ZONING CHANGE REVIEW SHEET

CASE NUMBER: HDP-2016-0928 **HLC DATE:** February 27, 2017
March 27, 2017

PC DATE:

APPLICANT: Historic Landmark Commission

HISTORIC NAME: **Tobin House**

WATERSHED: Shoal Creek

ADDRESS OF PROPOSED ZONING CHANGE: 405 W. 14th Street

ZONING FROM: GO to GO-H.

SUMMARY STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends the proposed zoning change from general office (GO) district to general office – Historic Landmark (GO-H) combining district zoning.

QUALIFICATIONS FOR LANDMARK DESIGNATION:
Architecture, historical associations, community value.

HISTORIC LANDMARK COMMISSION ACTION: **February 27, 2017:** Initiated the historic zoning case. Vote:

PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION:

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The house is listed as a Priority 1 for research in the Comprehensive Cultural Resources Survey (1984).

CITY COUNCIL DATE: **ACTION:**

ORDINANCE READINGS: 1ST 2ND 3RD **ORDINANCE NUMBER:**

CASE MANAGER: Steve Sadowsky **PHONE:** 974-6454

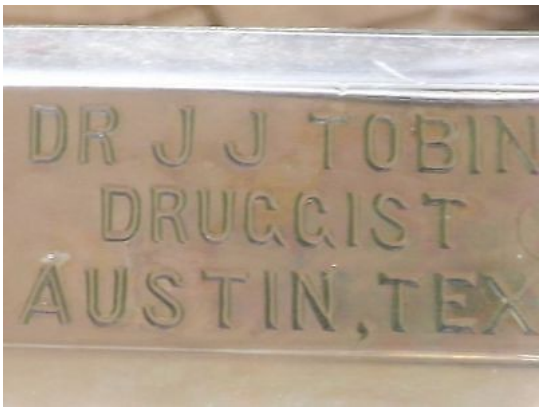
NEIGHBORHOOD ORGANIZATION: Original Austin Neighborhood Association

BASIS FOR RECOMMENDATION:
Architecture:
Two-story, rectangular-plan, hipped-roof, frame American Foursquare-style house with single 1:1 fenestration on the front of the house and single 2:2 fenestration on the sides of the house, a central entry with a transom, and a two-story, flat-roofed, full-width independent porch on boxed wood posts; gablet on the front of the house.

The house represents the identifying characteristics of the American Foursquare style of architecture, popular on city lots in the first two decades of the twentieth century. American Foursquare houses were designed to provide the maximum amount of interior room with their boxy massing, two-story height, hipped roof, and symmetrical composition. A large front porch also defines the style.

Historical Associations:
The house was built in 1910; the first occupants were Ida Tobin and her children, who lived here until around 1925. Ida Tobin, a native of El Dorado, Arkansas, was a renowned

society woman in the city who entertained often and lavishly in this house. She was the widow of Dr. J.J. Tobin, a pioneer Austin druggist who later went into the stationery business. Dr. Tobin came to Austin in 1870, and established a drug store with his brother, Dr. W.H. Tobin. Around 1896, J.J. Tobin sold the drug business to his brother, who ran it at 700 Congress Avenue with E.P. Wooldridge as the vice-president.



Antique glass medicine bottle from Dr. J.J. Tobin's drug business (undated)

Dr. Tobin had many other business interests in the growing city, including the establishment of a mule car line on Congress Avenue in the 1870s, and real estate ventures in both Austin and Round Rock, where he had another drug store. In the 1880s, he ws on the board of directors of the New York, Texas, and Mexican Railway, which was planned to run from New York City to Mexico City, with a starting point in Texas. He opened Austin Book and Stationery Company, later Tobin's Book Store in the 600 block of Congress Avenue, in the mid-1890s. Tobin's was the city's largest stationery store. After Dr. Tobin passed away in 1904, his widow, Ida, moved into a house at 9th and Lavaca Streets, and then in 1910, to this house. The Tobin children, who lived in this house until they married, were also very prominent in the city's business and social life. John H. Tobin continued Tobin's Book Store, which also employed several other of the Tobin brothers. R. Wallace Tobin, who lived in this house the longest, established a prominent insurance agency in the Scarbrough Building. After Ida Tobin died in 1921, Wallace Tobin continued to live in this house until around 1925.

The house was rented by Charles and Grace Nimon from around 1928 to around 1933. Charles Nimon was a Kansas-born traveling salesman for undertakers' supplies. He and his family eventually moved to Fort Worth, and then to Houston, where they died within a month of each other in 1943.

Around 1936, the house was rented by Eugene E. and Mary Upshaw and their daughter, Mary R. Blair, and her husband, Jesse. Eugene E. Upshaw was born in Louisiana but lived in Belton, Texas for many years before moving to Austin. He was very active in politics in Bell County, and held several prominent positions with local and county government there, including serving as treasurer of the City of Belton, and as the deputy superintendent of the county schools. After moving to Austin in the 1930s, Eugene Upshaw worked for the State Comptroller's Office. His son-in-law, Jesse W. Blair, was an auditor for the State Public Welfare Department. After Eugene Upshaw and Jesse Blair both died, their widows (mother and daughter) continued to live in this house until around 1948.

From the late 1940s until around 1960, the house was a rental property; around 1960, it was rented by Ava Atkinson, later Ava Crofford, who moved her photography studio from Guadalupe Street to this house. She also lived in the house while operating her studio. She sold the business to John and Carolyn Windsor around 1980.

LEGAL DESCRIPTION: LOT 7 BLOCK 156 ORIGINAL CITY

ESTIMATED ANNUAL TAX ABATEMENT: $6,949 (income-producing); city portion: $1,939.

APPRAISED VALUE: $1,220,635

PRESENT USE: Office

CONDITION: Excellent

PRESENT OWNERS:
Angelo Zottarelli and Burt R. Solomons
405 W., 14th Street
Austin, Texas 78701

DATE BUILT: ca. 1910

ALTERATIONS/ADDITIONS: None apparent.

ORIGINAL OWNER(S): Ida Tobin (1910)

OTHER HISTORICAL DESIGNATIONS: None.

LOCATION MAP

N

SUBJECT TRACT

PENDING CASE

ZONING BOUNDARY

1 " = 208 '

NOTIFICATIONS

CASE#: HDP-2016-0928

405 W. 14TH STREET

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.

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E-mails received on this case:

Hi Steve,

OANA members and our board have been in touch with the applicant's rep, Glen Coleman, regarding the application for a permit to demolish the improvements at 405 West 14th Street.

The attached letter presents the current state of our discussions. The OANA board wants you and the HLC members to have it as part of their February 27th meeting back-up.

Please let me know if you have any questions.

Best, Ted

Ted Siff, Board President
Old Austin Neighborhood Association

Post Office Box 1282
Austin, TX 78767
www.originalaustin.org

13 February 2017

City of Austin
Historic Landmark Commission
Austin, TX
RE: HDP-2016-0928 - 405 West 14th Street

Dear Landmark Commission Members:

The property at 405 West 14th Street is a historic structure, originally constructed around 1910 as a residence for a member of the Tobin family. It reflects the style, scale, and character of Austin's original residential neighborhood. The historic structure is currently used as an income producing property, and rehabilitation/restoration may make it eligible for both State Historic Tax Credits and the Federal Historic Tax Credits.

Saving and re-zoning this property from General Office (GO) to Downtown Mixed Use (DMU) could provide development opportunities toward the back of the lot.

If the property owner is willing to withdraw the pending demolition permit application and apply for a zoning change to DMU, the Old Austin Neighborhood (OANA)* will support that request as well as work with the property owner to find a solution that provides a competitive market value while preserving the historic character of the property. While we prefer saving the whole house, OANA is open to discussing all possible ways to preserve the historic character of the property including façade easements and other approaches.

Given OANA's offer of support, we are sharing this letter with the property owner in the hope that he will withdraw his demolition permit on or before your meeting on February 27, 2017.

Thank you for your consideration. Let us know if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Ted Siff, President

* Old Austin Neighborhood Association (OANA) is a historic neighborhood in downtown Austin bounded by Lady Bird Lake, West 15th Street, Lamar Boulevard, and Lavaca Street.

Since 1974, OANA *has worked with property owners* to preserve and enhance the historic and residential character of this part of downtown, while embracing the need for new compatible development. Forty plus years of responsible advocacy has contributed to creating and sustaining one of the most vibrant neighborhoods in Austin.

Board of Directors

Ted Siff, President	**Michael Portman, Treasurer**	**Blake Tollett, Secretary**	**Ray Canfield**
Austin Stowell	**Perry Lorenz**	**Perry Horton**	**Bill Schnell**
Diana Zuniga	**Charles Peveto**	**Katie Jackson**	

I am definitely opposed to the demolition of this house. I do not have the funds to purchase it, nor can I suggest anyone who might, but I feel I need to be a voice for this piece of Austin's history that will forever be gone if it is flattened to a concrete slab. I don't

understand why the City would do such a thing. If it's money related, then shame on you. If not, please explain.

Regards,
Anita Reingard Crase

"Be yourself - everyone else is already taken."
- Oscar Wilde.

A big piece of Old Austin, the historic J.J. and Ida Marr Tobin House at 405 West 14th Street in Austin, is set for demolition later this month so it can be...a small surface parking lot. I would rather it be preserved, please consider preserving this piece of history.

Carla Maria Smith
Global Impact Enthusiast

Mr. Sadowsky:

I'd like to express my support for designating the home located at 405 West 14th Street, Austin, TX 78701, as an historic landmark. I believe the Historic Landmark Commission will learn from enough people the home's history, but I'd just like to say it adds to the neighborhood's charm. I'm not sure what might be on deck to replace it, but I can't stand the thought of another large soulless business property that doesn't contribute visually to the neighborhood or represent the city's roots.

Thank you so much for your time and attention to this matter.

Coby C. Chase

Mr. Sadowsky,

I just recently learned that the house at the above-address is set for demolition. I drove past this house yesterday and noticed that there was a fence around it and what I presumed was preparation for a restoration. I was so pleased to see that someone appeared

to be saving it and restoring it to its original beauty. Now I find out that is not the case and that it is soon to be destroyed.

I just want to let you know that I think this would be a sad step for the City to take. Austin lost so many lovely and historic homes in the 60's due to commercial construction and parking lots and it would be a shame to see another added to that list. Houses like this one have survived so long due to the master craftsmanship and care that went into building them and this City should not be so quick to toss aside the beautiful buildings that are a part of what has made Austin such a lovely place to live.

Anything that you can do to get the City to reconsider this decision would be commendable and appreciated.

Thank you!

Diane Janner

Why? Is the real question as to who or what is fueling this demolition. Is parking that bad or money that needed and destroying history doesn't matter. Once history is destroyed you can't bring it back. Money comes and go, I think we can work around this land mark and preserve it for future generations. Demolition is not the answer and you know this. I csn only present this to you as I am not wealthy nor in a position to prevent this decision except to tell you it's a wrong decion. I hope you reconsider.
Rickey Jones

Diane Jacobs

Ms. Mary Jo Galindo and Historic Landmark Commissioners
City of Austin

Re: 405 W. 14th St.

Dear Chair Galindo and Commissioners:

Please do not allow demolition of this home! I can see it from my office window, a small glimmer of old Austin in a forest of high-rises. Austin has become, in areas, too brand-spanking-new looking. There are few signs that the city is more than 30 years old. This house is a reminder.

I'd much rather look at this lovely old house than at a parking lot -- and Austin sure doesn't need to make it easier for still more people to drive downtown.

Thank you for the wonderful work you do, and for your dedication to the city.

Respectfully,

Diane Jacobs

I am writing to express my concern about the potential demolition of the house at 405 W. 14th Street. I work in the neighborhood and am a long-time Austin resident. I would like to see the Old Austin neighborhood maintain its connection to the past through the preservation of its historic structures.

Thank you for considering any options that could preserve the house at this location.

Sincerely,
Emily Rogers

Dear Mr. Sadowsky,

I am writing to voice my strong opposition to the proposed demolition of the house at 405 West 14th Street. I am a lifelong lover of history who works in the downtown area. But, as you likely know, there are fewer and fewer vestiges of Old Austin still standing downtown.

I work close to the Capital, and walk almost daily through one of the few idyllic neighborhoods within walking distance, up 14th Street from Lavaca to West Avenue, and then over 15th into Judge's Hill. I love this area for the fact that so many of the houses on 14th have been preserved. I walk from house to house, plaque to plaque, reading about the history and imagining what the area was like over a hundred years ago. Even amidst the hustle and bustle of downtown all around this neighborhood, the beauty and history of these old houses comes through.

As I understand it, the proposed demolition is in order to turn this beautiful piece of history, standing since the early 1900s, into a parking lot. This proposed destruction would greatly affect the serene beauty of this area, and I cannot imagine that the parking spaces created out of this small lot would be worth the blow to the character of this lovely neighborhood.

I sincerely hope that consideration can be given to preserving this house as a part of Old Austin's history.

Thank you very much,

Eugenia Krieg

Dear Mr. Sadowsky...

It has come to my attention that the J.J. and Ida Marr Tobin House at 405 West 14th is presently slated for demolition (reportedly to end up as a parking lot).

If this is the case, I'd like to register my strong opposition. Razing an Austin landmark of historical significance is contrary to the kind of wise stewardship that we should strive for.

As someone with civic pride who also works downtown, I sincerely hope that the present course for the Tobin House will be reversed.

Thank you for your kind consideration.

Hanz Wasserburger

Thank you for responding. Your quick response is very much appreciated.

I vigorously oppose demolition. This building has a historic past and is a significant historical resource. For example, in addition to the use of the structure well over 50 years ago (probably 100 years), I believe that property records will show that it was owned by Lieutenant Governor Bill Hobby either individually or through one of his organizations. If it is demolished, then a zoning change or higher intensity use will be much easier to obtain.

Today, I mailed to you a written response to the notification to nearby property owners indicating my opposition to material changes to this property.

Again, I very much appreciate your response to my email.

Best regards,

Jim Ray

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January 19, 2017

Ms. Mary Jo Galindo and Historic Landmark Commissioners
City of Austin
Post Office Box 1088
Austin, TX 78767-8865
Sent via E-mail

Re: 405 W. 14th Street

Dear Chair Galindo and Commissioners:

Preservation Austin respectfully urges the Historic Landmarks Commission to follow City staff recommendation and postpone the demolition case for 405 W. 14th Street until the February 27 meeting of the Historic Landmark Commission. A postponement of this case will allow the City staff and the neighborhood to further research the significance and history of the house and its context in the development of the neighborhood as well as an opportunity for staff to work with the property owner on other options.

According to the Staff Report, the house, constructed in 1910, was owned by Ida Tobin and she lived here with her five sons. Mrs. Tobin was the widow of locally prominent businessman Dr. J. J. Tobin. Dr. Tobin owned a drug store and later a stationery store as well as many other business ventures and real estate holdings in Austin and Round Rock including the railway system in Austin. Mrs. Tobin was a celebrated member of Austin society who often entertained at this house. After her death in 1921, her son R. Wallace Tobin continued to live in the house. Wallace Tobin owned a prominent local insurance agency. Additionally, the house is a good example of the American Foursquare style, a subtype of the Prairie Style.

For 60 years, Preservation Austin has been the leading protector of Austin's diverse cultural heritage through the preservation of historic treasures and places. As such, we believe that preservation of this unique resource celebrates our past, enhances livability and a sense of identity for our city.

Sincerely,

John Donisi
President, Preservation Austin

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Kate Singleton, Executive Director
Lindsey Derrington, Programs Coordinator

February 21, 2017

Ms. Mary Jo Galindo and Historic Landmark Commissioners
City of Austin
Post Office Box 1088
Austin, TX 78767-8865
Sent via E-mail

Re: 405 W. 14th Street

Dear Chair Galindo and Commissioners:

Preservation Austin respectfully urges the Historic Landmarks Commission to follow City staff recommendation and initiate historic designation for 405 W. 14th Street. Research of the property has revealed the significance and history of the house and its context in the development of the neighborhood and the Tobin family's impact on the growth and development of Austin.

According to the Staff Report, the house, constructed in 1910, was owned by Ida Tobin and she lived here with her five sons. Mrs. Tobin was the widow of locally prominent businessman Dr. J. J. Tobin. Dr. Tobin owned a drug store and later a stationery store as well as many other business ventures and real estate holdings in Austin and Round Rock including the railway system in Austin. Mrs. Tobin was a celebrated member of Austin society who often entertained at this house. After her death in 1921, her son R. Wallace Tobin continued to live in the house. Wallace Tobin owned a prominent local insurance agency. Additionally, the house is a good example of the American Foursquare style, a subtype of the Prairie Style.

For 60 years, Preservation Austin has been the leading protector of Austin's diverse cultural heritage through the preservation of historic treasures and places. As such, we believe that preservation of this unique resource celebrates our past, enhances livability and a sense of identity for our city.

Sincerely,

John Donisi
President, Preservation Austin

February 9, 2017

Via e-mail

Ms. Mary Jo Galindo and Historic Landmark Commissioners
City of Austin
P.O. Box 1088
Austin, Texas 78767-8865

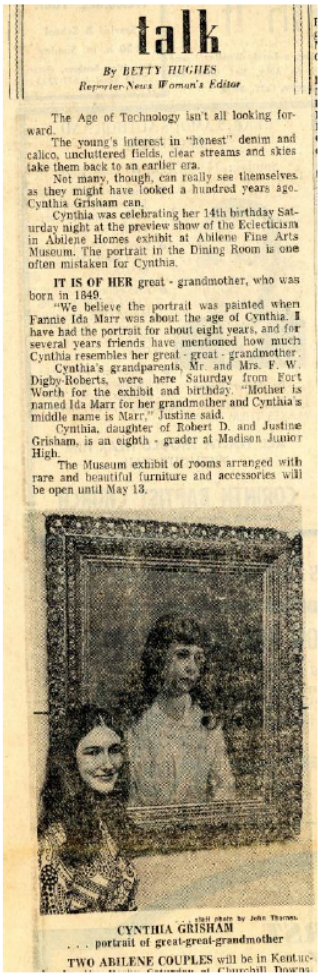
Re: 405 W. 14th Street
The Ida Marr Tobin House

Dear Chair Galindo and Commissioners:

My name is Cynthia Marr Grisham O'Keeffe and I am writing to enthusiastically support the preservation of the house at 405 West 14th Street ("The Ida Marr Tobin House"). It is my hope that this lovely house in the Old Austin neighborhood will be designated as an historic landmark.

The original resident of this house when it was built in 1910 was Fanny Ida Marr Tobin, my great-great grandmother. After she married my great-great grandfather, Dr. John Jenkins (J.J.) Tobin in 1870, she most frequently went by the name Ida

Marr Tobin. My grandmother, Ida Marr Tobin Digby-Roberts was named after her. In turn, my middle name is Marr, after my both my great-great grandmother and my grandmother. My bond with Fanny Ida Marr Tobin goes beyond blood and name. I grew up with a beautiful oil painting of her at age 13 in the living room of my home in Abilene. Visitors often commented on my resemblance to her. Such remarks were frequent enough to cause our local newspaper to write about it.



talk

By BETTY HUGHES
Reporter-News Woman's Editor

The Age of Technology isn't all looking forward.

The young's interest in "honest" denim and calico, uncluttered fields, clear streams and skies take them back to an earlier era.

Not many, though, can really see themselves as they might have looked a hundred years ago. Cynthia Grisham can.

Cynthia was celebrating her 14th birthday Saturday night at the preview show of the Eclecticism in Abilene Homes exhibit at Abilene Fine Arts Museum. The portrait in the Dining Room is one often mistaken for Cynthia.

IT IS OF HER great - grandmother, who was born in 1849.

"We believe the portrait was painted when Fannie Ida Marr was about the age of Cynthia. I have had the portrait for about eight years, and for several years friends have mentioned how much Cynthia resembles her great - great - grandmother.

Cynthia's grandparents, Mr. and Mrs. F. W. Digby-Roberts, were here Saturday from Fort Worth for the exhibit and birthday. "Mother is named Ida Marr for her grandmother and Cynthia's middle name is Marr," Justine said.

Cynthia, daughter of Robert D. and Justine Grisham, is an eighth - grader at Madison Junior High.

The Museum exhibit of rooms arranged with rare and beautiful furniture and accessories will be open until May 13.

staff photo by John Thomas

CYNTHIA GRISHAM
. . . portrait of great-great-grandmother

TWO ABILENE COUPLES will be in Kentuc-

Portrait of (Fanny) Ida Marr Tobin (at age 14) ca. 1861, and news article with me at age 14.

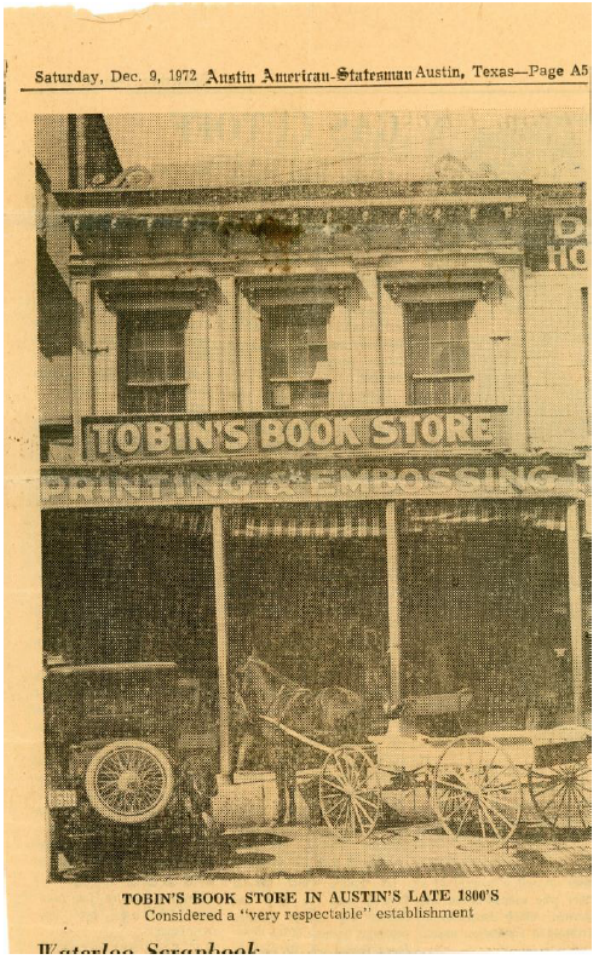
Although I feel a strong connection to my great-great grandmother, that is not the reason this house should be preserved. This house was at the center of the Austin social and cultural scene in the early 1900s. It is still a beautiful place that stands as evidence of what Austin was like when elegant family homes lined the streets around the Capitol. The house at 405 West 14th Street and those few that remain from that era remind all who drive, ride, run or stroll past of the time when Austin was being created by men and women like my great-great grandparents. Those

early Austinites took financial risks to establish businesses, used their imaginations to invent ways to make life better, routinely opened their homes to celebrate with their neighbors, took care of those in need without expectation of recognition and summoned the courage to rebound from tragedy to continue the work of building the community they loved.

In 1910 when my great-great grandmother made this house her home, she was a 63 year-old widow. Her beloved husband of 34 years, Dr. J.J. Tobin, had died six years earlier. She and my great-great grandfather moved to Austin early in their marriage and all seven of their sons were born in Austin. All but two of her sons were in their 30s when she moved into her new home at 405 West 14th Street. (Her second-born son died at age 21 and youngest son died as an infant.) Two of her adult sons moved into the home with her. Before long, her home was filled with the laughter of her grandchildren.

(Fanny) Ida Marr Tobin and Grandchildren ca. 1911

My great-great grandfather, Dr. J.J. Tobin, was an Assistant Surgeon in the Civil War. He served in the military from 1861 to 1865 and was in the 1st Regiment Texas Volunteers, Texas Brigade. After his military service and marriage to Fanny Ida Marr, he and his bride moved to Austin and he established some of Austin's most important businesses of the day: Tobin's Book Store and Tobin Drug Company, as well as the city's largest stationary store. His brother, Dr. W.H. Tobin, joined him in these successful business ventures and together they owned the mule-drawn streetcars that served as Austin's first public transportation system. Those streetcars provided transportation for the many attendees of the gala day festivities when the new Capitol was dedicated in May 1888.



TOBIN'S BOOK STORE IN AUSTIN'S LATE 1800'S
Considered a "very respectable" establishment

Dr. J.J. Tobin's contributions to Austin and Texas history were not limited to these endeavors. An important landmark opinion of the Texas Supreme Court in the area of patent and trademark litigation involved his role as a drug manufacturer. The Texas Supreme Court in 1891 issued its opinion in *Radam v. Microbe Destroyer Co.* which held that my great-great grandfather had not infringed upon the trademarks or labels of a competitor's product when he created and marketed a medicine for sale which he called the "Microbe Destroyer."

In preparing this letter, I found a tribute to my great-great grandfather written by a friend after his funeral. This quote from that tribute speaks to his philanthropic contributions to the Austin community: "It can be truthfully asserted that no one in distress ever appealed to Dr. Tobin in vain. It was not only worthy to whom he liberally dispensed charity, for without reference to that, it was enough for him to know that those appealing to him were in need, and to which he invariably responded. He was not an ostentatious donor, and only those who were aided by him knew his kindness of heart in this respect."

My great-great grandmother's many contributions to early day Austin were not merely derivative of her marriage to Dr. J.J. Tobin. When she moved into her new home in 1910, she was starting a new and meaningful chapter in her life. She lived in that home until her death in 1921, filling it with love of family, friends and community. She frequently hosted receptions and cultural gatherings in her new home, not letting her status as a widow keep her from living life to the fullest and remaining a vital part of the Austin community.

She not only had the house at 405 West 14th built, but the house next door at 409 West 14th Street as well. She wanted her son, my great grandfather, Charles Edwin (Ted) Tobin to live next door with his wife Edith and most importantly, her precious granddaughter and namesake, Ida Marr Tobin.

Ted and daughter Ida Marr Tobin (age 15)

Ida Marr Tobin (age 2 mos)

The two houses she had built at 405 and 409 West 14th Street really functioned as the Tobin family compound. Not only do I know this from stories my mother told me, a 1911 Austin Daily Statesman article about my grandmother's tenth birthday party describes how the two homes served as one venue for entertaining. The article noted that "Miss Ida Marr Tobin will always remember the important occasion of her 10th birthday, for it was the inspiration for one of the loveliest of children's parties given in her honor by her grandmother, Mrs. J.J. Tobin." The article went on to describe how the "two picturesque lawns of the adjoining Tobin homes were made attractive with rugs and swings and numerous seats, making an ideal playground." A group picture of the 118 children attending the birthday party

was taken and the name of each child was listed in the newspaper article.

Ida Marr Tobin's 10th birthday party and Austin Statesman article June 1911

Upon her death in 1921, my great-great grandmother was described in an Austin Statesman article as one of the "most prominent of Austin women." The article went on to say if "one were to return to Austin after an absence of many years, and make inquiry for those who were prominent in the life of the city long ago, one of the first names mentioned would be that of Mrs. J.J. Tobin." She was described as "one of the earliest of hostesses who gave a cultural air to the city…" It was noted that "Mrs. Tobin was an ardent worker in St. David's Episcopal Church" and that she "gave of herself unsparingly in charity, in friendliness and in good deeds, in love to her children and most of all in hospitality, the art of which is becoming lost in these mad rushing commercial days."

Growing up, I always knew how important the Tobin houses on West 14th Street were to my mother, Justine Digby-Roberts Grisham. She was the only child of Mrs. J.J. Tobin's beloved granddaughter, the same Miss Ida Marr Tobin honored at that historic birthday party. Each time my family visited Austin when I was a child, each time my mother would visit me when I was a UT student, each time she came to visit after I moved back to Austin with my husband and son, we made the trek to see the houses and hear the family history of them. My favorite story she would tell was how the Lammes Candy Company would deliver ice cream to the Tobin houses in a horse-drawn wagon to be served at holidays, parties and special family gatherings. She delighted in telling that same story to my son, her only grandchild, when he was a little boy.

My mother took these pictures of my husband, son and me in front of the Tobin homes in 1995

My grandmother and mother have both passed away, otherwise they would be writing this letter. Because they are gone, it falls to me to try to convey the importance of the house at 405 West 14th to Austin's history. I am at a substantial disadvantage because when those wonderful stories were being told to me I was distracted, first by youth and later by the demands of my life as a wife, mother and attorney. I wish I had listened more intently.

What I can tell you is that I have a perfect view of the Tobin homes on West 14th from the window of my office on the 9th floor of the William P. Clements Building. As I arrive at work each day, I look down at the two houses and imagine what life was like for the three generations of my family that lived there over 100 years ago.

I marvel at my great-great grandmother's fortitude in beginning her new life there after losing her husband and her courage in hosting 118 children for a birthday party! I keep a picture of that party in my office and I love showing my colleagues at the Attorney General's Office the view out my window of the houses where the party took place. On lunch breaks, I sometimes give walking tours to the younger lawyers in our office to show them the houses and they are fascinated by this glimpse of Austin history.

I believe it is incumbent upon those who know the city's history to step forward to preserve it for the next generations. This lovely historic neighborhood in the shadow of the Capitol should be protected from destruction. What a shame it would be to lose one of the last historic gems in the Old Austin residential area. I stand ready to do what I can to prevent that from happening.

My mother carefully researched and documented the Marr and Tobin family histories, so I have documentation of everything described in this letter and more. I will be happy to provide copies of any documentation needed to assist with your deliberations.

My plea to this commission is to preserve the Ida Marr Tobin House at 405 West 14th Street and designate it as an historic landmark, not because of its importance to me, but because it is an important part of the story of Austin.

Sincerely,

Cynthia Marr Grisham O'Keeffe

Ida Marr Tobin in her playhouse at the Tobin houses, early 1900's.

ca. 1910

OCCUPANCY HISTORY
405 W. 14th Street

City Directory Research, Austin History Center
By City Historic Preservation Office
January, 2014

1992	Bob Bullock campaign office
1985-86	Golson-Fitzgerald Interior Design-Furnishings Judy C. Golson and Rene Fitzgerald, proprietors NOTE: Judy C. Golson also lived on-site.
1981	University Studio, photography John Windsor, proprietor NOTE: John and Carolyn Windsor also lived on-site.
1977	University Studio, photography Ava Crofford and Ann A. Froeschl, proprietors NOTE: William L. and Ava Crofford also lived on-site. William L. Crofford was retired.
1973	University Studio, photography Ava Crofford and Ann A. Froeschl, proprietors NOTE: William L. and Ava Crofford also lived on-site. William L. Crofford was retired.
1968	University Studio, photography Ava Crofford, proprietor

NOTE: William L. and Ava Crofford also lived on-site. William L. Crofford was retired.

1965 University Studio, photography
Ava Crofford, proprietor
NOTE: William L. and Ava Crofford also lived on-site. William L. Crofford was the district manager for the Gibraltar Life Insurance Company.

1961 University Studio, photography
Ava Atkinson, proprietor
NOTE: Ava Atkinson also lived on-site.
NOTE: William L. Crofford is not listed in the directory.

1957 Wade and Bessie Dorsett, renters
Housekeeper
NOTE: Ava Atkinson is listed at 2027 Guadalupe Street. She was the proprietor of University Studio at that same address.

1955 Wade and Bess R. Dorsett, renters
Wade: No occupation listed
Bess: Saleswoman, Price's, women's clothing, 912 Congress Avenue.

1952 Ellen Loney, renter
No occupation listed

1949 Alma H. Winder, owner
Widow, Howard Winder
No occupation listed

1947 Mary R. Blair, renter
Widow, Jesse Blair
Employed by the State Department of Public Welfare

Mary Upshaw, renter
Widow, Eugene Upshaw
No occupation listed

1944-45 Mary R. Blair, renter
Widow, Jess W. Blair
Accountant, State Department of Public Welfare

Eugene E. and Mary Upshaw, renters
Accountant, State Comptroller's Office

1941 Eugene E. and Mary E. Upshaw, renters
Auditor, State Comptroller's Office

J. Wallace and Mary R. Blair, renters
Book-keeper, State Department of Public Welfare
Also listed is Mary M. Blair, a student at the University of Texas.

1939 Eugene E. and Mary Upshaw, renters
Auditor, State Comptroller's Office
Also listed is Daisy Upshaw, a stenographer for the State Department of Health.

1937 Eugene E. and Mary E. Upshaw, renters

Auditor, State Comptroller's Office
Also listed is Daisy Upshaw, a stenographer for the State Department of Health.

Jesse W. and Mary Blair, renters
Certifier, Texas Old Age Assistance Commission, 5th floor, Court House.

1935 Mrs. Lura G. Hubert, renter
No occupation listed
Also listed are Frank W. Hubert, a student at the University of Texas; Gussie M. Hubert, a stenographer for the State Board of Control; Lurleen Hubert, a typist for the State Comptroller's Office; and Nona G. Hubert, a typist for the State Highway Department.

NOTE: Eugene E. and Mary Upshaw are listed at 609 W. 14th Street; he was an auditor for the State Comptroller's Office. Listed with them is Daisy Upshaw, a stenographer (no place of employment listed).

NOTE: Jesse W. and Mary Blair are listed at 609 W. 14th Street; neither had an occupation shown.

1932-33 Charles W. and Grace Nimon, renters
Traveling salesman
Also listed is Rebecca Nimon, a typist for the State Comptroller's Office.

1930-31 Charles W. and Grace Nimon, renters
Traveling salesman
Also listed are Grace Nimon, no occupation shown; and Rebecca Nimon, a stenographer at the State Comptroller's Office.

1929 Charles W. and Grace Nimon, renters
Traveling salesman
Also listed are Grace Nimon, no occupation shown; and Rebecca Nimon, a book-keeper (no place of employment shown).

1927 Vacant
NOTE: Charles W. and Grace Nimon are listed at 307 W. 26th Street. He was a traveling salesman. Listed with them are Charles W. N9mon, Jr., an assistant storekeeper at Camp Mabry; Grace Nimon, no occupation shown; and Nelle Nimon, a teacher.

1924 Wallace Tobin, renter
Proprietor, Wallace Tobin & Company, fire, tornado, automobile, liability, livestock, plate glass, accident insurance, surety bonds, 804 Scarbrough Building.

1922 Wallace Tobin, renter
Proprietor, Wallace Tobin & Company, fire, tornado, automobile, liability, livestock, plate glass, accident insurance, surety bonds, 804 Scarbrough Building.

1920 Mrs. Ida M. Tobin, renter
Widow, John J. Tobin
No occupation listed
Also listed is Wallace Tobin, proprietor, Wallace Tobin & Company, fire, tornado, automobile, liability, livestock, plate glass, accident insurance, surety bonds, 804 Scarbrough Building.

1918 Mrs. Ida M. Tobin, renter
Widow, John J. Tobin
No occupation listed
Also listed is Wallace Tobin, proprietor, Wallace Tobin & Company, fire, tornado, automobile, liability, livestock, plate glass, accident insurance, surety bonds, 804 Scarbrough Building.

1916 Mrs. Ida M. Tobin
Widow, John J. Tobin
No occupation listed
Also listed is Wallace Tobin, proprietor, Wallace Tobin & Company, fire, tornado, automobile, liability, livestock, plate glass, accident insurance, surety bonds, 815-16 Scarbrough Building; and Cornelius D. Tobin, a reporter for the Austin American-Statesman.

1914 Ida Tobin
Widow, John J. Tobin
No occupation listed
Also listed are James Pl. Tobin, a salesman at Tobin's Book Store (John H. Tobin, proprietor), books and stationery, newspapers, periodicals, book and job printers and embossers, 606 Congress Avenue; and R Wallace Tobin, a notary.

Undated postcard view of the interior of Tobin's Book Store, courtesy AustinPostcards.com

1912-13 Ida Tobin
Widow, J.J. Tobin
No occupation listed
Also listed are Charles Edward ("Ted") Tobin, a salesman at Tobin's Book Store, books and stationery, newspapers, periodicals, book and job printers, and embossers, 606 Congress Avenue; James P. Tobin, a salesman at Tobin's Book Store; and R. Wallace Tobin, an attorney and notary public.

1910-11 Ida Tobin

Widow, J.J. Tobin
No occupation listed
Also listed are Charles Edward ("Ted") Tobin, a salesman at Tobin's Book Store, books and stationery, newspapers, periodicals, book and job printers, and embossers, 606 Congress Avenue; James P. Tobin, a salesman at Tobin's Book Store; and R. Wallace Tobin, an attorney.

1909-10 The address is not listed in the directory.
NOTE: Ida Tobin, the widow of J.J. Tobin, is listed at 900 Lavaca Street; she had no occupation shown. With her lived James P. Tobin, a salesman for Tobin's Book Store, books and stationery, newspapers, periodicals, book and job printers, and embossers, 606 Congress Avenue.
NOTE: Charles Edward ("Ted") Tobin lived at 307 W. 6th Street; he was a salesman for Tobin's Book Store.
NOTE: R. Wallace Tobin is listed as having "moved to Houston, Tex." He was an attorney.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES:
The Tobin Family (ca. 1910 – ca. 1925)
The 1900 U.S. Census shows John J. and Ida Tobin living at 602 W. 9th Street in Austin. John J. Tobin was 62, had been born in Alabama, and was a stationery merchant. Ida Tobin was 53, had been born in Arkansas, and had no occupation listed. They had 5 sons listed with them: David, 28, a lawyer; James, 25, a clerk in a stationery store; John H., 24, a clerk in a stationery store; Charles, 22, a clerk in a stationery store; and Wallace, 18, who was listed as being at school. All of the boys had been born in Texas.

Ida Tobin is listed in the 1910 U.S. Census as a 60-year old Arkansas-born widow living at 900 Lavaca Street with her son, James, 35, who had been born in Texas. Ida had no occupation listed; James was a clerk at a book store. They had 2 servants: Gussie Jackson, and U.S. Gregg, but no additional information is listed in the census report on either of them. Her son, John H. Tobin, 36, and his wife, Josie, also 36, were living at 600 W. 15th Street. John H. Tobin was the manager of a book store.

His 1918 World War I draft registration card shows that Robert Wallace Tobin was living in this house at that time. He was born in 1881, and was an insurance agent with his office in the Scarbrough Building. His mother is listed as his nearest relative. He was of medium height and had a slender build. He had gray eyes and brown hair.

The 1920 U.S. Census shows Mrs. John J. (Ida) Tobin as the renter of this house. She was a 68-year old widow who had been born in Arkansas and had no occupation listed. With her lived her son, C. David, 45, a stationery merchant, his wife, Lona, 45, who had been born in Louisiana and had no occupation listed; and another son, Robert Wallace Tobin, 36, a Texas-born insurance agent. The family had 2 servants: Viola Brooks, 30, a Texas-born cook; and Doughty Morrow, 23, a Texas-born chauffeur.

Ida Tobin died in 1921.

J.J. Tobin

FUNERAL OF DR. TOBIN

To Be Held This Morning at Eleven O'clock.

The funeral of Dr. J. J. Tobin will be held this morning at 11 o'clock from the residence, 900 Lavaca street. Funeral services will be held at the residence and also at the cemetery. Dr. T. B. Lee, rector of St. David's Episcopal church, will conduct the services at the house and also at the cemetery.

The following gentlemen will act as pallbearers: Active—George S. Criser, Henry E. Shelley, John L. Peeler, Dr. E. P. Wilmot, Mike Butler, Captain Bartlett, S. R. Fisher and Joe Barbisch. Honorary—John O. Johnson, A. H. Graham, L. M. Openheimer, Colonel Joel H. B. Miller.

Funeral notice for John J. Tobin
Austin Statesman, October 14, 1904

Large Bridge Gathering.

One of the most beautifully planned large bridge gatherings of the season was given Friday afternoon by Mrs. J. J. Tobin in compliment to Mrs. Lucy Tobin Thornton of San Antonio. The handsome new home of the hostess, who is one of the most gracious

and cordial in Austin, was charmingly decorated with cut flowers of brilliant hue, which gave color and fragrance to the apartments. In the living room were red carnations and geraniums, in the library were Killarney roses and Aurora carnations. Bride roses and carnations were in the reception room, while red flowers again were noted in the dining room.

Twenty tables were placed for bridge, five games of which provided the afternoon's diversion. At the close the most delicious full salad course was served, followed by creme de menthe. The refreshments were served on Japanese trays, in the center of which were placed crystal candlesticks holding candles, some red, some lavender, pink and green and yellow, with silver filigree shades showing the same color through. These candlesticks fell to the possession of the holder of the highest score at each table. The first prize, a filigree silver pie plate, was presented to Mrs. Hudley Fisher; the consolation, a cut glass lemon set, was presented to Mrs. W. H. Richardson, Jr., while the guest of honor received a most appropriate souvenir—an artist's version of "Lovely Woman."

Regrets were expressed on all sides that the lovely guest of honor would depart for home the next day, making her visit all too short.

Story on Mrs. Ida Tobin's bridge party at this house on 14th Street
Austin Daily Statesman, January 22, 1911

Ida Tobin and her sons

AUSTIN MOURNS DEATH OF GREATLY-BELOVED WOMAN

—Photo by Jensen-Raymer.

Mrs. J. J. Tobin, whose death Sunday removes one of the oldest and most prominent of Austin women.

If one were to return to Austin after an absence of many years, and make inquiry for those who were prominent in the life of the city long ago, one of the first names mentioned would be that of Mrs. J. J. Tobin. Mrs. Tobin was a figure in the social life of the city for many years, a hostess of the old southern type, which is fast passing away.

Coming to Austin in 1871 with her husband, Dr. J. J. Tobin, she lived here continuously until her death Sunday, for over fifty years. She was a young, vivacious woman when she first made Austin her home, she left it, young in spirit, beauty loving, youth loving, a sweet and charitable woman whose personality was charming and whose friendship was to be appreciated.

Mrs. Tobin was one of Austin's most prominent society women, one of the earliest of hostesses who gave a cultural air to the city, and helped mold its social life. She was fond of people, fond of making them happy, fond of having them in her home. Her entertainments were brilliant and beautiful. She entertained lavishly and hospitably, and her receptions, luncheons and parties were the model for others in the day when entertaining was whole-souled and delightful. Mrs. Tobin's home was the center of attraction to the young, and she enjoyed the companionship, after she grew older, of her young grandchildren, planning parties and diversi-

tions for them with the same eagerness that marked her early life.

When Dr. and Mrs. Tobin came to Austin they lived on East Seventh street, later living for many years in the Eggleston place on West Ninth street. Afterwards they lived on West Nineteenth in the house that later became Governor Hogg's home.

Dr. Tobin was proprietor of the Tobin Drug Store for over thirty years and had other business interests in the city. He was prominent in the business and social life of the State. Mrs. Tobin was an ardent worker in St. David's Episcopal Church and for years a faithful member of the Guild.

That she loved brightness, that she was always cheerful, that she liked flowers about her was remembered by her devoted children when she died, and the entire grave was lined with pink and lavendar sweet peas. Flowers heaped her coffin, the gift of loving friends.

Nothing sad, nothing sombre could affect her disposition, and though she had troubles and sorrow she bore them without the world's knowing.

Such women as Mrs. Tobin, cultivated, artistic, beautiful in thought and life, has made Austin the home of refinement and culture which is its boast. She gave of herself unsparingly in charity, in friendliness, in good deeds, in love to her children, but most of all in hospitality, the art of which is becoming lost in these mad rushing commercial days.

News story on the life of Mrs. Ida Tobin
Austin Statesman, February 27, 1921

MRS. IDA M. TOBIN LEFT PROPERTY TO IMMEDIATE FAMILY

Will Filed For Probate Discloses Estate Was of Considerable Value.

The last will of the late and beloved Mrs. Ida Marr Tobin was filed for probate by Judge Victor L. Brooks late Thursday afternoon. The will is dated November 26, 1919, and Wallace Tobin, a son, is made independent administrator without bond.

The instrument recites, among other things, that 160 shares of stock in the Tobin Book Store, Inc., had previously been given over to John H. Tobin and the will leaves him 41 additional shares, or 201, out of a total of 400 shares. One share of the same stock is bequeathed to Wallace Tobin. The will directs that the remaining 198 shares be equally divided between C. D. Tobin, James Tobin, Charles (Ted) Tobin and Wallace Tobin. The Ellis county farm, consisting of 193 acres of land, with improvements, is left to C. D., James, Charles (Ted) and Wallace Tobin, each to receive one-fourth.

To three grandchildren, all girls, Mrs. Tobin bequeathed all her jewelry, excepting her wedding ring, and all wearing apparel. To Wallace Tobin was bequeathed, in addition to the property mentioned above, the wedding ring, all household effects and "all other personal property not bequeathed to my granddaughters." The will also provided that any real estate that might be left shall be equally divided between Mrs. Tobin's five sons.

Story on the estate of Mrs. Ida Tobin
Austin Statesman, March 11, 1921

TOBIN RITES TO BE HELD HERE SATURDAY

Funeral services for Ted Tobin, former resident of Austin, who died in a Los Angeles hospital Tuesday morning of pneumonia were to be held Saturday afternoon at 5 o'clock from the Thurlow B. Weed funeral home. Services to be in charge of the Rev. Beverly Boyd, rector of St. David's church. Burial in Oakwood cemetery.

The body was sent here from California and arrived Saturday morning and was accompanied by Mrs. Tobin. Mr. Tobin was born and reared in Austn and had been living in California for only a few years. Until the time of his departure he was vice-president of the Tobin, Inc., firm here.

Survivors are his widow, a 14 year old son, Donald, of Long Beach, Cal., a daughter, Mrs. Wm. Digby Roberts of Dallas, four brothers, John H. James, and Wallace Tobin of Austin and Dave Tobin of Dayton, Ohio.

Dave Tobin of Dayton, Ohio, Mr. and Mrs. Wm. Digby Roberts of Dallas and one year old daughter, Justine, arrived in Austin Saturday morning to atend the funeral. Donald Tobin accompanied his mother here from California.

Pall bearers were A. M. Scott, A. W. Hart, E. J. Smith, H. D. Callaway, Ben W. Greig, and Clay Price. Mrs. Vena K. Mathews had charge of music for the funeral.

Obituary of Ted Tobin
Austin Statesman, July 6, 1929

John Tobin For Tax Collector

Business Man Announces Candidacy

John H. Tobin, an Austin business man for over 30 years, a native of Travis county, the son of the late Dr. J. J. Tobin who settled in Austin in 1870, is a candidate for the office of county tax collector of Travis county, subject to the action of the democratic primary, July 23.

Until last year, Mr. Tobin conducted the well known firm of Tobin's, known in former years as Tobin's Book Store, which had been an old land mark on Congress avenue since 1896.

Mr. Tobin's long business experience, his knowledge of Travis county affairs, and his wide acquaintance with his fellow citizens make it certain that he can and will conduct the office of tax collector in a manner satisfactory to the people of the county.

For many years John Tobin has taken an active interest in public affairs. He was a member of the first committee which planned and began work on the scenic drive from Bull creek and around Mt. Bonnell to Austin.

He is a Mason and a past potentate of Ben Hur Shrine temple.

Portion of the story on John H. Tobin's run for Travis County Tax Collector that describes the Tobin family's businesses in Austin
Austin American-Statesman, April 3, 1932

The 1930 U.S. Census shows R. Wallace and Fay Tobin as the owners of the house at 1305 Woodlawn Boulevard. That house was worth $7,500. Wallace Tobin was 46, had been born in Texas, and was an insurance agent. Fay Tobin was 36, had been born in Arkansas, and had no occupation listed. Listed with them is Fay Tobin's son, Hugh W. Heflin, 9, who had been born in Texas; and their daughter together, Fay E. Tobin, 2, who had been born in Texas. The 1940 U.S. Census shows Wallace and Fay Tobin as the owners of the house at 1509 Woodlawn Boulevard, which was worth $6,000. Wallace Tobin was a 58-year old insurance broker. His step-son, Hugh Heflin, then 19, is listed with them, as is Wallace and Fay's daughter, Fay Tobin, 12. High Heflin did not have an occupation listed in the census report.

His 1960 death certificate shows that Robert Wallace Tobin was living at 1403 Northridge Drive at the time of his death. He had been born in 1881 in Texas and was a widowed insurance broker.

Wallace Tobin

WALLACE TOBIN WILL MOVE TO HOUSTON

HAS FORMED A LAW PARTNERSHIP WITH CLARENCE KENDALL, A UNIVERSITY CLASSMATE.

Wallace Tobin will leave today for Houston where he will form a law partnership with Clarence Kendall with the firm name of Kendall & Tobin. They will have their offices in Houston in the Commercial National Bank building.

Both Mr. Kendall and Mr. Tobin graduated from the University law school in 1907, since when Mr. Kendall has been practicing law in Richmond, Texas, and Mr. Tobin in Austin, being associated with the late Judge Clarence H. Miller.

While Mr. Tobin's many friends here regret his departure from the city, where he has lived all his life and has been prominent in social and University circles, they are ready to congratulate him upon the excellent prospects which await him in Houston. Both Mr. Kendall and Mr. Tobin have assurances which will enable them to rapidly gain a foothold and rise to eminence in the legal fraternity.

Story on Wallace Tobin's move to Houston
Austin Daily Statesman, January 5, 1909

MRS. WALLACE TOBIN

Mrs. Wallace Tobin, a resident of Austin for over 30 years, died in a local hospital Sunday. She was born in Arkansas and lived most of her life in Beaumont before moving to Austin. She was a member of the University Presbyterian church, a graduate of the University of Texas and a member of Zeta Tau Alpha sorority.

Survivors are her husband, Wallace Tobin, Austin; one son, Hugh W. Heflin, Austin; her mother, Mrs. Silverman, Little Rock, Ark., and one brother, Frank Silverman of Little Rock.

Funeral services will be held at the Weed-Corley Funeral Home Tuesday at 10 a. m. Dr. Harry Moffett will officiate and burial will be in Oakwood Cemetery.

Obituary of Fay (Mrs. Wallace) Tobin
Austin Statesman, October 15, 1951

MRS. WALLACE TOBIN

Funeral services for Mrs. Wallace Tobin were held at the Weed-Corley Funeral Home Tuesday. Dr. Harry Moffett officiated. Burial was in Oakwood Cemetery.

Pallbearers were George C. Hawley, Walter Bremond Jr., W. E. Rowe, E. C. McClure, Dr. G. F. Thornhill and General Frederick Gilbreath.

Story on the funeral of Fay (Mrs. Wallace) Tobin
Austin Statesman, October 16, 1951

WALLACE TOBIN

Wallace Tobin, 78, lifetime resident of Austin and local insurance agent for over 40 years, died Wednesday morning in a local hospital. He was a graduate of the University of Texas Law School and a member of the Austin Lodge 12, AF&AM and the Scottish Rite Bodies.

Survivors are one son, Hugh W. Heflin, Austin; and two grandchildren. Several nieces and nephews also survive, including Bob Tobin of Austin.

Funeral services will be held at the Weed-Corley Funeral Home Friday at 11 a.m. with the Rev. Charles S. Sumners officiating. Interment will be private in Oakwood Cemetery.

Pallbearers will be Harris Brush, Lem Scarbrough, George Lacey, James Hawley, John Barclay and C. H. Walling.

Obituary of Wallace Tobin
Austin Statesman, February 25, 1960

WALLACE TOBIN

Funeral services for Walace Tobin, 78, 1403 Northridge, were held at the Weed-Corley Funeral Home Friday with the Rev. Charles S. Sumners officiating. Burial was in Oakwood Cemetery.

Pallbearesr were Harris Brush, Lam Scarbrough, George Lacey, James Hawley, John Barclay and C. H. Walling.

Story on the funeral of Wallace Tobin
Austin Statesman, February 26, 1960

Charles W. and Grace Nimon (ca. 1928 – ca. 1933)

The 1930 U.S. Census shows C.W. and Grace Nimon as the renters of this house. C.W. Nimon was 53, had been born in Kansas to an Irish-born father and a New York-born mother, and was a commercial traveler for an undertaker business. Grace Nimon was also 53, had been born in Kansas to an Irish-born father and an English-born mother, and had no occupation listed. They

had 2 daughters: Grace, 28, a stenographer; and Rebecca (who is listed as absent), 19, who had no occupation listed. Both girls had been born in Texas.

The 1920 U.S. Census shows Charles and Grace Nimon living in a rented house in Gainesville, Texas, where Charles was a traveling salesman for undertakers' supplies.

The 1940 U.S. Census shows Charles and Grace Nimon living in a rented house in Fort Worth, Texas, where Charles was the secretary to the State Armory Board. Grace had no occupation listed. Neither of their daughters is listed with them.

Charles William Nimon was born in 1876 in Leavenworth, Kansas, and died in March, 1943 in Houston, Texas, where he is buried. Grace Nimon was born in 1876 in Scranton, Kansas, and died in April, 1943 in Houston, where she is buried.

Eugene E. and Mary Upshaw (ca. 1936 – ca. 1948)
Jesse W. and Mary R. Blair (ca. 1936 – ca. 1948)

The 1930 U.S. Census shows E. Eugene and Mary E. Upshaw as the owners of a house in Belton, Texas. E. Eugene Upshaw was 59, had been born in Louisiana, and was the deputy superintendent of the county schools. Mary E. Upshaw was 54, had been born in Texas, and had no occupation listed. With them lived their daughter and son-in-law, Daisy and Ralph C. Anderson. Ralph C. Anderson was 32, had been born in Texas and was an electric refrigerator salesman. Daisy Anderson was 32, had been born in Texas, and had no occupation listed. The family also had a boarder, William H. Sparks, 28, a West Virginia accountant; and a roomer, Algee Shofner, 23, a sports reporter for a newspaper.

The 1940 U.S. Census shows Eugene and Mary Ella Upshaw as the primary renters of this house, along with Jesse W. and Mary Blair. Eugene Upshaw was 70, had been born in Louisiana, and worked in the State Comptroller's Office. Mary Ella Upshaw was 64, had been born in Texas, and had no occupation listed. Their daughter, Daisy, 40, had been born in Texas, and worked as a stenographer in the State Health Department. Jesse W. Blair is listed as Eugene Upshaw's partner, but in reality, was his son-in law. Jesse W. Blair was 47, had been born in Texas, and was an auditor in the State Public Welfare Department. Mary Blair was 45, had been born in Texas, and had no occupation listed. They had a daughter, Mary Margaret Blair, 17, who had been born in Texas and had no occupation listed.

His 1942 death certificate shows that Jesse Wallis Blair had been at the San Antonio State Hospital for almost 5 months at the time of his death. He had been born in 1892 in Texas, and was a bank cashier. He was buried in Belton, Texas.

His 1945 death certificate shows that Eugene Earnest Upshaw was living at this house at the time of his death. He was born on July 4, 1870 in Louisiana, and worked in the State Comptroller's Office. He was buried in Belton. Mrs. J.W. (Mary) Blair was his daughter, and the informant on the death certificate.

E. E. UPSHAW.

If there is any one man in Bell county who could be counted a walking incyclopedia of information so far as concerns records in the district court that man is Gene Upshaw. He can tell you things of the dead gone past that has slipped the minds of many men and details of present day events as recorded in bound books in his office are almost similarly recorded in his retentive mind. It might be well to say that this talent is cultivated and the stored knowledge the result of close study and the training of a keen intellect that enables one to perform more accurately the duties that fall upon him in keeping a record of the court and at any time he can go direct to the book and page that holds the record without recourse to any index. Mr. Upshaw has been in and about the district court for more years than he cares to tell, fully twenty we would say, as deputy or as district clerk, and he is familiar with the in tricacies of the law pertaining to court procedure as the oldest citizen is familiar with the paths and roads of his home town or country. This knowledge counts for much with those having business with the district clerk's office, litigants, officials or attorneys. It can not be otherwise than that Gene Upshaw is a most valuable man in the office of district clerk and his efficiency has caused the overthrow of the time worn rule of changing every four years. Experience along this line has brought the people to recognize that it is wise to retain in the office a man who has acquired the knowledge necessary to its proper conduct and it must be said that in this case efficiency is the rule of this office, so has it become that the voters appreciate that it would be a grave mistake to make a change so long as he attends to the duties of the office as he has always done.

Every man, woman or child having business with the district clerk knows how cheerfully he attends to every request for information and how free he is from favoritism and this, coupled with his ability to make reply to requests for informaton, shows why he is held in such confidence and esteem all over the country.

Mr. Upshaw is asking the voters to retain him in the office, basing his request upon his official record, a record that any man might well be proud of.

There is a personality about Gene Upshaw that naturally attracts men. He is a lovable man and quickly gains and holds the regard of all who come in contact with him. He lives close to nature when free from his official duties and delights in strolling through the field or woods or lingering near the streams, where he takes much of his recreation. He is a character that grows with acquaintance and counts his friends by the number of his acquaintances, which are legion. He belongs to no faction and represents no clan, but in his official life he has represented all of the people. In his private life he is close to and of the people, kindly, companionable, cheerful, charitable. A peerless official, a good citizen.

He is again making the race for this important office subject to the action of the democratic primary, July 25th.

From the Find-A-Grave website, a story from the Belton, Texas newspaper, May 7, 1914

FORMER TREASURER OF BELTON SUED BY STATE'S ATTORNEY

Diversion of Public Funds Among Allegations In Suits Filed Monday.

Alleging the diversion of public funds, the attorney general's department, on behalf of the state and the city of Belton, filed suits in the district court of Bell county late Monday against H. R. Smith and Eugene E. Upshaw, former treasurers of the city of Belton, announced Attorney General W. A. Keeling late Monday. The suits are also against the surety on their bonds.

In the suit against Smith it is alleged that he "diverted and paid out" of the sinking fund of the city of Belton the sum of $26,201, and that the Fidelity and Deposit Company of Maryland, the surety on Smith's bond, "became liable to the city of Belton" in the sum of $20,000, the amount of the bond. The state is also suing Smith for penalty in the sum of $1000 for failure to make report to the comptroller as required by law.

The same allegations are made in the petition filed against Upshaw, except that the state, joined by the city of Belton, claims that Upshaw, while treasurer of Belton, "diverted" funds belonging to the sinking fund in the amount of $40,225, the total amount involved in the two suits being $66,426. In the Upshaw case the state seeks to recover a penalty of $2000 for failure to file a report with the comptroller as required by law. The state is also seeking to recover $20,000 from Upshaw's bondsman, the Fidelity and Deposit Company of Maryland. Assistant Attorney General C. A. Wheeler has charge of this litigation. The dates of these alleged diversions were in 1920 and 1921.

News story on the suit brought by the State Attorney General against Eugene E. Upshaw for diverting funds from the City of Belton
Austin Statesman, April 1, 1924

E. E. Upshaw Succumbs

Eugene Earnest Upshaw, 75, a pioneer resident of Bell county, and a member of the comptrollers department since 1931, died at his home Friday evening.

Mr. Upshaw, had served Bell county as city clerk for a number of years, was deputy district clerk, and then district clerk for a number of years before coming to the state capitol. He was a member of the Presbyterian church, the Knights of Pythias, and the Woodman of the World.

He is survived by his wife, Mrs. Mary H. Upshaw; two daughters; Miss Daisy Upshaw, and Mrs. J. W. Blair, two granddaughters, and one great granddaughter, all of Austin; one brother E. L. Upshaw, and two sisters, Miss Anna and Miss Mattie Upshaw of Belton.

The body was removed from Wilke Funeral home Saturday morning, to the Eads Funeral home in Belton, where the body will lie in state until Sunday afternoon. Final funeral rites will be held, with interment in the Belton cemetery.

Obituary of Eugene E. Upshaw
Austin Statesman, September 8, 1945

MRS. MARY E. UPSHAW

Mrs. Mary E. Upshaw of 1704 West 34th Street died in a local hospital Sunday afternoon. She had been a resident of Austin 25 years and was formerly of Belton. Mrs. Upshaw was the widow of the late E. E. Upshaw who was employed in the State Comptroller's Office for many years. She was a member of First Southern Presbyterian Church.

Survivors are two daughters, Miss Daisy Upshaw and Mrs. J. W. Blair, both of Austin; one sister, Mrs. Daisy McKay of Belton; two grandchildren and several great-grandchildren.

The body has been sent to Belton by Cook Funeral Home. Funeral services will be held at 10 a. m. Tuesday at Heartfield Funeral Home in Belton.

Obituary of Mary Upshaw
Austin Statesman, December 29, 1958

MRS. MARY R. U. BLAIR

Mrs. Mary Rebecca Upshaw Blair, 70, of 3215 Oakmont Blvd., died in a local hospital Tuesday. She had been a resident of Austin since 1931 and was a member of St. David's Episcopal Church. Mrs. Blair attended Baylor University and was a member of the Daughters of the American Revolution, the Daughters of the Republic of Texas, and the United Daughters of the Confederacy. She was the widow of the late Jesse Wallis Blair of Belton, who was an auditor for the Department of Public Welfare in Austin for many years.

She is survived by two daughters, Mrs. Gene Blair Isely and Mrs. Mary Margaret Blair Lindsay of Austin; five grandchildren; three great-grandchildren; one sister, Miss Daisy Upshaw, of Austin.

The body was sent to Belton Tuesday night by the Weed-Corley Funeral Home. Funeral services will be held at 2 p.m. Thursday at St. Lukes Episcopal Church, Belton, and burial will be in North Belton Cemetery.

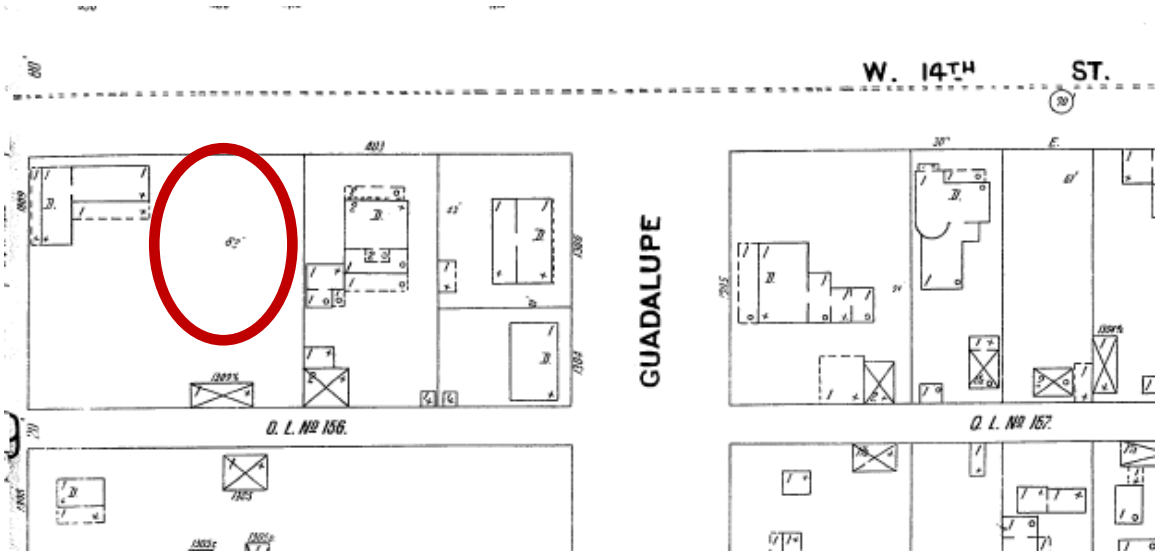
Obituary of Mary Blair
Austin Statesman, August 24, 1966

Ava and William L. Crofford (ca. 1960 – ca. 1980)

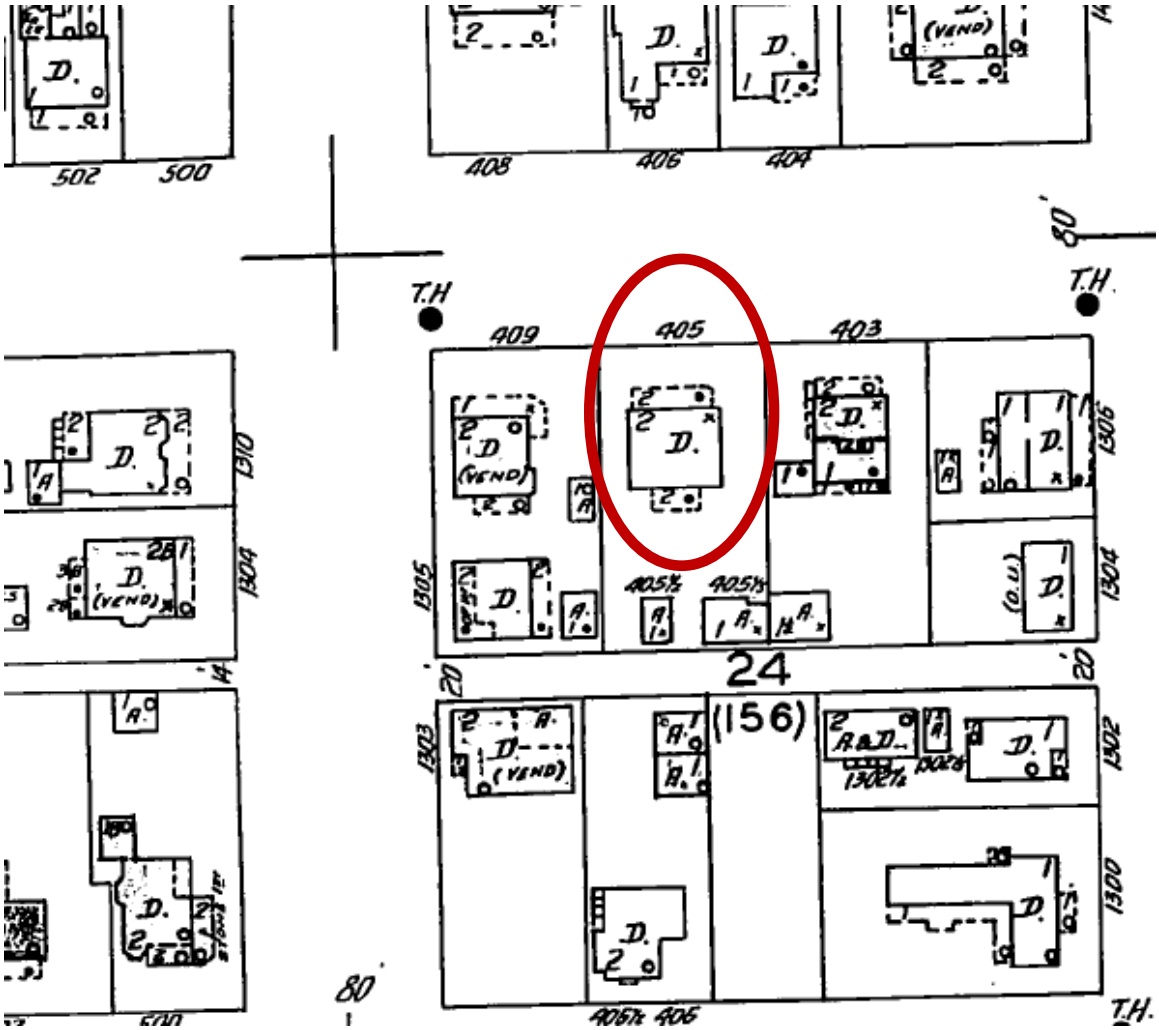
Ava Mae Monroe was born November 20, 1915 to Andrew J. Monroe, Jr. and Eulice Mae Templeton in Montague County, Texas. She was a well known professional photographer, and teacher in the Austin area. Ava owned University Studio in Austin and was a lifetime member of the Professional Photographers Association. She was a very recognized speaker, performing engagements throughout the country, and the First Woman with the designation as Master Of Photography Craftsman. She was an active member of the Soroptomist Club, and honored by the City Of Austin by having Ava Crofford Day. Ava was Invited to display Portraits in the Capitol Rotunda as one of the most 50 prominent Women of Texas. In 1975, she wrote a book called "The Diamond Years Of Texas Photography", and she was a past Worthy Matron order of The Eastern Star. After her retirement, she was still very active in the community. She is survived by one daughter: Ava Ann Fails and son-in-law Ned Fails of Buda, Texas, A granddaughter Denise Watson, husband Benny and children of Burnet. Grandson, Thomas Gaines Froeschl and

children also of Buda. A sister Wanda McCAuley of Murfreesboro,Tn., Brother Rex Monroe and his wife Laverne of Bryson, Tx. William Crofford,Jr.,& wife Betty & children of Dallas. BJ & Wanda Durham & children of Houston,& Bill & Linda Fennell & children of Sequin,Tx. Visitation will be at Cook Walden Funeral Home, from 6 to 8pm on wednesday ,May 31st. Graveside Services scheduled on Thursday June,1st,2000 at 10am, at Decker United Methodist Church Cemetery,located outside Austin in Manor,Tx.,with Rev.Paul Smith Officiating. Honorary Pallbearers will be Ava's Great-Grandchildren. Ava is preceded in Death by her parents, Andrew Monroe,Jr.& Eulice Templeton Monroe,& a brother Curtis Ray Monroe.

From the Find-A-Grave website



The site of the house is vacant on the 1900 Sanborn map.



The house appears on the 1935 Sanborn map.