

**HISTORIC LANDMARK COMMISSION
FEBRUARY 23, 2015
DEMOLITION AND RELOCATION PERMITS
HDP-2015-0002
1805 LIGHTSEY ROAD**

PROPOSAL

Demolish a ca. 1932 house.

ARCHITECTURE

One-and-a-half story, rectangular-plan, clipped side-gabled brick-veneered house with a front-facing gablet in the front; an exterior chimney in the front with a rock base and brick flue; a front-gabled and round-arched rock-faced entry; and a partial-width wraparound porch on the left side of the entry with rock piers and ornamental metal railings; single 1:1 fenestration with a single set of casement windows in the front gablet. There is an addition to the right side of the house, which functions as a separate dwelling unit, addressed as 1807 Lightsey Road. The addition is rectangular-plan, front-gabled, and brick with a rock foundation, with similar fenestration to the main house.

RESEARCH

Charles O. and Veda Lightsey purchased this land from Theodore Low in 1931 and built this house around 1932. Charles O. Lightsey started his cab company in Fort Worth in the 1920s, and expanded into the Austin taxi market around 1928, while still maintaining his business in Fort Worth. Lightsey also established one of the first (if not the first) rental car agency in Austin (Lightsey's Drive-It-Yourself System), with offices downtown, and near the UT campus, while still maintaining his cab business. He employed his son-in-law, Bryan Russell (married to Lightsey's step-daughter, Ora Claire Humphries) in both businesses. After the repeal of Prohibition, Lightsey also established the Lightsey-Carroll Company, a wholesale beer and liquor distributorship, converting some of his unused taxis into delivery trucks for the liquor business. Lightsey died in 1937; Veda Lightsey died in 1939. Ora Claire Russell had taken over the management of the cab company after her step-father's death, while her mother remained the president of the company. Bryan Russell, who had been an embalmer and funeral director, took over the Lightsey cab business after Veda Lightsey died.

The Russells ran the Lightsey Cab Company until the mid-1940s; the family had quit the rental car agency some years before, and the wholesale beer business was sold to Lightsey's partner in that business after Lightsey's death. Bryan Russell then went to work as an auditor, and later as a field agent for the IRS, while Ora Claire Russell worked as a proofreader for the Steck Company. Bryan Russell lived in this house for the rest of his life; Ora Claire Russell sold the house in 1983.

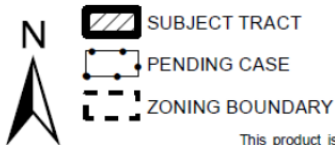
STAFF COMMENTS

The house is beyond the bounds of any City survey.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

No recommendation, but if the Commission releases the permit, then staff recommends the completion of a City of Austin Documentation Package consisting of photographs of all elevations, a dimensioned sketch plan, and a narrative history, for archiving at the Austin History Center.

LOCATION MAP



1" = 200'

CASE#: HDP-2015-0002
Address: 1805 LIGHTSEY ROAD



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

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

1805 Lightsey Road
ca. 1932







View of downtown Austin from the house

OCCUPANCY HISTORY 1805 Lightsey Road

City Directory Research, Austin History Center
By City Historic Preservation Office
January, 2015

1992	A. and Louise Foss, owners Retired
1985-86	A. Louise Foss, owner Department manager, Southwestern Bell Telephone Company
1981	Ora Claire Russell, owner Retired
1977	W. Bryan and Ora C. Russell, owners Retired
1973	W. Bryan and Ora C. Russell, owners Retired
1968	W. Bryan and Ora C. Russell, owners Agent, IRS

- 1962 W. Bryan and Ora C. Russell, owners
Agent, IRS
- 1959 W. Bryan and Ora C. Russell, owners
W. Bryan: Agent, IRS
Ora C.: Copy preparation, Steck Company, printers, binders, and office supplies, 9th and Lavaca Streets.
- 1955 W. Bryan and Ora C. Russell, owners
W. Bryan: Agent, IRS
Ora C.: Proofreader, Steck Company, printers, binders, and office supplies, 9th and Lavaca Streets.
- 1952 W. Bryan Russell (Ora C. Russell is not listed), owner
Auditor, IRS
- 1949 The address is not listed in the directory.
NOTE: Neither W. Bryan nor Ora Claire Russell is listed in the directory.
- 1947 The address is not listed in the directory.
NOTE: Neither William Bryan nor Ora Claire Russell is listed in the directory.
- 1944-45 Bryan and Ora Claire Russell, owners
NOTE: The house is listed as being in Theodore Low Heights.
Bryan Russell was the president of Lightsey Cab Company, 112-14 E. 7th Street;
Ora C. Russell was the secretary/treasurer of Lightsey Cab Company.
- 1942 Bryan and Ora Claire Russell, owners
NOTE: The house is listed as being in Theodore Low Heights
Bryan Russell was the president of Lightsey Cab Company, "prompt, dependable service," 112-14 E. 7th Street; Ora Claire was the secretary/treasurer of Lightsey Cab Company.
- 1940 Bryan and Ora Claire Russell, owners
NOTE: The house is listed as being in Theodore Low Heights
Bryan Russell was the president of Lightsey Cab Company, "prompt, dependable service," 112-14 E. 7th Street; Ora Claire was the secretary/treasurer of Lightsey Cab Company.
- 1939 Mrs. C.O. Lightsey, owner
President, Lightsey's Cab Company, 112 E. 7th Street.
NOTE: The house is listed as being in Theodore Lowe Heights.
NOTE: Bryan and Ora C. Russell are listed at 1706 Nueces Street; he was an embalmer; she was the manager of Lightsey's Cab Company, 112 E. 7th Street.
- 1937 Mrs. C.O. Lightsey, owner
President, Lightsey's Cab Company, "New Cars, Safe Drivers, Call Us and Count the Minutes," 112-14 E. 7th Street.
NOTE: The house is listed as being in Theodore Lowe Heights.
NOTE: Bryan and Ora C. Russell are listed at 1407 Alta Vista Avenue; he was an embalmer; she was not separately listed in the directory.
NOTE: The Lightsey-Carroll Company, wholesale beer, was owned by L.W. Carroll. The offices were at 211 W. 4th Street.

- 1935 Charles O. and Veda R. Lightsey, owners
President-manager Lightsey's Drive It Yourself System, "Rent a New Car, Drive It Yourself, at Your Service Day and Night with a Convenient Taxi Service," 112 E. 7th Street; president-manager, Lightsey's Cab and Baggage Company, 112-14 E. 7th Street.
NOTE: The house is listed as being in Theodore Lowe Heights.
NOTE: Bryan and Ora Claire Russell are listed at 1607 Lavaca Street. He was an embalmer for Thurlow B. Weed, funeral director and embalmer, 17th and Lavaca Streets; she was the book-keeper for Lightsey-Carroll Company, distributors of Falstaff, Pon, Monte Carlo, and Shiner beer, 112 E. 7th Street.
- 1932-33 There is no listing of the houses in Theodore Lowe Heights. Charles O. and Veda R. Lightsey are listed at 1701 Kenwood Avenue; he was the president of Lightsey's Drive it Yourself System, 112 E. 7th Street and 2400 San Antonio Street.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

Charles O. and Veda R. Lightsey (ca. 1932 – ca. 1939)

Bryan and Ora Claire Russell (ca. 1939 – 1983)

Ora C. Humphries (later Russell) appears in the 1930 U.S. Census as the step-daughter of Charles O. and Veda R. Lightsey, who lived at 711 W. 34th Street in Austin. Ora C. Humphries was 20, had been born in Oklahoma, and had no occupation listed. Her step-father, Charles Lightsey was 39, had been born in Texas, and was the president of an automobile business. The 1910 U.S. Census shows that Ora Humphries was the daughter of George L. and Veda S. Humphreys of Garret Township, Johnston County, Oklahoma. Her father, George Humphries was 27, had been born in Missouri, and was a farmer. Her mother, Veda, 19, had been born in Idaho and had no occupation listed. Ora was the only child shown in the census report.

The 1940 U.S. Census shows Bryan and Ora C. Russell as the owners of an un-numbered house in Precinct 5 of Travis County, which corresponds to this house. Their house was worth \$10,000. Bryan Russell was 30, had been born in Texas, and was the owner of a service car company. Ora C. Russell was 31, had been born in Oklahoma, and had no occupation listed. With them lived their daughter, Veda, 2, Ora's grand-mother, Mary J. Brock, an Arkansas-born widow, and a housekeeper, Delphine Schoen, 16, who had lived in rural Travis County in 1935.

Hijackers Hold-Up **Lightsey** Rent Car Station in University Neighborhood

The most daring holdup that has been pulled in Austin in some time was executed early Sunday morning at the **Lightsey** University station, 2263 Guadalupe street, when two men robbed the place of \$30 in currency.

According to Byron Russel, who was in charge of the station at the time, the pair drove down the alley and parked their car at the rear entrance of the rent car company.

While one of the men sat in the automobile the second ran through the building to the office which faces on Guadalupe street. Pulling his gun on operators of the station he forced them to turn over the currency and fled through the back entrance.

Russel quickly spread the alarm to patrolmen in the university neighborhood who with aid secured from the central station scoured that section of the city until early hours of the morning in an attempt to arrest the hi-jackers.

Russel said that the bandit had covered his face with a bath towel to conceal his features.

Police at 2 o'clock Sunday morning had been unable to find trace of the pair.

There was little money in the station at the time of the holdup attendants said. The greater part of the receipts of the day had been taken in checks and small change, thus saving the majority of the heavy Saturday receipts from loss.

Article in the Austin American, September 29, 1929 detailing a robbery of the Lightsey Drive It Yourself System office near the University of Texas. The article notes that Byron Russel (Bryan Russell) was in charge of the station at the time.

LIGHTSEY SYSTEM PROVIDES AUSTIN CAR TRANSPORTATION

Balmy spring weather beckons the motorist to enjoy the great outdoors, particularly on Sunday afternoons. Those who do not own cars may enjoy the pleasures of motoring on the scenic highways in and around Austin by securing a service car at nominal charges from the Lightsey System located at 112 East Seventh street.

The Lightsey System Inc., of which C. O. Lightsey of Austin is president and manager, provides a complete transportation service to the people of Austin and Central Texas. The company features the Black and White taxicabs which meet all trains, day and night. Taxicab service is given at 25 cents for the first mile with ten cents additional for each two-fifths of a mile and the charge for four or five persons is no greater than for one passenger. The Lightsey taxicabs are operated on the meter system

where the passenger may see the fare being registered as he rides.

The Lightsey System operates a University station for the convenience of its university patrons, the station being located at 2402 San Antonio street. A fleet of 75 automobiles, both closed and open types, are maintained by this transportation company and are always available to patrons. The charge for driverless service cars is 12 cents a mile for open cars and 15 cents a mile for closed cars. Open Fords of the 1929 model are also available at a rental of 10 cents a mile. Night rental charges are 50 cents per hour minimum on open cars and 75 cents minimum for closed cars.

As a protection to its patrons, the Lightsey System offers insurance against damage to cars up to \$25 at a charge of 25 cents additional. This feature is optional with the patrons.

Article in the Austin Statesman, April 11, 1931 featuring the Lightsey System services for motorists.

Wholesale Liquor House Expands

Spare Taxicabs Used First For Deliveries

When prohibition was repealed in Texas, the Lightsey-Carroll company organized and entered the beer business on a comparatively small scale. A few taxicabs not in use by the Lightsey system were converted into trucks and used for local beer delivery. The original location at Eighth and Congress became inadequate as the company expanded and offices were moved to 306 Colorado street.

At present the offices and warehouse are located on West Fourth street. Shortly after the state law against hard liquor was repealed Lightsey-Carroll entered the wholesale business.

"At that time there was considerable confusion in the field and much of it still exists just as it always does in every new business. The situation is gradually evolving into one comparable to that of or-

dinary merchandising. I am happy to say. Our major difficulty at the start was the selection of quality merchandise that would carry local support in national advertising. These we managed to find in whiskey and wine just as we had already done in beer," C. O. Lightsey, co-partner of the firm, said in speaking of the development of the business.

"Those of us who have been with the company from its beginning until the present time, look with pride upon the accomplishment which the people of Austin and surrounding territory have made possible. To those who have so loyally aided us in the fight to restore to man his personal rights and to those who have helped us to succeed in business, far more credit is due than mere words of mine could indicate. The people made our business possible, and it is they whom we thank."

Article in the Austin American, July 19, 1936 featuring the services and facilities of the Lightsey-Carroll Company, a wholesale beer distributorship owned by Charles O. Lightsey and L.W. Carroll.

Lightsey Rites Slated Tuesday

Charles O. Lightsey, 48, well known Austin business man, who died Sunday night at his home in Theodor Low heights, will be buried here Tuesday. At the time of his death Mr. Lightsey was owner of the Lightsey System taxicab firm and member of the Lightsey-Carroll company.

Survivors are his wife; one daughter, Mrs. Bryan Russell of Austin; his mother, Mrs. A. D. Lightsey of Chillicothe; two sisters, Mrs. G. G. Kemp of Clarendon and Mrs. Jeff Pertle of Pampa; one brother, A. D. Lightsey of Tyler.

Funeral services will be conducted by the Rev. Virgil H. Fisher, pastor of the First Methodist church, at the Thurlow Weed funeral home at 2 p. m. Tuesday. Interment will be in Austin Memorial Park.

Obituary of Charles O. Lightsey
Austin Statesman, January 18, 1937

BRYAN RUSSELL

Bryan Russell, 70, of Austin, Texas, died in a local hospital Sunday evening following a long illness. A native of Liberty Hill, he had been a resident of Austin for 49 years and prior to becoming a field Agent for the Internal Revenue Service he had been a licensed Funeral Director and Embalmer in Austin for many years.

At the time of his death Mr. Russell was a member of the South Austin Christian Church; a member of Austin Lodge No. 12 A.F. & A.M.; Scottish Rite Bodies and Ben Hur Temple. A veteran of World War II Army service he was also a member of the Disabled American Veterans.

Survivors include his wife, Mrs. Ora Claire Russell of Austin; two daughters, Mrs. Mary Claire Masterton of Austin and Mrs. Veda R. Douglas of Hays, Texas and five grandchildren.

Funeral services will be held at 1:30 p.m. Wednesday in Hyttin-Manor Funeral Chapel with Reverend Jack Jordan officiating. Interment will be in Austin Memorial Park with graveside services under the auspices of Austin Lodge No. 12 A.F. & A.M.

Those who wish may make memorial contributions to the American Cancer Society.

Obituary of Bryan Russell
Austin American-Statesman, May 6, 1980

Ora Claire Russell

Ora Claire Russell, age 92 of Austin, died Friday, June 8, 2001.

Ora Claire loved football and was a fan of the Cowboys and Longhorns. She also loved her family, especially her grandchildren and great-grandchildren. Traveling was a special joy to her.

Survivors are her daughters, Veda Russell and husband James, and Mary Claire Masterton, all of Austin; grandchildren, Trey Russell and wife Virginia of Elgin, Samantha Russell Martinez and husband Henry of Toledo, Ohio, Bill Masterton of Houston, Bren Puryear and husband Watty of Dripping Springs, and Bret Masterton of Austin; great-grandchildren, Jonathan and Taylor Russell, Willow Russell Martinez and Lightsey Puryear.

A graveside service will be held at Austin Memorial Park on Monday at 10:00 a.m.

Arrangements with Harrell Funeral Home, Austin, 443-1366.

Obituary of Ora Claire Russell
Austin American-Statesman, June 11, 2001

WATER SERVICE PERMIT

D No 3489

Austin, Texas

Received of 1805

Date July-15-53

Address 1805 LIGHTSEY RD.

Amount

Plumber

Size of Tap

Date of Connection July-15-53

Size of Tap Made 3/4"

Size Service Made 3/4"

Size Main Tapped 12"

From Front Prop. Line to Curb Cock 6'

From WEST Prop. Line to Curb Cock 6'

Location of Meter FRONT CURB

Type of Box

Depth of Main in St. 4 1/2'

Depth of Service Line 30"

From Curb Cock to Tap on Main 30'

Checked by Engr. Dept. 10-15-53

INDEXED

Water service permit for this address (1953)

SANITARY SEWER SERVICE PERMIT

Austin, Texas

No 29157

Received of Bryan Russell

Date 4-23-58

Address 1805 Lightsey Lane

Amount

Builder or Owner Russell & Co.

Lot

Block

Subdivision

Plumber Green

Plat No. 578

Date of Connection 4-29-58

By City 44' Ed WPL

By Plumber

Checked By Powell

Size Main 8"

Depth 7' (Rock)

Main Assign. 14.5' N 18.5 PL

Stub Depth 7'

Prop. Line 18.2'

Stub Location

Book No. A-43200

Paving Cut 5' x 20'

4-18-58

4-23-58

Price 4.50

Size

No. Fittings

18' Pipe 6" Con

Pipe

Wyes

2 Bends 6" Con

Reducers

Plugs

Sand

Gravel

Remix

Stoppers

Castings

1 Other Tap 6" Con .98

Carpenter 1.30

Labor 2.40

Truck 1.40

Person 1.40

Total 45.34

Sewer service permit to Bryan Russell (1958)

Bryan Russell 1805 Lightsey Lane
 578 3@ Ora C. Russell Tract - -

Frame add. to present bldg for duplex

67576 9/25/57 11500.00

Jackson & Cullen Const. 5

Storage room in basement

DUPLEX

Building permit to Bryan Russell to construct a frame addition (1957)

OWNER Bryan Russell ADDRESS 1805 Lightsey Rd.
 PLAT 578 LOT 3 ac tract BLK
 SUBDIVISION Ora C. Russell Tract
 OCCUPANCY 2 bedrooms and bath
 BLD PERMIT # 123486 DATE 3-27-72 OWNERS ESTIMATE 7,000
 CONTRACTOR Travis Const Co. NO. OF FIXTURES yes
 WATER TAP REC # exist SEWER TAP REC # exist
 Remodel exist duplex

Building permit to Bryan Russell to remodel the duplex (1972)