMENT:** \$8,319 (owner-occupied); city portion: \$2,482. The values for this property fall just short of the capping amount.

**APPRAISED VALUE:** \$737,724

**PRESENT USE:** Residence

**CONDITION:** Excellent

**PRESENT OWNERS:**

Veronica Lee Allbright  
905 Dawson Road  
Austin, Texas 78704

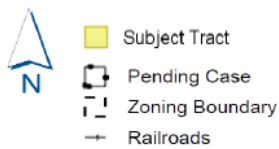
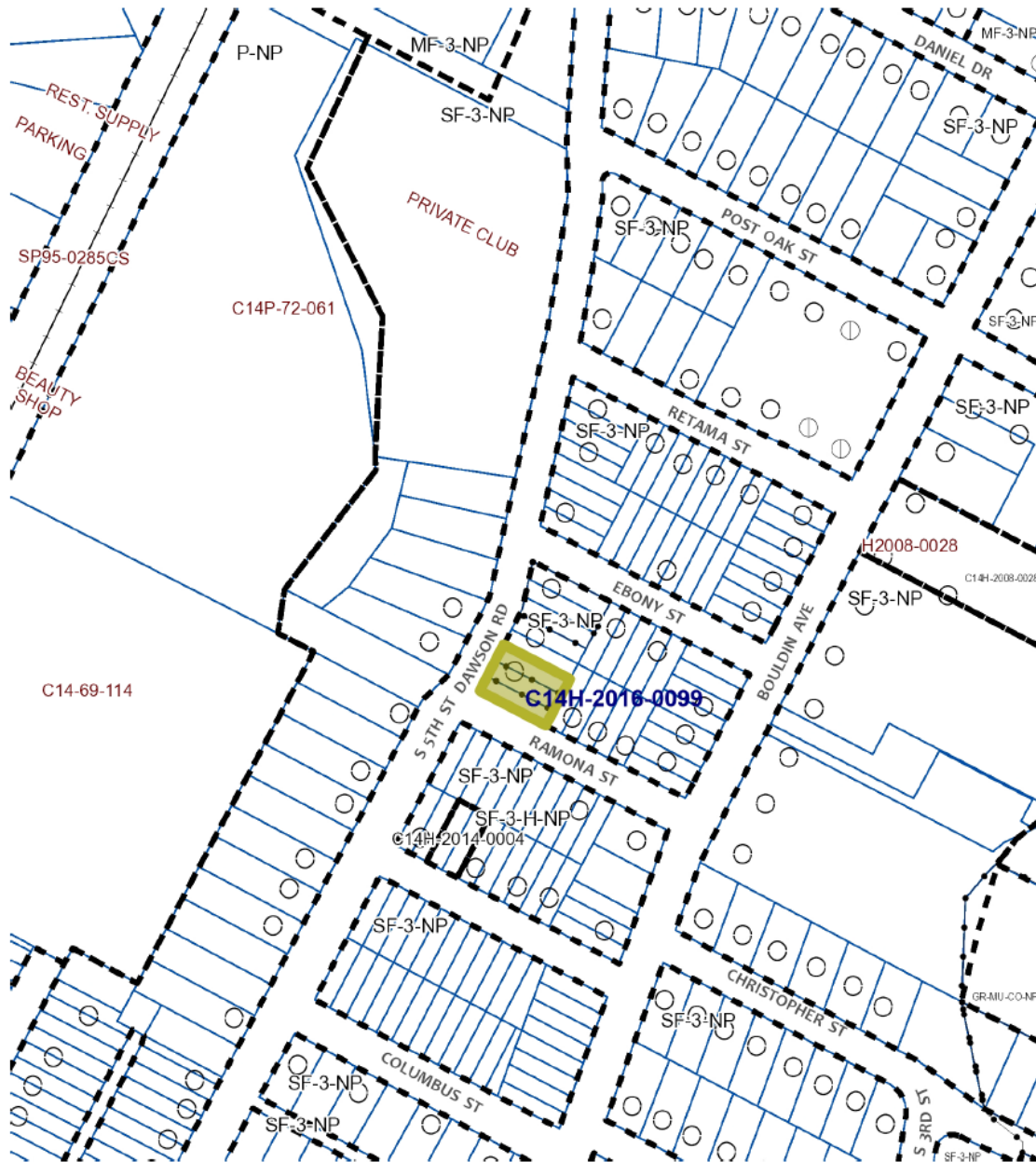
**DATE BUILT:** ca. 1937

**ALTERATIONS/ADDITIONS:** An addition was constructed in 1998; a loft was created in 2002 using the remains of a demolished outbuilding.

**ORIGINAL OWNER(S):** Ruth Dawson Tinnin and Jane Dawson Parker

**OTHER HISTORICAL DESIGNATIONS:** None.

# LOCATION MAP



100 200 Feet

1" = 200'

## ZONING

ZONING CASE#: C14H-2016-0099



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Created 09/12/16



905 Dawson



DAWSON-TINNIN / ALLBRIGHT HOUSE at 905 DAWSON RD.

Even a cursory glimpse by a fair-minded citizen would seem to come to an obvious conclusion. On its face, a beautifully intact stone house built almost a century ago by one of the most prominent families in the city's history would appear to be an appropriate if not an obvious choice for historical preservation status.

To boot, an extensive 2015 survey undertaken by Preservation Central, Inc. of the Bouldin Creek Neighborhood Association Historic Resources has indicated that of the nearly seven hundred "cultural resources" pre-dating 1965 in the area, this particular house is on a very short list of twenty-five houses (some since demolished) that were rated "high preservation priorities." But when the history and details surrounding this house are examined, the story becomes far more compelling.

Before Nicholas "Cheyenne" Dawson finally settled in South Austin in 1851, he had already been to California and back three times. The first time was as a member of the John Bidwell Western Emigration Society as they literally blazed a new trail through the deserts and over the mountains as the first emigrant party to travel overland to California. He also returned West as an original '49er during the California Gold Rush. Dawson chronicled his adventures in <Narrative of Nicholas "Cheyenne" Dawson (Overland To California in '41 & '49, and Texas In '51)>, a classic of that era which is cited in no less than thirty-five subsequent sources on the topic.

The Pennsylvania native supported himself primarily by teaching school in various locales during his travels. He would later marry one of his former students, Margaret Wright, while in Arkansas. Once settled in Austin in 1851 the couple would raise their family here and become landowners of 100 acres of the Isaac Decker League (4428 acres) in what is now considered the Bouldin Creek neighborhood. The land was originally granted to Decker on 3/17/1835 by the Republic of Mexico (Book No. 16, p. 177, General Land Office State of Coahuila, Texas). Dawson paid \$314 for his 100 acres.

In addition to teaching, Dawson was also a builder and the family would eventually develop much of this area and other parts of the city in subsequent years. Nonetheless, the Dawson family would make their homestead a bit farther south at what is currently 7709 Manchaca Rd. "Cheyenne" and Margaret would have four surviving children: Mary Jane ("Mollie"), born in 1853; Nancy Elizabeth ("Nannie"), born in 1858; Nicholas Amos, born 1864; and Margaret Isabelle ("Belle"), birth date unknown. Two other children died in early childhood.

Not much has been documented about Belle other than she married a gentleman named Daniel for which the South Austin street is named. We do know that Mollie and Nannie would follow in their father's footsteps, becoming educators and, later, developers. In fact, Mollie organized and became principal of the first public school in South Austin, the current Fullmore Middle School. Mollie Dawson Elementary School on So. First St. is named in her honor as is Mary St. in 78704. She also started two private schools in downtown Austin in the early 1890s.

Meanwhile, Nicholas would receive a Mechanical Engineering degree in the first graduating class from Texas A&M and then graduated from the University of Texas Law School. He served

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one term in the 22nd Texas State Legislature, 1891-92, in the Hogg Administration. But according to an interview in the Austin American Statesman in February, 1987, N.A.'s daughter-in-law, Audrey Swank Dawson, stated that "he decided he didn't like law or politics and started building roads and courthouses." This refers to the courthouse and city block he built in Orange, Texas in the very first years of the new century.

About a decade before this venture in Orange, N.A. would marry Jennie D. Davis, who was a Daughter Of The Republic, from another land-owning, Texas pioneer family. In 1891, they were given property by her father, J.J. Davis, making their combined land holdings one of the largest in the area.

It was sometime during the mid-1890s that these three Dawson children, along with their father, started to make inroads as developers in what is now known as the West Line Historic District. According to the U.S. Department of Interior's National Register of Historical Places, prior to the Dawsons' work, almost all of the early houses in this West Austin neighborhood (built largely from 1870-1895) "were individual efforts constructed with little or no consideration for neighboring design or building types. Lots and blocks were developed piecemeal and varied from architect-designed brick mansions to more modest frame houses."

Conversely, the Dawsons' Silliman Subdivision on W. 10th and W. 11th streets, built between 1894-98, was, according to the aforementioned U.S. National Registry, "the first sustained building campaign in the West Line Historic District. The Houses shared similar designs, materials, size, height and scale. Lot size and setback was consistent and the resulting streetscapes convey an orderly, planned appearance."

Examples include the Edward F. Nicolds House (1106 W. 10th St.), the McBride-Knudsen House (1109 W. 10th St.) and the Brass-Goddard House (1108 W. 9th St.). These homes, according to Dawson's obituary in the Austin American Statesman, dated 7/7/39, were described as "significant beyond evident craftsmanship."

A bit earlier, starting in 1890, before the building campaign in West Austin and according to Travis County records, "Cheyenne" and Margaret began transferring land by deed to their children. This Bouldin Creek area is often referred to as South Heights and the Dawson children, 35 y.o. Mollie, 32 y.o. Nannie and 26 y.o. Nicholas Amos, would begin developing parts of this Isaac Decker League for the rest of their lives.

It is here, before the turn of the century, that the Dawsons built a number of Victorian style limestone houses. These dwellings were targeted for single family, middle class owners and were considerably more modest than the homes they were building in the West Line District. These houses were built of stone quarried from the old Dawson farm in Manchaca. Only four of these historic South Heights homes remain today.

In 1892 son N.A. Dawson would begin work in this South Austin area on what was planned as a grand family mansion to be built on the site that is now the High Road on Dawson, formerly the Elks Lodge. Due to various complications over the years, including local and nationwide economic downturns like the Depression of 1893, Dawson was never able to complete the mansion and his daughter, Ruth Dawson Tinnin, would eventually sell that piece of property to the Elks Lodge around 1960.

Literally a stone's throw away, across the strip that would become Dawson Rd. some forty years later, is the site of the next phase of the family's development plans for South Heights.

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According to local records the area was platted in 1894 and dedicated for "free use to public streets and alleys in the division of lots and blocks in the 44 acres."

The first two homes, sometimes referred to as "cottages," were built here at the eventual addresses, 901 and 905 Dawson Rd. There seems to be some question as to when these two dwellings were actually constructed. Travis County Archival Tax records from 1917-18 indicate an increase in land valuation to imply that "improvements," such as these two homes, had been added to the property. The two houses first officially appear in the tax records in 1925; however, the present owner, Veronica Albright, was told by Ruth Dawson Tinnin in 1975 that these houses date back to the turn of the century with 901 being the older of the two homes. The house at 901 Dawson Rd. was demolished in 2015.

These two homes were built as rental properties with the working class family in mind. The house at 905 Dawson Rd. featured modern amenities such as indoor plumbing for bathrooms and a kitchen area that the aforementioned Victorian-styled homes they had built previously in the neighborhood did not possess. This was a "transitional house form" for the era that has a distinctive peaked front roof. The roof was initially composed of shake shingles, found underneath three layers of more modern composites.

This house had a small kitchen with two wall cupboards between a small double hung window above a sink with a wall faucet. The kitchen had three doorways: one to the outside, one to the small hallway and a third to the dining room. This dining area was next to the living room which still has a fireplace on the front-center wall. To the left is the front door and on the adjoining wall is a door to access the front bedroom and the downstairs bathroom.

The upstairs is basically one room with two double-hung windows and a small workable window in a gabled section above the front door. Another gabled area leads to a flat-roofed patio that can be accessed through a "pony" door. A bathroom with the original claw-foot tub and a toilet are also on the second floor. Hardwood pine floors are upstairs with oak floors downstairs.

A back porch room was added at some undisclosed point in time. The room's walls are made of rock with a cement floor and a wooden beam ceiling. There are six double-hung windows and two outside doors on opposite ends. The room had gas and washer hookups.

This "rock room" could be completely closed off from the rest of the house and the outside elements but it could freeze in very cold weather. A third door opened to the inside hallway and the stairs. This small hallway had three other doors, to the kitchen, to the bedroom and to the third step of the staircase. In cold weather this was helpful in heating specific areas.

A separate detached one-and-a-half-story building on the property was built for a motor vehicle and was constructed of the same material as the house. This "garage" also featured a separate workroom with two doors facing each other, one to the outside and the other to the garage. It had a front-open window and two small windows in the back. The upstairs loft was accessible

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only on the side via a wooden stair that is no longer there. It had a wood-plank floor and door and two screened dormer windows that were latched at the front roof with a wooden handle. This upstairs area was used to store hay for the family's horses. Ms. Albright was told that family members would come by on horseback from their homes in the vicinity to get hay.

It is noteworthy that the Dawsons did not see a problem with having these smaller domiciles so close to their planned mansion only yards away. We can surmise that these rental properties were built as a source of steady income for the Dawson children, particularly the women. And, indeed, at a time when women often married out of economic necessity or for other reasons of dependency, neither Mollie nor Nannie ever married and each was often referred to as a "feme sole."

Also of note is that on most of their legal documents the Dawson family included women's names, a practice that was uncommon at the time and an indication of a forward-thinking acceptance of respectability for women. The sisters were highly educated for the time, attending the State Normal School in Huntsville. Mollie gave up her pursuit of art in order to work in real estate with her siblings. The sisters were involved in the designing of these homes.

Also of importance to the history of this neighborhood is that as early as 1900 N.A. Dawson operated a streetcar service on what is now Bouldin Ave. It was modeled after a similar rail line that was successful in transporting patrons from downtown to his West Line subdivision. This South Austin service could not be sustained, however, due to opposition from "rival interests" concerned, in part, that their wagon wheels would not be able to cross Fredericksburg Rd. (now Lamar Blvd) when Dawson's extended lines were put in.

In an obituary dated 7/7/39, the Austin American Statesman stated that "Dawson was a pioneer developer of South Austin and at the time of his death was said to be one of the largest owners of real estate in South Austin."

The house at 905 Dawson Rd. would remain in the Dawson family until 1977 when it was sold to the current owner, Veronica Albright. Ms. Albright has lived in the house continually since first becoming a tenant in October of 1975. The house was purchased from Elizabeth Tinnin Moore, the granddaughter of N.A. Dawson.

As mentioned above, a 2015 survey by Preservation Central, Inc. of the Bouldin Creek Neighborhood Association Historic Resources has rated the house at 905 Dawson Rd. as "High Preservation Priority" on a list of now less than twenty-five pre-1965 houses in this vibrant part of the central city. As Austin continues to grow and cannibalize its historic neighborhoods, houses such as this one are becoming more important in preserving some semblance of character and integrity in what remains of the city's rich history.

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### Time line

- 1851 Nicholas "Cheyenne" Dawson & wife Margaret buys 100 acres  
Isaac Decker League.
- 1866 Land transfers between Dawson family members.
- 1890 Raymond heights, 1106 & 1109 west 10 St. with sister Mary.  
Joseph Nalle House  
South Heights Development-part of Isaac Decker league, with sister Mary.  
Mary Dawson House, 1200 So. 5th St. (Rte. 5) & W. Mary.  
So. Lamar House 1105
- 1891 land Dedication in South Heights, for public use
- 1892 N.A. Dawson Mansion building begins, current Dawson Rd., current High Rd.  
on Dawson, Former Elks Lodge, abandoned at his death at 75 in 1933.
- 1894 " financial panic of 1894", Building on Mansion stops  
West Line historic district Silliman addition "Dawson's sustained  
development".  
Plated South Heights Addition.
- 1896 McBride-Knudsen House 1109 W 10th St.
- 1897 Brass-Goddard House 1108 W 9th St. - "most flamboyant"
- 1900 Rail line started
- 1903 Nicholas Cheyenne Dawson dies
- 1912 error clarifications
- 1918 Margaret Wright Dawson dies
- 1917-20 901 & 905 Dawson built
- 1925 First time Travis County Tax records indicate 901 & 905 house.
- 1926 Mary Dawson grants to Ruth Tannehill Dawson Tinnin  
12 acres Of South Heights including Arboles Estates block 4.  
Plated Block 1 of 7 b
- 1928 Restrictions
- 1929 6/20 - Subdivision of South Heights by Mary Dawson.
- 1931 City Council meeting- protest proposed zoning, approved for no  
Commercialization Isaac Decker league, block 10- B.
- 1938 South Austin part of City of Austin.  
Dawson Road built from dedicated land by Dawson Family.
- 1959 Ruth T. Dawson Tinnin sells to Elk Lodge land where N.A.'s Mansion  
was to be built.
- 1964 Elizabeth Tinnin Moore acquires land in South Heights.
- 1978 Veronica & Clifton West with a Balloon payment, Block 4, section 3,  
lots 19-21 of Arboles Estates.
- 1979 Veronica Edmondson, takes over payments.
- 1991 David Lee Albright added to Title of said property.
- 1998-99 New addition to north side of house.

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2002 Veronica L. Albright assumes ownership.

2015 Dawson Ramsey Herndon House 901 Dawson - Demolished

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Transfer of Title History - 905 Dawson Road Austin Tx..78704

Republic of Mexico to Isaac Decker, colonist  
One league (4428 acres) South Side of Colorado River adjoining Santiago de Valle  
Book 16 P.177

3/17/1835

Mexican land grant, Spanish Records general land office State of Coahuila, Texas

Cunningham to Nicholas & Margaret Dawson  
100 acres of land out of the Isaac Decker League

Book Q pp.385-386

11/8/1851

\$314.00

D W Bouldin/Maxwell Administer to Home Builders Association Mary & N A Dawson Vol. 142  
pp. 94-96

37 65/100 acres out of the Isaac Decker League  
6/13/1896

Mary Dawson to Ruth Tannehill Dawson Tinnin  
12/15/1926  
12 acres out of Isaac Decker League

Vol 397 pp.170

Ruth T Dawson Tinnin to Elizabeth Tinnin Moore  
3/13/1964  
Block 5 lot 5 South Height  
...With love & affection for my daughter...

Vol 2746 pp.590

Mary M. Herndon & husband R.W. Herndon to Elizabeth T. Moore  
3/13/1964  
lots number 9 Block 4 Capitol Heights  
Consideration of the love & affection toward my beloved niece Elizabeth Tinnin Moore

Elizabeth T Moore to Clifton & Veronica West  
Block 4 section 3 lots 19-21  
11/30/1977  
\$22,000

Vol.6022 pp.905-06

Clifton West to Veronica Edmondson(West)  
\$10 & balance of promissory note  
12/15/1978

vol 11350 pp.0006

David Lee Allbright to Veronica L. Allbright  
3/29/2002

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Occupancy List

Year	Name	Listing
1939	Holiday P.E. (Hester M.;2) Holiday Paul E. Jr. hop driver Creamery	Rear
1940	Latham Raymond(Ella L ;2). painter Latham Ella L. Mrs. Beauty Shop Carlson James E. Auto trimmer Cooley Top Shop Gartman Fred M. (Minnie;1) carpenter	Rear
1941	Stanley Alf L.(Dorothy;2) Plumber Joslin Wm. M. (Billie B ;1) driver Showers lumber	Rear
1942	VACANT	
1944-45	Hamilton Rear VACANT	
1946	No Book	
1947	Hamilton Cath A. Mrs. Service Assistant Telephone Co. Bang Francis J. (Rosemary P).	Rear
1948	No Book	
1949	Hamilton Cath A. Mrs. Hall Robert (Grace) USA	Rear
1950-51	No Book	
1952	Hamilton Cath A. Mrs. Chauinard Lionel - not listed	Rear
1953-54	Hamilton Cath A. Mrs.	
1955	No Listing	
1956	No Book	
1957	VACANT	
1958	Peterson Emily H. Mrs. Nurse state hospital	
1959	Griffin Rudolph A. ( Marjorie A). Contractor Nash -Philips -Corpus	
1960-61	Martine Bernard P. Jr.(Tommie R) Book Binder Hill Book Bindery (Arboles Addition ; South Austin)	

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962-68      Lewis Lee S.(Mary A) Operator Steelman Construction

969            VACANT

970            Moore Maureen Mrs. Austin National Bank

971-75      Moore Bill T.(Margaret M) not listed

976            Holly Watson M not listed

977-78      West Veronica L. & Clifton T. Painter

979-84      Edmondson Veronica L. Vocational Nurse

985-2003    Allbright Veronica L.-David L. Realtor

004-16      Allbright Veronica L.

There were only 2 houses on Dawson in 1939, 901 & 905 the road was barely built at this time. Working class tradesmen called 905 Dawson home drivers, tradesmen, carpenter, nurses, clerks, bookmaker, often with children.

In 1940 Mrs Latham had a beauty shop listed along with her husband, a painter & 2 children. Home run shops were common ways to supplement incomes at the time. For instance Sparky Johnson who lived across the street on Ramona ran a used car/garage, his wife was a notary.

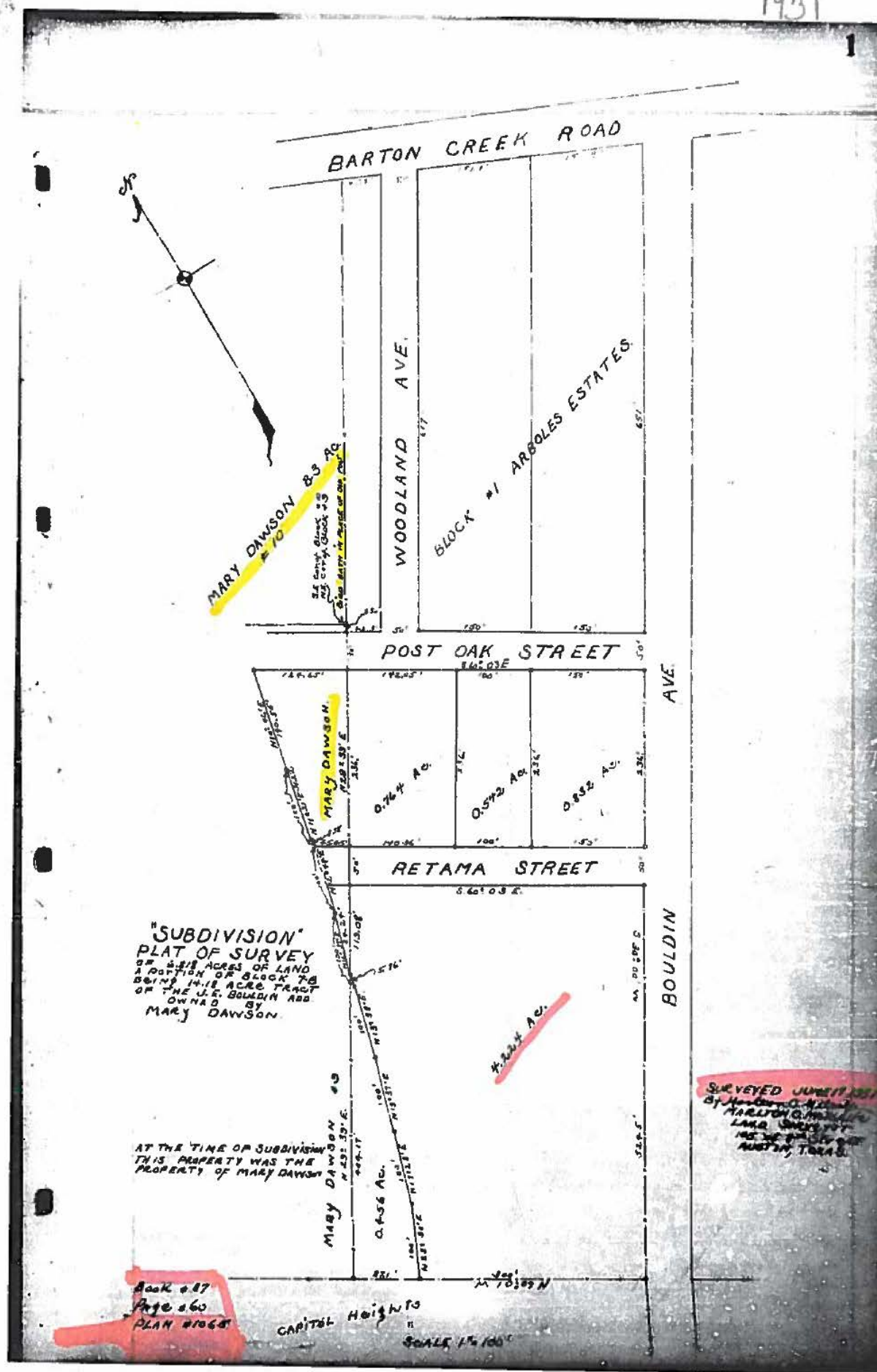
Mr. Mrs. Hamilton in 1944-55, a telephone operator, lived there for a decade or longer. At this time it appears 905 housed more than 1 renter/ household.

It was vacant at least 4 times

and in 1975 the renters were evicted for nonpayment, making the wait to move in over 4 months. Elizabeth T. Moore the owner finally had the sheriff remove them.

These renters had done extensive damages to the property by burning the roof decking & garage doors, among other things.

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Dawson Family in Austin

Nicholas "Cheyenne" Dawson born in Glasgow, Pa. 1/22/1819-11/25/1903 - 83 y.o.

Nicholas Cheyanne Dawson - 29 y.o.

married 3/29/1848 Sevier, Arkansas

Margaret Wright - 20 y.o.

Margaret Wright was born in Sevier Arkansas 4/4/1828 - 11/4/1918- 90 y.o

Their children

1.Mary Jane "Molly" Dawson 10/15 /1853 - 12/13/1933.

buried in Travis county Never married

2. Nancy Elizabeth "Nannie" Dawson 12/31/1858 -8/9/1951

1951. buried in Travis County, Tx, Masonic Cemetery. Never married

3. James R. Dawson was born on 6/1/1861 - 9/11/1863.

4. Nicholas Amos Dawson was born on 4/6/1864 - 7/7/1939

5 Margaret Isabell "Belle" Dawson 6/20/1867 -8/6/1901

6. George, died Infancy

Nicholas Amos Dawson 4/6/1864-7 7/7/1939 -75 y.o.

married

Jennie D. Davis 9/30/1868 12/14/1959 -91y.o.

Their children;

1.Mary Margaret Dawson Herndon m- R.W.Herndon

2.Ruth Tannehill Dawson Tinnin 1892-9/15/1976 (84yo)

m

Hugh Tinnin

Their children

Elizabeth T. Moore

Mary Jane Ramsey

Dawson Tinnin

3. Jane D.Dawson Parker

4. Nicholas Amos Jr.

5. Joseph Jenkins Jr. 10/13/1903 Orange,Tx - 2/22/1982

It appears that the family plot was at the Masonic Cemetery, Austin,Tx.

Dawson, Nicholas, 1814-1939  
Dawson, Nicholas A

# Austin History Center

July 7, 1939



## Colorful Early Austin Resident Taken by Death

### Man Who Put Street Car Line in South Austin Succumbs

Nicholas A. Dawson, owner and operator of the only street railway which operated only in South Austin, died at a local hospital at 10 a. m. Thursday.

A lifetime resident of Austin, Dawson was one of the city's most colorful and prominent figures.

He was a member of the first graduating class at A. & M. college in Bryan, and later attended the law school at the University of Texas.

About 50 years ago, Dawson represented Travis county in the state legislature for one term.

#### Notable Litigation

Dawson, who was 75 at the time of his death, built a streetcar track south of Congress avenue bridge in South Austin. Friends recalled that the struggle for control of the bridge across the river between him and the Austin Street railway company provided one of the most notable pieces of litigation in Travis county. The short street railway line was operated about 1900 or 1901, oldtimers here recalled.

One Austinite stated that during the dispute over the bridge, Daw-

(Continued on page 15, col. 7)

## Nicholas Dawson Claimed by Death

### Services for Pioneer Developer Today

(Continued from Page 1)

son, to avoid an injunction, had a crew to lay tracks after midnight on the bridge to take his streetcar line into town.

Dawson was a pioneer developer of South Austin and at the time of his death was said to be one of the largest owners of real estate in that section of the city.

Dawson was the son of Nicholas Dawson, Sr., who was one of the original Forty-Niners in the California gold rush. He established his homestead in Travis county more than 90 years ago on the Manchaca road, where his son was residing at the time of his death. The Dawson homestead is said to be probably the oldest house in Texas, standing exactly as it did on the day of its building.

Dawson married Miss Jennie Davis, daughter of Joe Davis, one of the pioneers of Travis county, and his sister, now deceased, Miss Mollie Dawson, was one of the early teachers in the Austin public schools.

In later years Dawson abandoned the practice of law and engaged in contracting and real estate.

He is survived by his widow, Mrs. Jennie Davis Dawson; three daughters, Mrs. R. W. Herndon of Austin; Mrs. Ruth B. Tinnin of San Antonio; and Mrs. Jane D. Parker of Dallas; two sons, N. A. Dawson, Jr., of Oklahoma and Joe J. Dawson of Austin; two sisters, Miss Nannie E. Dawson of Austin and Mrs. Belle D. Daniels of San Antonio; two granddaughters, Mrs. Andrew J. Flannigan of Austin, Mrs. J. S. Ramsey of San Antonio, and a grandson, M. Dawson Tinnin of Austin.

Funeral services will be conducted at the Thurlow Weed Funeral home Friday at 6 p. m. and burial will be in the Masonic cemetery on Boggy creek.

## Weeds Hide Monument To Lost Hope

Austin has landmarks and monuments to the struggles of its builders, but few if any more intriguing than the foundation of what would have been Austin's greatest mansion.

It was started by the late N. Dawson in 1892. But the pioneer South Austin builder had to drop his plans for the mansion in a panic of 1894.

Dawson built the only street railway line in South Austin. At this time he became involved in a struggle with rival interests, and the streetcar line was abandoned.

Dawson was a difficult person to discourage. The financial panic made money scarce. Dawson refused to wait to build his mansion.

He turned to other interests many years, finally coming back to undertake again the development of Dawson Heights. This time began by building cottages for sale or rent.

A few months before his death Dawson was still expecting to build his mansion. He said he expected the completed structure to cost around \$50,000.

His death wrote the end to the story.

What remains of that long struggle is the limestone masonry—workmanship that has withstood the ages of the elements for half a century and which is a challenge to builders of today—on one of the most commanding views of the hidden by native growth from Ton Springs road only a few feet away. It stands today as a monument of a forlorn hope.

Location of Elks  
700 Dawson Road





905 Dawson Road  
ca. 1937



OCCUPANCY HISTORY  
905 Dawson Road

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

1992	Lee D. and Veronica Allbright, owners Real estate agent
1985-86	Lee D. and Veronica Allbright, owners Real estate agent
1981	V.L. Edmondson, renter No occupation listed NOTE: The directory indicates that V.L. Edmondson was a new resident at this address.
1977	Clifton and Veronica West, renters Painter NOTE: The directory indicates that Clifton and Veronica West were new residents at this address.
1973	Billy T, and Margaret M. Moore, renters No occupation listed
1968	Lee S. and Mary A. Lewis, renters Retired

- 1965 Lee S. and Mary A. Lewis, renters  
Construction worker
- 1962 Lee S. and Mary A. Lewis, renters  
Equipment operator, J.W. Steelman Construction and Paving, 4302 Marathon Boulevard.
- 1959 Rudolph A. and Marjorie A. Griffin, renters  
Contractor, Nash-Phillips-Copus, home builders, 6300 Cameron Road.  
NOTE: Lee S. and Mary A. Lewis are not listed in the directory.
- 1955 The address is not listed in the directory.  
NOTE: Catherine Hamilton is listed at 1210 Richcreek Road; she was a service assistant for the telephone company.
- 1954 Catherine Hamilton, renter  
Service assistant, telephone company
- 1952 Catherine A. Hamilton, renter  
Service assistant, telephone company
- 1949 Catherine A. Hamilton, renter  
Telephone operator, Seton Hospital
- 1947 Catherine A. Hamilton, renter  
Operator, Southwestern Bell Telephone Company.  
Rear: Francis J. and Rosemary F. Bang, renters  
Instructor
- 1944-45 Catherine A. Hamilton, renter  
PBX operator  
Rear: Vacant
- 1942 Vacant  
Rear: Vacant  
NOTE: Catherine A. Hamilton is not listed in the directory.
- 1941 Alfred L. and Dorothy Stanley, renters  
Plumber  
Rear: William M. and Billie Joslin, renters  
Driver, Showers Lumber Company, 3<sup>rd</sup> and Brazos Streets.
- 1940 Raymond and Ella L. Latham, renters  
Raymond: Painter  
Ella: Proprietor of a beauty shop at the house.
- James E. and Maxine Carlson, renters  
Auto trimmer, Cooley Top Shop, auto tops, seat covers, and furniture upholstery,  
207 W. 5<sup>th</sup> Street.
- Rear: Fred M. and Minnie Gartman, renters  
Carpenter
- 1939 Paul E. and Hester Holliday, renters  
Carrier

Also listed are Paul E. Holliday, Jr., a route hop for Meyer's Creamery, 308 W. 6<sup>th</sup> Street; and Valla L. Holliday, a saleslady at McLellan's 5 and dime store, 710 Congress Avenue.

NOTE: The 1940 city directory does not list Paul E. Holliday, Sr. Hester M. Holliday is listed as a waitress for Maggie Ellis, the proprietor of a restaurant at 4111 Guadalupe Street, and lived at 4004 Avenue C. Paul Holliday, Jr., is listed without an occupation at 1808 Manor Road, the home of his grandparents, Eugene A. and Mattie Holliday. Valla L. Holliday is listed as a saleslady at McLellan's five and dime, and lived at 4004 Avenue C.

1937 No houses are listed in Dawson Road.  
Paul E. and Hester Holliday are listed on the north side of Airport Road, 9 houses east of Cameron Road. He was the manager of the Gemawa Farm Dairy.

### **BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES:**

#### **Paul E. and Hester Holliday (ca. 1938 – ca. 1939)**

The 1910 U.S. Census shows Hester Stewart (later Hester Holliday) as the 16-year old daughter of George W. and Mary M. Stewart of O'Brien, Haskell County, Texas. Hester had been born in Texas. Her parents had both been born in Tennessee; her father was a clergyman. The 1900 U.S. Census shows the Stewart family in rural Travis County, where George Stewart was a minister. Hester was the 8<sup>th</sup> of the couple's 9 children.

His 1917 World War I draft registration card shows that Paul Holliday was living on Route 7 of Austin at the time of his registration. He was born December 29, 1894 in Karnes County, Texas, and was a farmer with a wife and 2 children. He was tall with a medium build, and had blue eyes and brown hair.

The 1920 U.S. Census shows Paul and Hester Holliday as the renters of the house at 4302 Avenue A in Austin. Paul Holliday was 25, had been born in Texas to Mississippi-born parents, and was a laborer for a truck driver. Hester Holliday was 24, had been born in Texas, and had no occupation listed. They had 3 children: Gladys, 4; Margaret, 3; and Valla Lee, 2. All of the children had been born in Texas.

The 1930 U.S. Census shows Paul E. and Hester M. Holliday as the renters of a house on a rural route of Austin in Travis County. Paul E. Holliday was 38, had been born in Texas, and was a laborer on a milk dairy. Hester M. Holliday was 34, had been born in Texas, and was a laborer on a milk dairy. They had 6 children: Gladys L., 15, a student at Austin High School; Margaret, 13; Valla L., 12; Paul E., Jr., 10; Cecil S., 5; and Ruby A., 4. All of the children had been born in Texas.

The 1940 U.S. Census shows Hester M. Holliday living as a lodger in the home of Robert L. and Mamie L. Bowen at 4706 Avenue F in Austin. Paul E. Holliday is not listed in the 1940 census report or the 1940 city directory. Hester M. Holliday is listed as married, 43, and a waitress and cook in a cafe. With her lived 3 of her children: Valla Lee, 21, a clerk in a variety store; Cecil S., 15; and Ruby A., 14. Paul E. Holliday, Jr., 20, lived with his grandparents in rural Travis County. He was a driver.

His 1968 death certificate shows that Paul Eugene Holliday, Sr. was born in Karnes City, Texas in 1894 and was living at 1419 Hillcrest Drive in Austin at the time of his death. He was a retired truck driver for an electrical co-op.

**PAUL EUGENE HOLLIDAY SR.**

Paul Eugene Holliday Sr., 73, of 1419 Hillcrest Dr., died in a local hospital Friday. He was a retired employee of Texas Electric Co-op, was a member of Hillcrest Baptist Church and had been a lifelong resident of Austin.

Survivors include his wife, Mrs. Gwendolyn Holliday, Austin, two sons, Paul Eugene Holliday Jr., New Braunfels; four daughters, Mrs. Gladys Meadows and Mrs. Ruby Stewart, both of Austin; Mrs. Valla Lee Britton, San Antonio and Mrs. Margaret Jaques, Dallas; one step-daughter, Mrs. William Britcher, Austin; 14 grandchildren and 13 great-grandchildren.

Funeral will be at 2 p.m. Sunday at Hyatt-Mannor Funeral Home with Rev. J. Derald Dugger officiating. Burial will be in Austin Memorial Park.

Pallbearers will be Al J. Claude, Carson, Jan Barr, Sidney Rich, Alon Leggett and J. O. Evans. Honorary pallbearers will be all employees of Texas Electric Co-op.

Obituary of Paul Holliday, Sr.  
Austin American-Statesman, September 8, 1968

**Raymond and Ella Latham (ca. 1938 – ca. 1939)**

The 1940 U.S. Census shows Raymond E. and Ella L. Latham as the renters of a house in Brownwood, Texas, where Raymond was a body and fender repairman and Ella was an operator in a beauty shop. Raymond Latham was 28, and had been born in Texas. Ella Latham was 37, and had been born in Texas. He had lived in New York City in 1935; she had lived in San Antonio in 1935. With them lived Ella's 2 sons: Jack E. Weakley, 16; and Bobby Weakley, 10, who had lived in San Antonio in 1935, as well as Raymond's father, George Latham, 56, a Texas-born laborer for the State Highway Department who had lived in Brady, Texas in 1935, and Raymond's step-brother, Edward L. Cox, 23, a Texas-born laborer who had lived in Benson, Arizona in 1935.

**Alfred L. and Dorothy Stanley (ca. 1940 – ca. 1941)**

The 1940 U.S. Census shows Alfred L. and Dorothy Stanley as the renters of this house. Alfred L. Stanley was 29, had been born in Mexico, and was a gas plumber. Dorothy Stanley was 22, had been born in Texas, and had no occupation listed. They had a son, Harben L., 2, who had been born in Texas. At 905½ Dawson Road lived Leslie L. and Belva Allison. Leslie L. Allison was 22, had been born in Texas and was a cement worker. Belva Allison was 26, had been born in Texas, and had no occupation listed. They had a son, Leslie W., 10 months.

**Catherine A. Hamilton (ca. 1943 – ca. 1954)**

The 1930 U.S. Census shows A.S. and Katherine Hamilton living in a house they owned in Justice Precinct 5 of Travis County. A.S. Hamilton was 29, had been born in Texas, and was a steel worker. Katherine Hamilton was 27, had been born in Texas, and had no occupation listed. They had 3 children: Theresa, 4; Owen, 2; and Raymond, 6 months. All the children had been born in Texas.



The 1940 U.S. Census shows O. (Orien) S. and Theresa [sic – Catherine] Hamilton as the renters of an apartment at 307 E. 9<sup>th</sup> Street in Austin. O.S. Hamilton was 38, had been born in Texas, and was a structural iron worker. Theresa Hamilton was 37, had been born in Texas, and had no occupation listed. They had 3 children: Theresa, 13; Peter O., 12; and Raymond, 10. With them lived Catherine Hamilton's sister, Thelma Dean, 40, who is listed as married, and had no occupation shown. At another apartment in the same house lived Valentine S. Eppes, 33, and his daughter, Betty Jane Eppes. Valentine Eppes was Catherine Hamilton's brother, and had no occupation listed. The 1920 U.S. Census shows Catherine Eppes as the 17-year old daughter of Joseph and Sarah Eppes, who owned their home on S. 4<sup>th</sup> Street in South Austin. Catherine Eppes was a telephone operator. Her father was a jobber. Catherine's next younger brother was Valentine Eppes.

Catherine Hamilton died in May, 1983, but there does not appear to have been an obituary or death notice in the Austin newspapers. Orien Sidney Hamilton died in 1978 in Denton, Texas, where he had lived for 21 years. He was married to a woman named Vivian, and as a construction superintendent who had been born in Texas.

### Lee S. and Mary A. Lewis (ca. 1960 – ca. 1970)

Lee S. and Mary A. Lewis appear in the 1940 U.S. Census for Bennett, Parker County, Texas, near Fort Worth. Lee S. Lewis was 37, had been born in Texas, and was a shovel operator. Mary A. Lewis was 34, had been born in Texas, and had no occupation listed. They had 4 children: Barney L., 13; Hazel A., 12; Patsy R., 6; and Paul L., 9 months. All of the children had been born in Texas. The family had lived in rural Kaufman County, Texas in 1935.

His 1976 death certificate shows that Lee Sylvester Lewis was born in 1901 in Medina, Texas, and was an equipment operator in the construction trade. He was living in Brady, Texas at the time of his death, but died in Henderson, Texas. He was buried in Brady, Texas. There was no obituary in the Austin newspapers.

Unless the Plumbing is done in strict accordance with City Ordinances, do not turn on the water.

**PERMIT FOR WATER SERVICE** AUSTIN, TEXAS No. 5627 113

M. N. A. Dawson Address 905 E. 9th St. **INDEXED**

Plumber Lots 19-20-21 Blk 4 Size of Tap 1/2" Date 7-2-37

SW changed to 6" Main & 3/4" cap. serv. on 700-881

Date of Connection 7-13-37

Size of Tap Made 3/4"

Size Service Made 2"

Size Main Tapped 2"

From Front Prop. Line to Curb Cock 7.7'

From S-Prop. Line to Curb Cock 20'

Location of Meter back of curb line

Type of Box 7' x 6'

Depth of Main in St. 2'

Depth of Service Line 2'

From Curb Cock to Tap on Main 35'

Checked by Engr. Dept. MB

**INDEXED** 34-37

No. Fittings	Size	Foreman's Report
1	Curb Cock 1/2"	
1	Elbow 3/4"	
1	St. Elbow 3/4"	
1	Bushing 2" x 1 1/2"	
2	Reducer 4" x 2"	
34	Pipe 3/4" galv. pipe	
1	Feed Comp. 3/4" galv. pipe	
1	Nipples 2" x 1/2" galv. pipe	
	Union	
	Plug	
	Tee	
	Stop	
	Box	
	Lid	
	Valves	
	Tile & 1-Tile cover	
	Req. No.	

Foreman's Signature Permitter

187220

Water service permit to Nicholas A. Dawson for this address (1937)

Connection-Charge \$ 17.77 N<sup>o</sup> 16032  
 APPLICATION FOR SEWER CONNECTION:  
 SW. 1/4 Austin, Texas, 6-15 1939  
 To the Superintendent of Sewer and Public Improvements,  
 City of Austin, Texas  
 Sir:—  
 I hereby make application for sewer connection and instructions  
 on premises owned by Jane D. Parker  
 at 901 S. Dawson Rd. Street,  
 further described as lot 10-20-21 block 7 outlot  
 subdivision AR 20125 division 1 plat 13  
 which is to be used as a Res.  
 In this place there are to be installed 1000 fixtures.  
 I agree to pay the City Sewer Department the regular ordinance  
 charge.  
 Respectfully,  
CO. C. 2" DEEP Jane Dawson Parker  
 Stub Out -PL  
 Connected 10-7 1939 Per Pl.  
 Size of Main 6 inches. 10-5-29  
 Size of Service 4 inches.  
4 Feet Deep in ST  
20 Feet from Property Line  
14 Feet from Curb Line  
 Inspected by Boating St at S L  
 Connection made by Moore's  
sewer in Dawson St ✓  
12322 5 A-1336

Sewer connection application for this address (1939) showing the owner as Jane D. Parker, who also owned the now-demolished house at 901 Dawson Road.

