

ZONING CHANGE REVIEW SHEET

CASE NUMBER: HDP-2015-0114

HLC DATE:

March 28, 2016

April 25, 2016

PC DATE:

APPLICANT: Historic Landmark Commission

HISTORIC NAME: Thomson-Hansborough-King House

WATERSHED:

ADDRESS OF PROPOSED ZONING CHANGE: 1308 E. 12th Street

ZONING FROM: CS-MU-NCCD-NP to CS-MU-H-NCCD-NP

SUMMARY STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Staff has no recommendation on this case. The house has obvious historical significance as the home of Alice T. King, but has had severe architectural modifications. The Commission initiated this case on the criteria of historical significance and community value, which staff agrees with, but the architectural modifications to the house cause staff hesitation in not being able to whole-heartedly recommend this house for historic zoning.

Staff encourages the applicant to further consider historic zoning for this property, even on a reduced land area that would allow for development of the remainder of the site. Staff also encourages the applicant to investigate the possibility of state and federal tax credits for the rehabilitation and restoration of the house; this, in addition to the possibility of the annual property tax incentive for historic landmarks could make the restoration of this house an economically worthwhile endeavor.

QUALIFICATIONS FOR LANDMARK DESIGNATION:

Historical Associations and Community Value.

HISTORIC LANDMARK COMMISSION ACTION: **March 28, 2016:** Initiated a historic zoning case. Vote: 6-4 (Panju, Osburn, Papavasiliou, and Whitworth opposed).

PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION:

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The house is listed as a low priority for preservation in the Historic Resources Survey of East Austin (2000) because of alterations, but there is also a notation on the survey that there are no known historical associations with this property.

CITY COUNCIL DATE:

ACTION:

ORDINANCE READINGS: 1ST 2ND 3RD

ORDINANCE NUMBER:

CASE MANAGER: Steve Sadowsky

PHONE: 974-6454

NEIGHBORHOOD ORGANIZATION: Organization of Central East Austin Neighborhoods.

BASIS FOR RECOMMENDATION:**Architecture:**

This is a late 19th century wing-and-gable frame house that has lost its front porch, original fenestration, and has had its original wood siding covered with synthetic siding. The basic form of the house remains, although the window patterns have changed in the house.

Historical Associations:

The house appears to have been built around 1897, and was originally a wing-and-gable frame house with a partial-width front porch, as shown on the Sanborn Fire Insurance Company maps of 1900, 1922, and 1935. The earliest known occupant was Dr. Will E. Thomson (or Thompson), who was a Missouri-born cancer specialist, who lived here until his death in 1907. He was a widower who lived here with two of his daughters. Dr. Thomson had previously lived at the southeast corner of 12th and San Bernard Streets, and apparently built this house in the mid- to late 1890s as his residence and office. After his death in 1907, the house was rented out to a series of tenants, including meat-cutter Herman Scheel around 1909, Albert Leifeste, the pastor of the German Methodist Episcopal Church around 1910, George M. Wagner, a granite cutter in the early 1910s, Henry Tuke, a saloon-keeper in the mid-1910s, a German-born widow who later worked in her sister's grocery and her music teacher daughter in the late 1910s, Fred Everett, a janitor at Pease School around 1920, Robert L. Cloud, a yardman, in the early 1920s, and Jesse and Ellen Conner in the mid-to late 1920s. Jesse Conner worked in an ice plant.

Around 1928, the demographics of the house and the neighborhood changed, and the renters of the house were African-American, rather than German- or Anglo-American. A porter, Harry White, and his wife, Cora, are listed as the renters of the house in the 1929 city directory. Thomas C. Echols, who had worked as a porter in the State Comptroller's Office, and was an insurance salesman at the time he lived in this house, rented here in the early 1930s. His wife, Suewillie Echols, was a schoolteacher. Seth and Willie Roach rented the house in the mid-1930s; he was a car washer at a tire company. Jesse and Sarah Hansborough were the next renters of the house. Jesse Hansborough had no occupation listed in the city directories, and he only appears in the 1939 directory. After that point, only Sarah Hansborough is listed as the renter of the house. She was a cook at the State School for the Deaf, and later was a cook at Jimmy's Alcove Grille on E. 12th Street. She lived here until around 1950.

Alice T. King, the widow of Charles B. King, the founder of the King Funeral Home, bought this property around 1953, and lived here (except for a stay in Washington, DC from 1970 to 1976) until her death in 1984. Charles B. King was originally from Mississippi. He was an insurance man in Indianola, Mississippi in the 1920s, and moved to Memphis, Tennessee before 1930. In Memphis, he was the president of an insurance company. He and Alice moved to Austin in the 1930s, and Charles B. King established the King Funeral Home in the 1100 block of E. 6th Street in 1933, providing funeral home services for Austin's African-American population. Alice T. King was a native of Memphis, and attended Fisk University in Nashville.

After Charles B. King died in 1941, Alice T. King took over the funeral home business. In 1955, she merged with the Tears Funeral Home, another African-American mortuary, and the new business became known as the King-Tears Funeral Home. The business was moved from E. 6th Street to E. 12th Street, and Alice King, who had lived next door to the King Funeral Home on E. 6th Street, moved into this house, next door to the new business site. She maintained the Union Burial and Welfare Society for many years, which was a way for African-American families to save money for the costs of a funeral and burial, and to provide benefits to family members after a death. She moved to Washington, D.C. in 1970 with her husband, Dr. Mordecai Wyatt Johnson, president emeritus of Howard University, but returned to Austin after his death in 1976. She was the president of the

King-Tears Mortuary for many years, and upon her return from Washington, she concentrated her energies on the Union Welfare and Burial Association until the time of her death.

Alice T. King was the mother of John Q.T. King, who served as dean and then president of Huston-Tillotson College (now University). He combined his professorship at Huston-Tillotson with an active interest in the family's funeral business in the 1940s and 1950s, so while he did not grow up in this house (Alice T. King bought the house after John was already an adult), he also has a connection to the house and family business.

PARCEL NO.: 0207080815

LEGAL DESCRIPTION: E 34.5 FT OF LOT 2 *& W 30 FT OF LOT 3 BLK 2 OLT 38 DIV B OREILLY JAMES

ESTIMATED ANNUAL TAX ABATEMENT: \$3,791 (owner-occupied); city portion: \$1,131; \$2,024 (income-producing); city portion: \$565.

APPRAISED VALUE: \$336,485

PRESENT USE: Residential rental.

CONDITION: Fair

PRESENT OWNERS:

Patricia Goldman Tankersley
3110 Wheeler Street
Austin, Texas 78705

DATE BUILT: ca. 1897

ALTERATIONS/ADDITIONS: The structure has been significantly modified at an unknown date (no permits exist detailing the remodeling that was done). The original front porch has been lost, the windows have been replaced, and the original wood siding has been covered with a synthetic siding.

ORIGINAL OWNER(S): Dr. Will E. Thomson (1897)

OTHER HISTORICAL DESIGNATIONS: None.

LOCATION MAP



SUBJECT TRACT



PENDING CASE



ZONING BOUNDARY

CASE#: HDP-2015-1114
Address: 1308 E 12TH STREET

1" = 200'

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.



1308 E. 12th Street
ca. 1897



OCCUPANCY HISTORY 1308 E. 12th Street

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

1992	John T. King, renter President, King-Tears Mortuary, 1300 E. 12 th Street. NOTE: The directory indicates that John T. King was a new resident at this address.
1985-86	Alice T. King, owner Proprietor, Union Welfare and Burial Association, 1300 E. 12 th Street.
1981	Alice T. King, owner Proprietor, Union Welfare and Burial Association, 1300 E. 12 th Street.
1977	Alice T. King, owner Widow, Charles B. King President, King-Tears Mortuary, 1300 E. 12 th Street.
1973	Alice T. King, owner Widow, Charles B. King President, King-Tears Mortuary, 1300 E. 12 th Street.
1968	Alice T. King, owner Widow, Charles B. King President, King-Tears Mortuary, 1300 E. 12 th Street.
1962	Alice T. King, owner

- Widow, Charles B. King
Proprietor, King-Tears Mortuary, and the Union Welfare and Burial Association,
1300 E. 12th Street.
- 1959 Alice T. King, owner
Widow, Charles B. King
Proprietor, King-Tears Mortuary, 1300 E. 12th Street.
- 1955 Alice T. King (not listed as owner)
Widow, Charles B. King
Proprietor, King-Tears Mortuary, 1300 E. 12th Street.
- 1952 Vacant
NOTE: Alice T. King, the widow of C.B. King, lived at 1107 E. 6th Street. She was the proprietor of the King Funeral Home, "Funeral Directors and Ambulance Services for Colored People," 1107 E. 6th Street.
NOTE: Sarah Hansborough is listed at 2007 E. 13th Street; she was a cook at the Alcove Grille, 1914-A E. 12th Street.
- 1949 Sarah Hansborough, renter
Cook, Jimmie's Alcove Grille, 1914-A E. 12th Street.
- 1947 Sarah Hansborough, renter
Cook, Texas School for the Deaf
- 1944-45 Sarah Hansborough, renter
Coo, State School for the Deaf
- 1941 Sarah Hansborough, renter
Assistant cook, State School for the Deaf
- 1939 Jesse and Sarah Hansborough, renters
Jesse: No occupation listed
Sarah: Assistant cook, Texas School for the Deaf
Also listed is John Hansborough, a porter at the Driskill Hotel Drug Store, 6th and Brazos Streets.
NOTE: Seth A. and Willie E. Roach are listed at 2607 E. 13th Street; he was a porter at Knight-Stewart Tire Company, 19th and Guadalupe Streets.
- 1937 Seth A. and Willie Roach, renters
Car washer
NOTE: Jesse and Sarah Hansborough are not listed in the directory.
- 1935 Seth A. and Willie Roach, renters
Porter, Lindsey-Knight Tire Company, 307 W. 19th Street.
- 1932-33 Thomas C. and Suewillie Echols, renters
No occupation listed
NOTE: Seth and Etta Roach are listed at 1506 E. 21st Street. He had no occupation shown.
- 1930-31 Thomas C. and Suewillie Echols (colored), renters
Insurance agent
- 1929 Harry B. and Cora White (colored), renters
Porter

1927	Jesse L. and Ellen Conner, renters Assistant engineer, Consumers Ice and Cold Storage Company.
1924	Jesse L. and Ellen Conner, renters Employed by Home Ice and Cold Storage Company.
1922	Robert L. and Lillian Cloud, renters Yardman
1920	Fred and Clara Everett, renters Janitor, Pease School
1918	Kate Ganter, renter Widow, Max Ganter No occupation listed Also listed is Lizzie Ganter, a music teacher.
1916	Henry G. Tuke Proprietor of a saloon at 1618 Rosewood Avenue Also listed are Clement Tuke, a student; Francis Tuke, a student; and Lillian Tuke, no occupation shown. NOTE: Kate Ganter is listed at 206 W. 14 th Street; she had no occupation shown. Lizzie Ganter is not listed in the directory.
1914	George M. Wagner Stone cutter, Julius Seaholm, 1016-18 E. 6 th Street.
1912-13	George M. Wagner Granite cutter, Julius Seaholm, 1016-18 E. 6 th Street.
1910-11	Rev. Albert Leifeste Pastor, German Methodist Episcopal Church, 300 E. 18 th Street. NOTE: Herman Scheel is listed as a meat cutter for Herman Schieffer; he lived at 1107 E. 13 th Street. NOTE: George M. Wagner was a granite cutter for J.J. Macken; he boarded at 1208 E. 12 th Street.
1909-10	Herman Scheel Meat cutter, Excelsior Meat Market, 115 W. 6 th Street. NOTE: William E. Thomson is not listed in the directory.
1905	Dr. William E. Thomson Physician
1903-04	Dr. William E. Thomson Physician
1895-96	Dr. William E. Thomson Cancer doctor NOTE: The address is listed as 1210 E. 12 th Street.
1891-92	Unknown Dr. William E. Thompson is listed as a specialist living at the southeast corner of 12 th and San Bernard Streets. The 1889-90 city directory indicates Dr. Thompson's address as 1201 E. 12 th Street at the corner of San Bernard Street.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

William E. Thompson (ca. 1896- ca. 1907)

Willie E. Thompson is listed in the 1900 U.S. Census at this address (1204 E. 12th Street). He was born in September, 1821 in Missouri to Kentucky-born parents, and owned this house. He was a widower. His occupation is listed as cancer specialist. With him lived two daughters: Willie, 30, who had no occupation listed; and Norine, 28, a clerk. Both had been born in Missouri.

Dr. Will E. Thomson died in 1907. He is buried in Oakwood Cemetery in Austin.

Herman and Ida Scheel (ca. 1907 – ca. 1909)

The 1910 U.S. Census shows Herman and Ida Scheel at 1107 E. 13th Street. Herman Scheel was 35, had been born in Texas to German-born parents, and was a butcher in a meat market. Ida Scheel was 38, had been born in Texas to German-born parents, and had no occupation listed. They had 3 children: Oscar, 12; Edna, 5; and Bara, 3. All the children had been born in Texas.

Albert and Louisa Leifeste (ca. 1910 – ca. 1912)

The 1910 U.S. Census shows Albert and Louisa Leifeste as the renters of this house. Albert Leifeste was 29, had been born in Texas, and was a church minister. Louisa Leifeste was 29, had been born in Texas, and had no occupation listed. They had 2 children: Lorena, 3; and Leroy, 2. Both had been born in Texas.

Kate and Lizzie Ganter (ca. 1917 – ca. 1918)

Katie A. and Elizabeth E. Ganter appear in the 1930 U.S. Census as residing in the home of Katie's sister, Elisia Schlueter, at 2205 Speedway in Austin. Katie A. Ganter was a 67-year old German-born widow who worked as a clerk in a grocery store. Elizabeth E. Ganter was 39, had been born in Texas, and had no occupation listed. Kate's sister, Elisia Schlueter, was a 71-year old German-born widow who was a grocery merchant.

Fred and Clara Everett (ca. 1918 – ca. 1919)

The 1920 U.S. Census shows Fred and Clara Everett as the renters of the house at 1101 West Avenue in Austin. Fred Everett was 39, had been born in England, and was a custodian for a school building. He had immigrated to the United States in 1905. Clara Everett was 36, had been born in Texas, and had no occupation listed. They had 2 daughters: Amy Louise, 5; and Regenia E., 4. Both girls had been born in Texas.

Jesse and Ellen Conner (ca. 1923 – ca. 1928)

The 1930 U.S. Census shows Jesse and Ellen Conner as the renters of the house at 2007 Longfellow Street in Austin. Jesse Conner was 41, had been born in Texas, and was a stationery engineer at an ice factory. Ellen Conner was 33, had been born in Texas, and had no occupation listed. They had 7 children: Melvena, 18, a saleswoman at a department store; Stella Bella, 16; Ruby, 14; Marie, 13; Earl, 12; Artie, 7; and Charlotte, 3. All the children had been born in Texas.

The 1920 U.S. Census shows Jesse and Ellen Conner as the owners of their house at 2100 Garden Street. Jesse Conner was an engineer at an ice plant.

His 1969 death certificate shows that he was born in Bastrop County in 1889. He was a retired life insurance salesman, and was living in Fulton, Texas at the time of his death.

Thomas C. and Suewillie Echols (ca. 1929 – ca. 1933)

Tommy and Sue W. Echols appear as the renters of this house in the 1930 U.S. Census. Tommy Echols was listed as being a 26-year old Texas-born agent for an insurance company.

Sue W. Echols was also listed as being 26, a native of Texas, and a public school teacher. They had no children listed with them.

The 1920 U.S. Census shows Thomas and Luella [sic] Echols renting a house at 413 E. 13th Street in Austin. Thomas Echols was 25, had been born in Texas, and was a porter at the State Comptroller's Office. Luella Echols was 24, had been born in Texas, and was a public school teacher. They had no children listed with them.

Seth A. and Willie Roach (ca. 1933 – ca. 1938)

The 1940 U.S. Census shows Seth A. and Willie E. Roach as the renters of the house at 1305 Cedar Avenue in Austin. Seth A. Roach was 36, had been born in Texas, and was a porter at an auto service station. Willie E. Roach was 38, had been born in Texas, and was a school teacher in the County school system. They had no children listed with them. It is believed that Seth Roach died in Dallas in 1969; he is buried there. It is also believed that Willie E. Roach died in Los Angeles, California in 1970 and is buried there.

The 1930 U.S. Census shows Seth and Etta Roach living with relatives, Nathaniel and Alberta Banks, who rented a house at 1611 E. 11th Street in Austin. Seth Roach was 27, had been born in Texas, and was a laborer in an auto shop. Etta Roach was 29, had been born in Texas, and was a cook for a private family.

Jesse and Sarah Hansborough (ca. 1938 – ca. 1950)

The 1940 U.S. Census shows Sarah Hansbrough [sic] as the renter of this house. She was a 45-year old widow who had been born in Texas, and was a cook at the State School. With her lived 2 stepsons, John Hansbrough, 20, a Texas-born porter at a drug store; and Tom Hansbrough, 17, who had been born in Texas and was a construction laborer. Sarah's mother, Delia Penasca, a 74-year old widow, also lived with her, as well as a grandson, Burl Williams, 11. They had both been born in Texas and neither had an occupation listed. Mrs. Hansbrough also had 2 lodgers, LeRoy Wilson, 23, a Texas-born filling station attendant; and Leslie Jones, 28, a Texas-born shoe shine boy.

According to her 1980 death certificate, Sarah Darby Hansborough was born in 1899 in Texas. She was a widowed cook at the Alcove Grille, and lived at 2007 E. 13th Street at the time of her death.

HANSBOROUGH, Mrs. Sarah, 80, 2007 E. 13th St., died Tuesday. Services 2 p.m. Saturday at King-Tears Mortuary. Burial, Evergreen Cemetery. Survivors: brother, James R. Darby Sr. of Austin; stepdaughters, Mrs. Lucinda Mercer, Mrs. Ella Wilson, Mrs. Ida B. Hubbard, all of Austin; stepson, the Rev. Luke Hansborough of Austin.

Obituary of Sarah Hansborough
Austin American-Statesman, January 23, 1980

Alice T. King (ca. 1953 – ca. 1984)

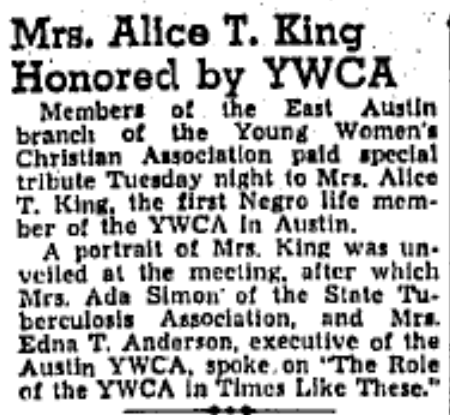
Alice T. King was the widow of Charles B. King, who established the King Funeral Home in Austin in the 1930s. Charles B. King died in 1941. There was no obituary for him in the Austin newspapers.

The 1940 U.S. Census shows Charles B. and Alice T. King as the owners of the house at 1107 E. 6th Street, which was worth \$3,000. This house was next door to their funeral home

business. Charles B. King was 51, had been born in Mississippi, and was the operator of a funeral home. Alice T. King was 40, had been born in Tennessee, and was an assistant in a funeral home. They had 2 children: Edwina T. King, 18; and John T. King, 17. Both children had been born in Tennessee; neither had an occupation listed.

The 1930 U.S. Census shows Charles B. and Hattie J. King as the owners of a \$10,000 home in Memphis, Tennessee. Charles B. King was 45, had been born in Mississippi to a Pennsylvania-born father and a North Carolina-born mother, and was the president of an insurance company. Hattie J. King was 40, had been born in Arkansas, and had no occupation listed. They had 4 children: Charlotte B., 20, who had been born in Arkansas; Vivian A., 19, who had been born in Arkansas; Charles B., 17, who had been born in Mississippi; and John I., 14, who had been born in Mississippi. None of the children had occupations shown in the census report.

The 1920 U.S. Census shows C.B. and H.I. King as the owners of a house in Indianola, Mississippi, where C.B. King was an insurance agent. Their four children as shown in the 1930 U.S. Census are listed here, although they are all shown as natives of Mississippi.



Story on the tribute to Alice T. King as the first African-American life member of the YWCA in Austin

Austin Statesman, January 24, 1951

Alice T. King Wins Honor

As a highlight of its annual Finer Womanhood Week, the Austin Alpha Kappa Zeta Chapter of Zeta Phi Beta sorority has named Mrs. Alice T. King "Woman of the Year."

Winners of the honor in previous years have included Miss Mary Jane Sims and Mesdames Helen McCauley, M. E. Durden and Janie Perry-Harrison.

Owner of King Funeral Home, Mrs. King is a member of Wesley Methodist Church and is an active worker in the Douglas Club, Silver Leaf Club, Eastern Star, YWCA, King's Daughters, Court of Calanthe, Council School of Nursing and Alpha Kappa Alpha sorority. She also is a volunteer worker at Holy Cross Hospital and the Austin State Hospital.

Mrs. King has one son, John T. King, professor at Huston-Tillotson College; one daughter, Mrs. Edwina Murphy, professor at A&T College in Greensboro, N. C.; and three grandchildren.

She was cited as "a tireless worker, one who works with dignity and zeal in the Austin community and one who firmly believes that the true standard of greatness is service rendered."

A program honoring Mrs. King was held at Ebenezer Baptist Church, with the Rev. James Wiley Brown, college pastor at Huston-Tillotson, as keynote speaker. The Rev. R. L. Rowe offered the invocation, and Mrs. Curtis Collins gave a special tribute to Mrs. King. A key symbolizing the "Woman of the Year" selection was presented by Mrs. Vivian McDonald. Musical numbers were by Miss Thelma Slider, Miss Edith Davis, Mrs. V. M. DeWitty and Hige Russell.

Mrs. J. A. Kirven was chairman of the project for the sponsoring sorority.

Story on Alice T. King winning the Woman of the Year award from the Zeta Phi Beta sorority
Austin Statesman, March 10, 1954

King, Tears Firms Are Consolidating

Merger of two of East Austin's oldest business firms—the King Funeral Home and the Tears Funeral Home—was announced Saturday by officers of both firms.

They will operate in the future as the King-Tears Funeral Home, with business continuing at both establishments until the physical plants are also consolidated.

The King Funeral Home was founded in 1933 by C. B. King.

Since his death in 1941, the business has been carried on by his widow, Mrs. Alice T. King.

She was assisted by C. L. Watkins, who acted as manager until his death in 1953. At the present time, Mrs. C. L. Watkins, his widow, is serving as manager, assisted by John T. King, mortician. Others in the firm include Mrs. Edwina King, Murphy, Mrs. Marcet Hines King, Gus Bragner, Andrew T. Young, John B. Murphy and Calvin Lynn Jr.

The Tears Funeral Home was founded on Oct. 1, 1901 by the late William M. Tears, who organized the first burial association in the United States in 1902.

His son, William Tears Jr., car-

ried on the business until his death in 1941. At that time, Milton C. Tears took over the business and is at present the owner and operator. Because of his health, Tears has arranged the merger.

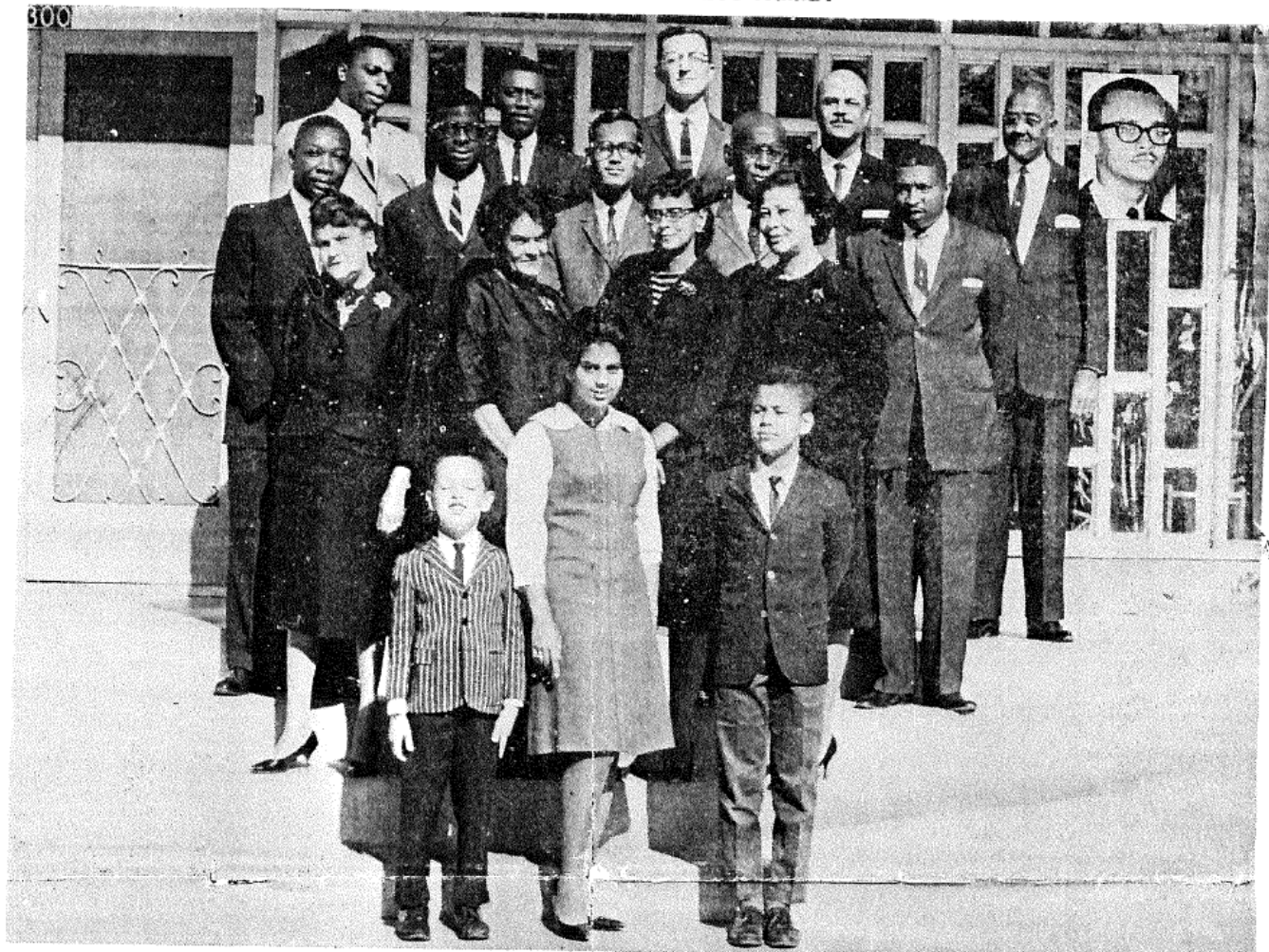
Members of his staff who are continuing with the business are Miss Lois Moore and Eugene Johnson.

Because both firms operate burial associations, they, too, will be merged, and no additional charge or change will be made in the rates. Policyholders in good standing of both burial associations will continue in full benefit without and change in benefits or premiums now being paid.

For the present the firm, now known as the King-Tears Funeral Home will continue to operate both establishments. Information may be received at both places—1107 East Sixth Street and 1300 East 12th Street. Plans are now being made to consolidate the physical plants, and the King-Tears Funeral Home will then be permanently located at 1300 East 12th Street.

AN ERA IN THE GROWTH

THE KING - TEARS BUSINESS FAMILY



Mrs. Alice T. King, sole owner of the King-Tears Mortuary, has announced the incorporation of the business on Jan. 1.

To show her appreciation for the interest and service of a number of dedicated persons through the years, Mrs. King also announced that she has given shares of stock in the new firm to Mrs. Clara Watkins Johnson, Gus Bragner Jr., Leanthus Jackson, Cardell Arnold, and to her daughter and son, Mrs. Edwina King Murphy and John T. King. Shares were given according to tenure in the business.

Mrs. King announced the incorporation of the business at a meeting of the King-Tears "business". At the meeting she paid tribute and told of her debt of gratitude to Woodie (Moody) McWallace, Celester L. Watkins and John Calvin Lynn, all deceased, who started working with the business at its beginning 32 years ago.

McWallace worked faithfully for some time, was loyal to the business and was a friend to the King family, said Mrs. King. Watkins, who was with the busi-

ness from its inception until his death in 1953, dedicated his life to the firm. When C. B. King, founder of the business, arrived in Austin in October, 1932, it was Watkins who met him, helped him find a place to live. Watkins and King "batched" together through the winter of 1932 and until June, 1933, when Mrs. King arrived in Austin. The two King children came later that summer to join their parents.

As Mrs. King talked of those early days in Austin, she told of what Preacher (the affection title

Celester Watkins' friends gave him) meant to the whole family. He helped "raise the two King children. Later, he was a second grandfather to John's children while he was away serving in the Army and also during their very early childhood. Mrs. King gives much credit to him for the success of the business in its early days.

John Calvin Lynn, along with Watkins and McWallace, was associated with the business from its infancy and remained with it until his death in Octo-

ber, 1963. John gave him the name of "the Colonel," which indicates the esteem in which he was held by members of the King family.

When C. B. King died in 1941, Watkins was made manager of the firm because of his keen business ability and interest. He maintained this position with dignity until his death.

At that time, Mrs. Clara Watkins Johnson was promoted to manager because of her ability, interest and tenure. Mrs. Johnson had joined the firm in 1936 and her ability had been proved by years of work and loyalty.

Overlooking advice from those not associated with the business who told Mrs. King that managing a firm like King-Tears Mortuary should be a man's job, Mrs. King appointed Mrs. Johnson as manager.

Mrs. King says now that she has never regretted once her decision. "Clara," says Mrs. King, "has been most effective and efficient." The two ladies have never had a serious disagreement, putting to rest the warnings that two women in business cannot remain friends.

Bragner, Jackson and Arnold are all trusted members of the "business family". Bragner, a veteran of World War II, joined the staff following his graduation from the Landig College Mortuary Science in Houston in 1946. Jackson joined the firm late in 1951, following his graduation from the Landig College. Except for a brief period of military service, he has had continuous service with King-Tears since then. Arnold joined the staff in 1945, and has had periodic service with the firm for these 20 years.

The TEARS FUNERAL HOME was a well-established business concern organized in 1900 by the late WILLIAM M. TEARS, SR. Some people say that it was the first Negro owned and operated funeral business in the state of Texas. At the death of William M. Tears Sr., his son, WILLIAM TEARS, JR., assumed management of the business. In 1941, after the death of WILLIAM TEARS, JR., MILTON TEARS assumed ownership and remained as the perennial boss until the King purchase in December 1954.

The organization then became, and is still known as, KING-TEARS MORTUARY.

THE KING - TEARS MORTUARY MASTERMIND



MRS. ALICE T. KING

SHAREHOLDERS IN KING - TEARS MORTUARY INC.



THE TRIBUNE

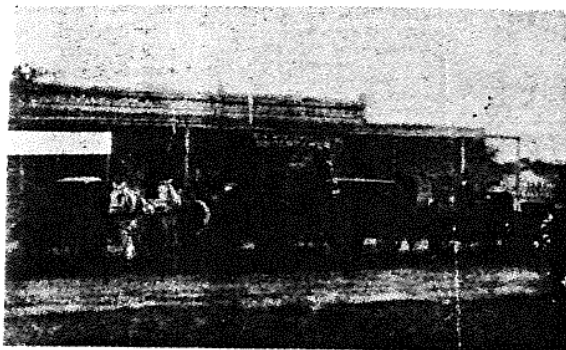
Expressing Our Heritage and Our Freedoms.

10¢ PER COPY

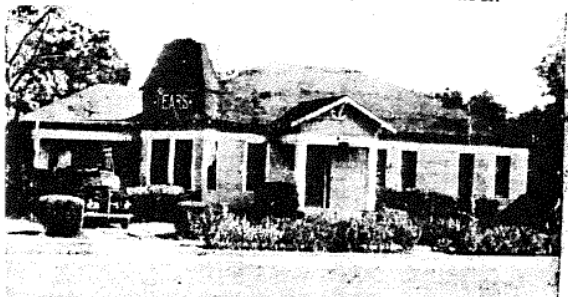
THE TRIBUNE, Thursday, May 13, 1971

Volume 1, Number 41

THE KING-TEARS STORY



THE EARLY DAYS -- of King Tears founded in 1901 by William M. Tears Sr.



Young men dream dreams, old men have visions.

Back in 1901, William M. Tears, Sr. had both, a dream and a vision. He labored with his dream until it became a reality. It was in 1901, we are told, that the Tears Funeral Home was founded. He was a man of dignity and worth. He was married to Miss Izanetta Fullylove. They were the parents of two sons, William Jr. and Milton C. Tears.

Pictured above is the location of the Tears Funeral Home when it was located at 614 East 6th Street displaying a rig of fine horses which were used for transportation of the deceased at that time. He passed away in 1923, leaving the torch to be carried by his son, William Tears Jr., his wife Ethel and daughter, Isanetta; who carried on the business on the same location until 1934 when they relocated at 1300 East 12th St., where they served the community until the son passed away in 1941.

After his death, Milton C. Tears came home to carry on the business as owner, with W.E. Phillips as his manager. Leslie "Farmer" Jones was also known as an integral part of the Tears Funeral Home for a number of years.

Where did the King name originate? In 1932, C.B. King came to Austin from Memphis, Tenn., to establish a business of the same nature, and founded King Funeral Home at 1107 East 6th Street. He opened the above establishment Feb. 5, 1933. Allied

with him were personalities like Mrs. Ola Mae Jefferson, Woodie McWallace, Mrs. Mattie Brown, Mrs. Frances Stubbs, John C. Creasy, J.C. Lynn and C.L. Watkins. Later in the year he was joined by his wife, Mrs. Alice T. King and his children John and Edwin.

In 1936 the old building was remodeled. Mr. King passed away in 1941. At this time C. L. Watkins was named manager of the business. He served in the capacity until his death in 1953. He also had a dream. It was his idea to relocate since the population was moving out. After his passing, his widow, Mrs. C. M. Watkins, now Mrs. C.M. Johnson, was promoted to manager.

Milton C. Tears retired in 1955, and it was at this time the 1300 E. 12th Street location took on a new look and a new name. It became known as "King-Tears Mortuary." Milton passed away in 1968 being the last of the Tears' immediate family.

The building was remodeled with John S. Chase the architect and Arthur Parks the general contractor.

In 1967 the business was incorporated with Mrs. Alice T. King, president; John T. King, vice president; Mrs. Edwin K. Murphy, secretary; Mrs. C. Johnson, assistant secretary and manager; and Gus Bragner, Leannus Jackson and Cordell Arnold.

As the business progressed it was decided that it needed another new look. A decision was made after much planning, discussion, putting

together and taking apart. Architect John S. Chase, AIA, was again employed and Arthur Parks, general contractor, put the plans together thus coming up with the new look of King-Tears Mortuary, Inc. The personal ideas of people in the firm were used in the interior decoration.

A dedication service will be May 16 at 4 p.m. and Open House from 5 to 9 p.m. Everyone is encouraged to come by and see the building.

Afro-American History

May 7-13

Methodist church (South & North) separated over slavery platform adopted in 1844 General Conference. 1845

Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters organized through efforts of A. Philip Randolph. 1925

John Brown, Martyr for freedom. Born in Torrington, Connecticut. 1800

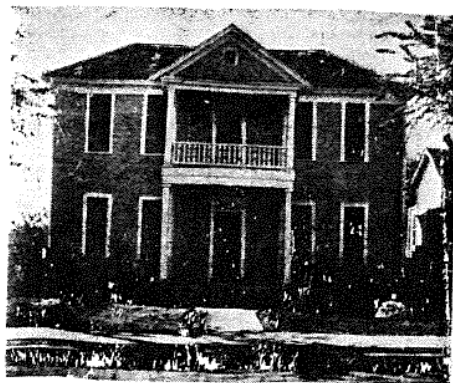
P. B. S. Pinchback, Civil War captain and reconstruction statesman. Born (1837-1921)

Elizabeth Taylor Greenfield invited to sing before Queen Victoria. 1854

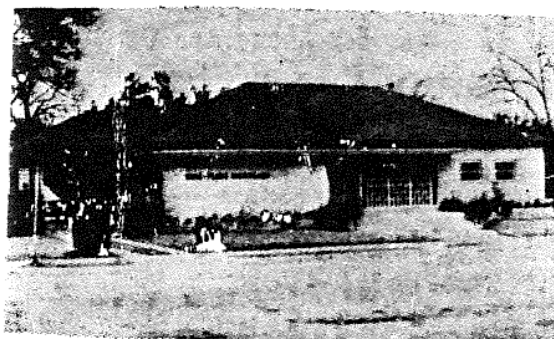
William Grant Still, Outstanding black composer. Born 1895

Jacar DePriest, First Negro elected to congress from a northern state. Died 1951

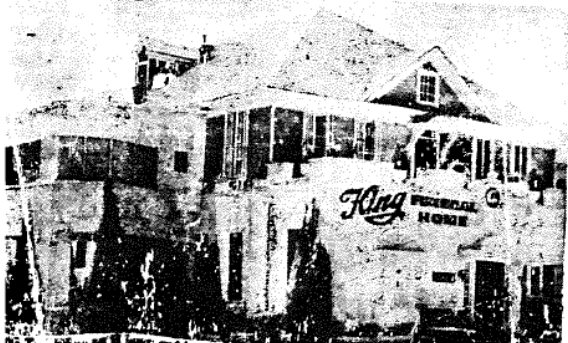
Joe Louis, Held heavyweight title for 11 years; longer than any other man. Born 1914



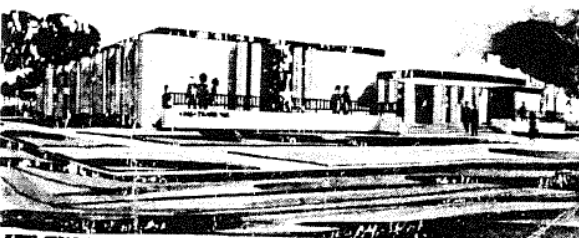
KING TEARS -- as it appeared in 1955.



KING TEARS -- as it appeared before most recent remodeling



KING TEARS -- as it appears today after extensive remodeling



KING TEARS -- as it appears today after extensive remodeling

Autobiography **King-Johnson**

Mrs. Alice T. King became the bride of Dr. Mordecai W. Johnson Sunday, April 12, at the home of Dr. and Mrs. John T. King of Austin. Rev. J. H. Carruthers, pastor of Wesley United Methodist Church and Rev. Marvin C. Griffin, pastor of Ebenezer Baptist Church officiated at the ceremony. William H. Johnson, son of Dr. Johnson, and Mrs. John B. Murphy, daughter of Mrs. King, were their parents' attendants. A reception was held in the Embassy Room of the Sheraton-Crest Hotel.

The former Mrs. King is a native of Memphis. She is a graduate of Griggs Business College and LeMoyne College as well as Fisk University and Huston-Tillotson College. She is a licensed funeral director and is president of King-Tears Mortuary.

Dr. Johnson is president emeritus of Howard University. He is a graduate of Morehouse College, the University of Chicago, and Rochester Theological Seminary. He received a Master's of Sacred Theology from Harvard Seminary and has received many honorary degrees. He is an ordained minister of the Baptist Church.

The couple will divide their residences between Austin and Washington.

Am 4/21/72



American-Statesman/UPI

THE WOMEN BEHIND HUSTON-TILLOTSON'S PRESIDENT
Mrs. Alice King, mother, and Mrs. John T. King, wife



Alice Taylor King Johnson

Mrs. Alice Taylor King Johnson, longtime Austin funeral director, died Monday, December 17, 1984, in her home in Austin.

Born Alice Clinton Woodson in Memphis, Tennessee, on April 18, 1891, she was a graduate of Fisk University in Nashville, Tennessee, and Huston-Tillotson College. She was the youngest child of Benjamin F. and Alice Kennedy Woodson.

When her first husband, John Q. Taylor, M.D., died of having been gassed in World War I in France, she commenced the long career as a teacher and business executive which earned her numerous awards and much civic recognition.

She came to Austin when she married Charles B. King, who established King Funeral Home, now King Tears Mortuary, Inc. Mr. King died in 1941. In 1970, she married her childhood sweetheart, Dr. Mordecai Wyatt Johnson, President Emeritus of Howard University. They lived in Washington, D.C. until his death in 1976, when she returned to Austin and resumed her active connection with the family business.

An active member of Wesley United Methodist Church, she was a member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, the Douglas Club, Order of the Eastern Star, Courts of Calanthe, and a life member of the YWCA. She received

Alumni awards from Huston-Tillotson College and Fisk University.

She is survived by her daughter and son-in-law, Dr. and Mrs. John B. Murphy of San Antonio; her son and daughter-in-law, Dr. and Mrs. John Q. Taylor King, Sr.; grandsons and their families, John Q. Taylor King, Jr., M.D., Clinton A. King, M.D., Stuart Hines King, John Edwin Murphy; one granddaughter and her family, Mrs. Marjon King Christopher. Also, six great-granddaughters and two great-grandsons; four nieces, Mrs. Claude W. Black of San Antonio, Mrs. Cordella N. Johnson of Baltimore, Maryland, Mrs. Clara D. Johnson of New York City, New York, and Mrs. Sadie A. Thompson of Little Rock, Arkansas; one nephew, Aldrich Allen of St. Louis, Missouri; and many grandnieces and nephews.

The family requests that in lieu of flowers, memorials be sent to The Alice King Johnson Professorship at Huston-Tillotson College.

Services at 11:00 AM, Saturday, December 22, 1984, Wesley United Methodist Church, King-Tears Mortuary, Inc. officiating.

Obituary of Alice T. King
Austin American-Statesman, December 21, 1984

Rites scheduled for owner of King-Tears Mortuary

Services are scheduled Saturday for Alice T. King Johnson, owner of King-Tears Mortuary and an Austin resident since 1932.

She died Monday at age 93.

Mrs. Johnson was a volunteer at Austin State Hospital and was an active member of Wesley United Methodist Church. She was a member of the Order of the Eastern Star, Alpha Kappa Alpha sorority, the Douglass Club, and several other organizations.

Mrs. Johnson was married to the late Dr. Mordecai W. Johnson, president emeritus of Howard University. She received a bachelor's degree in home economics from Flisk University in Tennessee and a bachelor's degree in business ad-

ministration from Huston-Tillotson College. Her son, John Q.T. King, is president of Huston-Tillotson.

Other survivors are a daughter, Edwina King Murphy of San Antonio; four grandsons, Dr. Clinton A. King of El Paso and Dr. John Q.T. King Jr., Stuart H. King, and John Edwin Murphy, all of Austin; a granddaughter, Marjon King Christopher of Austin; six great-granddaughters, and two great-grandsons.

Services will be at Wesley United Methodist Church at 11 a.m. Saturday. Burial will follow at Evergreen Cemetery. Arrangements are being made by King-Tears Mortuary at 1300 E. 12th St.

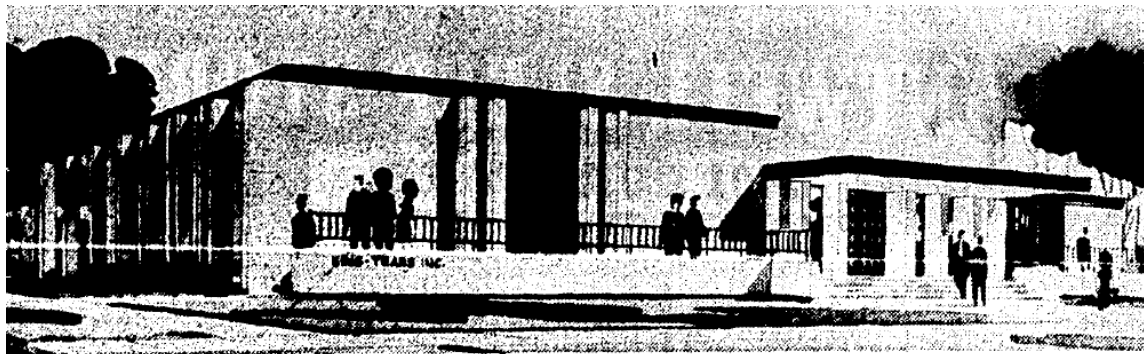
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KING-TEARS MORTUARY

IN OCTOBER 1901, WILLIAM M. TEARS OPENED THE TEARS FUNERAL HOME AT 614 E. 6TH STREET TO PROVIDE MORTUARY SERVICES FOR AFRICAN AMERICANS IN AUSTIN AND THE SURROUNDING AREA. UPON HIS DEATH IN 1923, HIS SON WILLIAM M. TEARS, JR. BECAME MANAGER OF THE FIRM. IN 1933, MR. AND MRS. CHARLES B. KING OPENED KING AND COMPANY (LATER KING FUNERAL HOME) AT 1107 E. 6TH STREET. TEARS RELOCATED TO THIS SITE IN 1934, AND KING COMPLETED EXTENSIVE REMODELING IN 1936. IN 1955, THESE TWO HISTORIC EAST AUSTIN ESTABLISHMENTS MERGED TO FORM THE KING-TEARS FUNERAL HOME. CONTINUING TO OPERATE AT THIS SITE WITH EXPANDED SERVICES AND CHARITABLE WORKS IN THE COMMUNITY, KING-TEARS REMAINS AN IMPORTANT PART OF AUSTIN'S HERITAGE.

(2002)



NEWLY-REMODELED KING-TEARS MORTUARY, INC.
Public invited to dedication and open house Sunday

Mortuary Sets Open House

The King-Tears Mortuary, Inc., will hold open house in the newly remodeled building at 1300 E. 12 St. from 5 p.m. until 9 p.m. Sunday.

The public is invited to the open house and also to the dedication service at 4 p.m.

King-Tears, which became incorporated in 1967, was formerly two separate funeral homes — Tears Funeral Home and King Funeral Home. The two homes joined in partnership in 1955. Tears Funeral Home was established by William M. Tears Sr. in 1901, and King Funeral Home was founded by C. B. King in 1932.

Officers of the present corporation are Mrs. Alice T. King, president; John T. King, vice president; and Mrs. Edwina K. Murphy, secretary.

John S. Chase was architect for the remodeling, and Arthur Parks was the general contractor.

Story on the new King-Tears Funeral Home building
Austin Statesman, May 13, 1971

Rev. J. W. Bennett 1308 East 12th. St.

33 33 2 Pt. of 2 & 3

O Riley

Refloor porch & general repairs

24631 - 5/23/43 \$95.00

W. A. Brooks

Building permit to Rev. J.W. Bennett for general repairs (1943)

J. H. Dibrell 1308 East 12th St.

33 Part of 2, 3

O'Riley

Frame garage.

51138 6-16-52 \$250.00

Owner

Building permit to J.H. Dibrell for a frame garage (1952)

OWNER Mrs. Alice King ADDRESS 1308 East 12th Street

PLAT 33 LOT East $\frac{1}{2}$ of 2 & West 30' of 3 BLK 2

SUBDIVISION James O ' Reilley Subd.

OCCUPANCY Residence

BLD PERMIT # 99352 DATE 8-15-66 OWNERS ESTIMATE 1,686.00

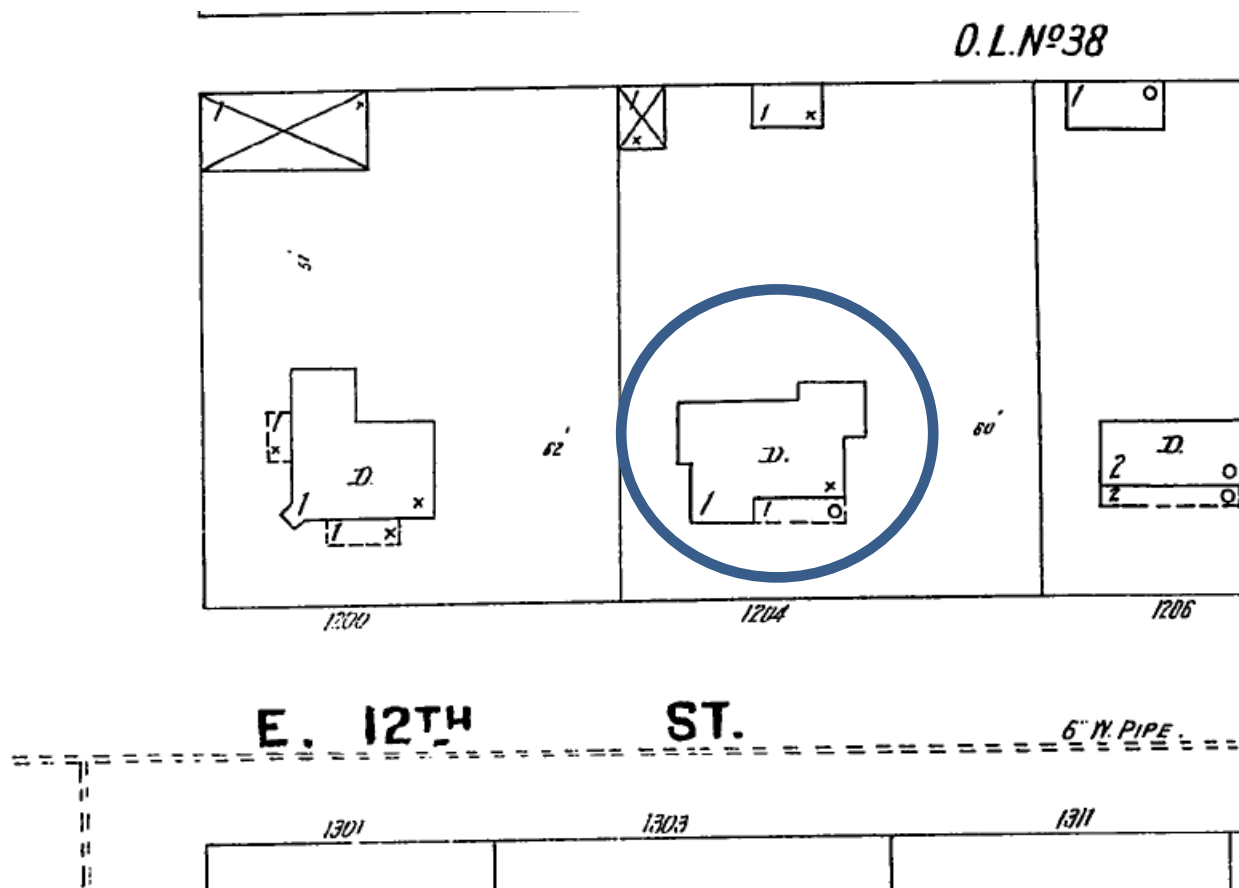
CONTRACTOR Shuler Roofing Company NO. OF FIXTURES

WATER TAP REC # SEWER TAP REC #

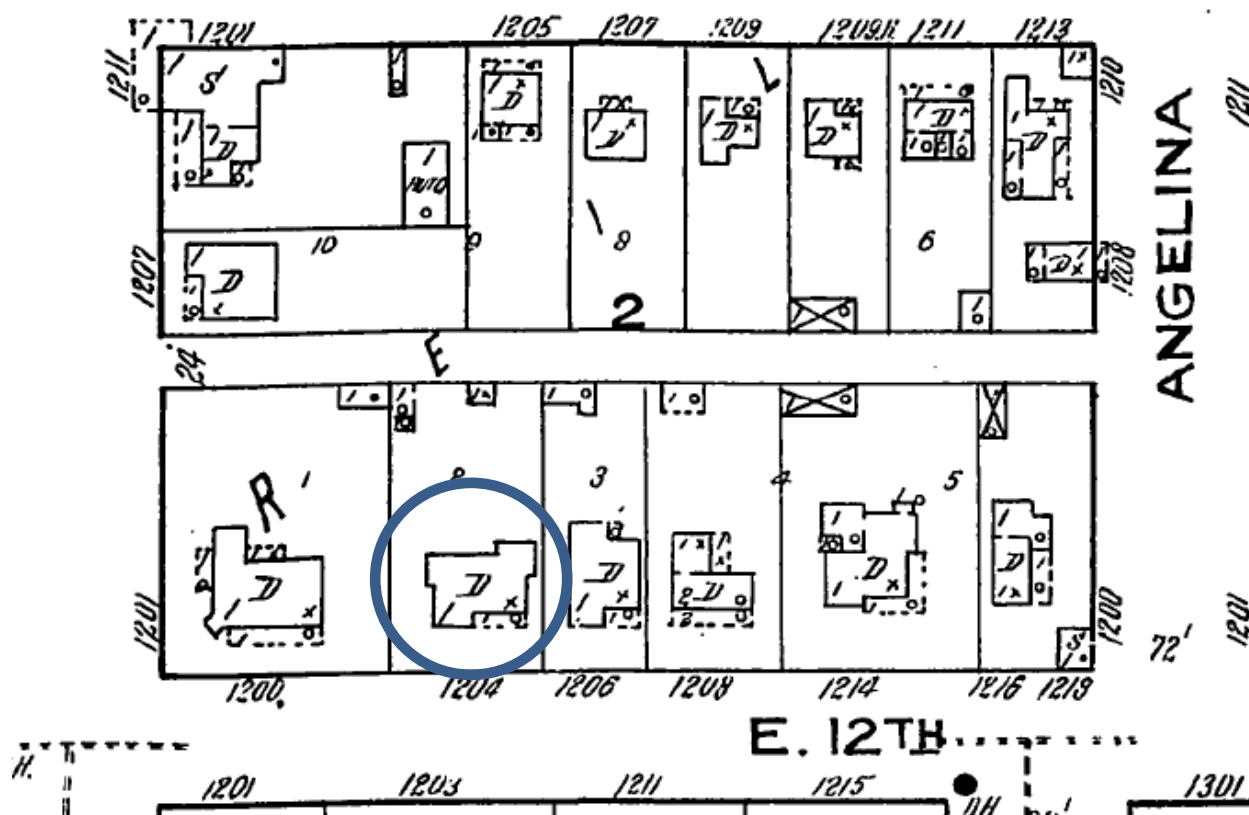
Repair Frame Residence

5-12-71-121822-frn acc bldg. 572 sq. ft.

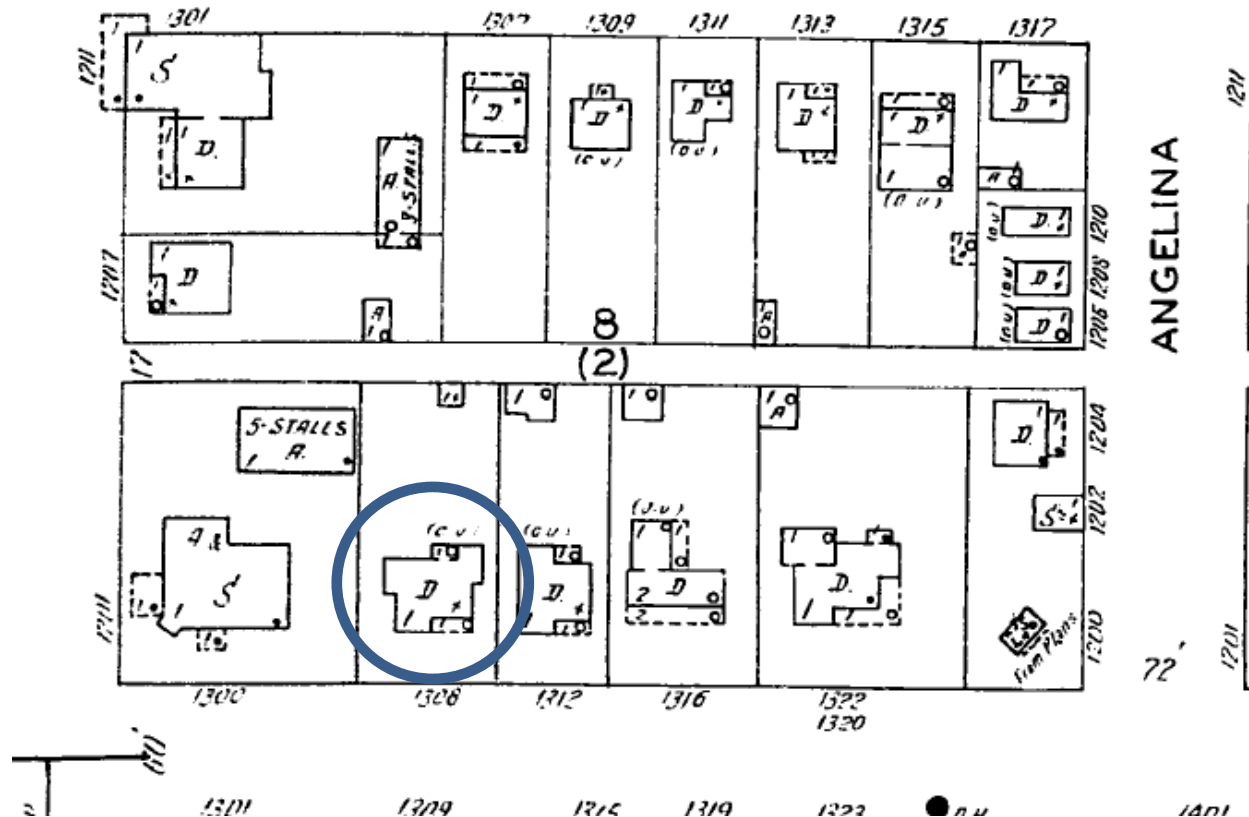
Building permit to Alice King for roof repairs (1966) and for a frame accessory building (1971)



The 1900 Sanborn map shows the house with its front porch. This is the first map to show this section of the city.



The 1922 Sanborn map shows the same configuration as the 1900 map above.



The 1935 Sanborn map shows the same configuration as the earlier maps, but with the current address of 1308 E. 12th Street.