

**HISTORIC LANDMARK COMMISSION
NOVEMBER 18, 2019
DEMOLITION AND RELOCATION PERMITS
HDP-2019-0517
1911 ROBBINS PLACE**

PROPOSAL

Demolish a ca. 1934 house.

ARCHITECTURE

One-and-a-half story, rectangular-plan, side-gabled brick veneered house with Tudor Revival design elements, including the front-gabled and round-arched entry portico; single and paired 1:1 windows with 9:1 wood screens; front gablet to the right of the central entry; front-gabled dormer to the left of the entry; open concrete patio across the right side of the front façade.

RESEARCH

The house appears to have been built around 1934 and was originally rented by Sidney C. and Georgia McIntosh, who lived here until around 1938. Sidney C. McIntosh was an engineer for the Railroad Commission of Texas.

Andrew P. and Julia Montgomery purchased the house around 1938, and lived here until around 1948, when they switched houses with her parents, R. Brown and Julia Robbins, who lived at 1900 San Gabriel Street. Julia Montgomery was the only child of R. Brown and Julia Robbins, and was living in Madison, Wisconsin, when she met Andrew P. Montgomery, the son of the vice-president of Madison's electric railway system. They married in 1933 and moved to Austin, where Andrew P. Montgomery went into business with his father-in-law, R. Brown Robbins, in his insurance company in the Elks (later the Nash) Building at 618 Colorado Street. Around 1948, Andrew and Julia Montgomery switched houses with her parents, who were living at 1900 San Gabriel Street. Andrew and Julia Montgomery lived at 1900 San Gabriel until the late 1950s, when they moved to California.

Andrew Montgomery appears to have been very popular, and was very active in numerous civic organizations in Austin, serving, as had his father-in-law, as director of the Austin Chamber of Commerce, president of the Rotary Club, and many other civic and charitable local institutions. It was therefore particularly notable when, in late February, 1958, he was last seen at the Kennelwood Docks on Lake Austin and then failed to return home. Julia Robbins Montgomery, becoming fearful for her husband's well-being in what has been described as a rainy and cold night, called the police, who found Andy Montgomery's boat, wallet, and several articles of clothing at the Kennelwood Docks, but no sign of the man himself. Several teams from the Austin Fire Department and other agencies began a search for him, which included dragging the lake for his body, all of which were unsuccessful in locating him. Six months later, a reporter for the American-Statesman, on vacation in Denver, Colorado, swore that he saw Andy Montgomery there, but when they called his name, he ran away. A year after his disappearance, his presumed widow, Julia, filed for control of their community property, stating that her husband was presumed drowned in the lake. Six months after that, there were a couple stories in the newspaper about how Andy Montgomery was living in northern California, and that Julia Montgomery had gone there to reunite with him. There never was a really good justification for his disappearance published in the newspapers, except that he had "gone to pieces" and needed to get away. Nor was there ever any accounting for the trouble he caused the AFD and others in trying to locate his body in the lake. It is unclear if he ever returned to Austin after that. Julia Montgomery moved to California to be with him, but they divorced in California in 1971. Julia Montgomery died in California in 1972; her body was returned to Austin for burial in the Oakwood Cemetery

Annex, but no obituary appeared in the Austin newspapers. Andy Montgomery remarried, and died in California in 1988. His obituary was published in the Austin paper.

Andrew and Julia Montgomery traded this house for that of her parents, at 1900 San Gabriel Street around 1948, and her parents, R. Brown and Julia Robbins, moved into this house, where they lived until Julia Robbins died in 1958.

R. Brown Robbins was brought up in Vernon, Texas, the son of the John W. Robbins, who became the treasurer of the State of Texas in 1898. Brown Robbins worked as a book-keeper in the State Treasurer's office, and then was appointed chief clerk of the State Treasury by his father in 1905 to replace a man who resigned to organize the American National Bank of Austin. Brown married Julia Eilers of Bastrop in 1906, and returned to Austin, where he and his father opened a real estate and insurance business. After his father retired, Brown went into business with his brother, Leonard, incorporating The Robbins Company, dealing in fire insurance policies, real estate, and rental properties. They opened their offices at 618 Colorado Street.

Brown Robbins quickly became involved in many civic and charitable organizations; he served as the director of the Austin Chamber of Commerce in the 1920s, and later served as president of the Rotary Club. He consistently pushed for civic improvements, including the construction of a municipal auditorium. Upon his daughter's marriage to Andy Montgomery in 1933, Robbins invited him into the firm, and he eventually became a partner. Brown Robbins died in 1954, and his wife continued as the matriarch of the family and of the insurance business. They lived in this house from around 1948 until Julia Robbins' death in 1958.

The house was then rented by a professor at the University of Texas, Gerhardt Fonken, and his wife, Carolyn, from Fonken's arrival in Austin in 1959 through the mid-1960s. Fonken was a professor of chemistry, then went into university administration; he was the head of the offices of academic affairs and research from 1979 until 1985, when he was appointed provost of the university, serving in that role until his retirement in 1994. There was a series of renters in the 1960s and 1970s; from the early 1980s at least through the early 1990s, the house was rented by another UT professor, Gideon Sjoberg. Sjoberg was a professor of sociology at UT, and was the author of The Pre-Industrial City, a 1960 study of ancient cities and civilizations to address issues in modern urban industrial societies.

STAFF COMMENTS

The house was listed with no priority for research in the Comprehensive Cultural Resources Survey (1984).

Staff has evaluated this house for designation as a historic landmark and has determined that the house may meet the criteria for landmark designation as set forth in City Code:

- a. **Architecture.** The house is a relatively common type of 1930s brick-veneered cottage with minimal Tudor Revival detailing. The house is remarkably intact and may qualify under the criterion for architecture for its depiction of a vernacular residential design of the 1930s.
- b. **Historical association.** The house was the home of two families, Andrew and Julia Montgomery, who lived here until around 1948, when they moved to her parents' house, and Julia Montgomery's parents, Brown and Julia Robbins, moved into this house, where they lived until 1958. Brown Robbins was the head of an insurance and real estate firm in Austin, and brought his son-in-law into the company. Both were active in civic organizations in Austin, serving as heads of the Chamber of Commerce and the Rotary Club. The Commission will need to decide whether these historical associations are significant enough to warrant individual designation under this criterion.

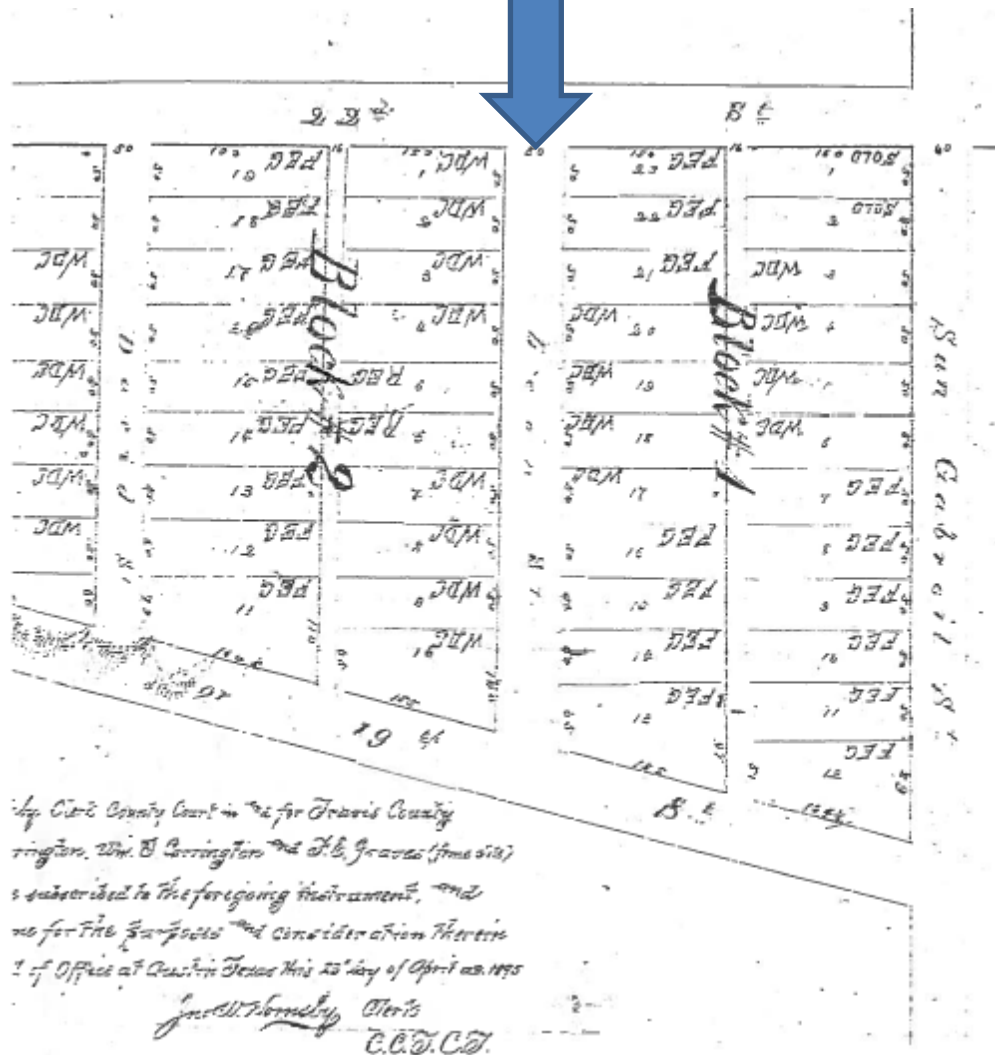
- c. **Archaeology.** The house was not evaluated for its potential to yield significant data concerning the human history or prehistory of the region.
- d. **Community value.** The house does not possess a unique location, physical characteristic, or significant feature that contributes to the character, image, or cultural identity of the city, the neighborhood, or a particular demographic group.
- e. **Landscape feature.** The property is not a significant natural or designed landscape with artistic, aesthetic, cultural, or historical value to the city.

Staff recommended postponement of this case to evaluate it within the context of a potential historic district in this section of West Campus, including Robbins Place. Investigation of the possibility of a historic district in this neighborhood reveals that while portions of Robbins Place could be included in a larger potential district in West Campus, there is not sufficient integrity on the street itself to be considered independently as a historic district.

Robbins Place was originally Leon Street (portions of which still survive with that name in West Campus), as shown on the 1895 plat map of the Carrington Subdivision below. The 1935 Sanborn map shows the street named Leon; the 1961 Sanborn map shows it as Robbins Place with the former name of Leon still noted in parentheses. It appears that the name of the street was changed in the late 1930s, as newspapers in the early 1940s referenced the street as Robbins Place. Staff has not been able to find any documentation in newspapers or city records that pinpoint the change of the street name, nor the reason for it. No member of the Robbins family lived on Robbins Place until Brown Robbins traded houses with his daughter and son-in-law, Andy Montgomery. Brown Robbins lived at the corner of 19th and San Gabriel for many years before moving to Robbins Place; Andy and Julia Montgomery moved from Robbins Place to her parents' house on San Gabriel. There is no definite indication that any members of the Robbins family played a part in the development of this street, although that would seem likely for the name change. Brown Robbins was indeed involved in real estate development at around the same time as Robbins Place was developed (1930s), but staff has not been able to identify a direct connection between any member of the Robbins family with the development and name change of the street.

The Carrington Subdivision ran between 19th (now MLK) and 22nd Street, and from San Gabriel Street west to Shoal Creek, including Robbins Place, David Street, and Cliff Street. There is a potential historic district for the Carrington Subdivision (albeit with substantial non-historic multi-family construction), as well as a potential historic district incorporating the Carrington Subdivision as well as areas to the north along 22nd, 22 ½, 23rd, and Leon Streets.

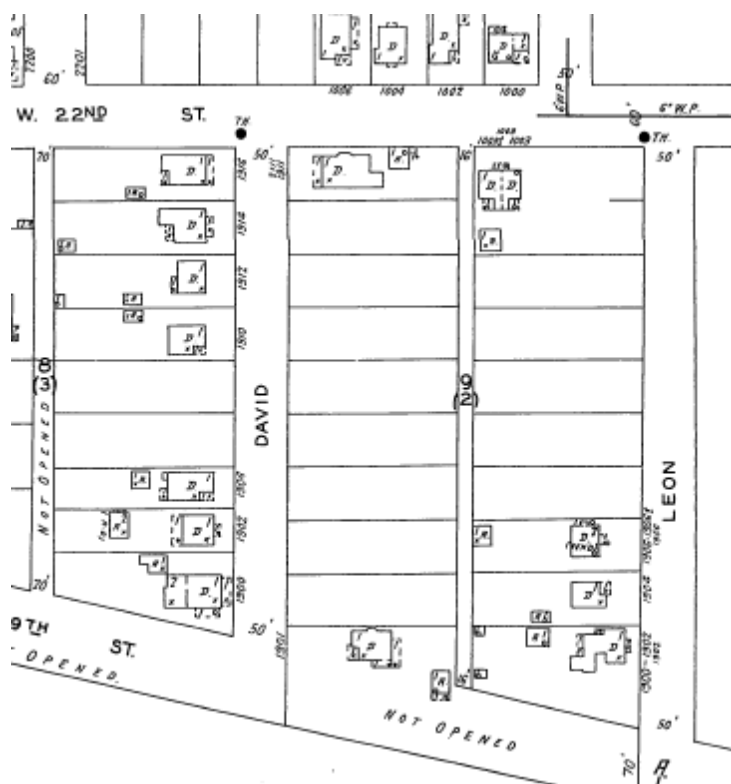
What evaluation of the evidence does reveal is that the 1961 Sanborn map shows that Robbins Place had a line of two-story brick duplexes along the west side of the street; only one of which survives. Robbins Place also had an unusual collection of relatively modest houses, some of which were owned by prominent citizens of Austin. The houses were occupied by both prominent and middle-class people; most were owner-occupied until the 1970s; the two-story brick duplexes on the west side of the street were home to many university personnel as well as other members of prominent Austin families, especially widows, some of whom owned the duplex and rented out the other unit. The physical and demographic composition of Robbins Place made it unique in the West Campus neighborhood, but that composition has been overshadowed by demolitions and new apartment and condominium buildings.



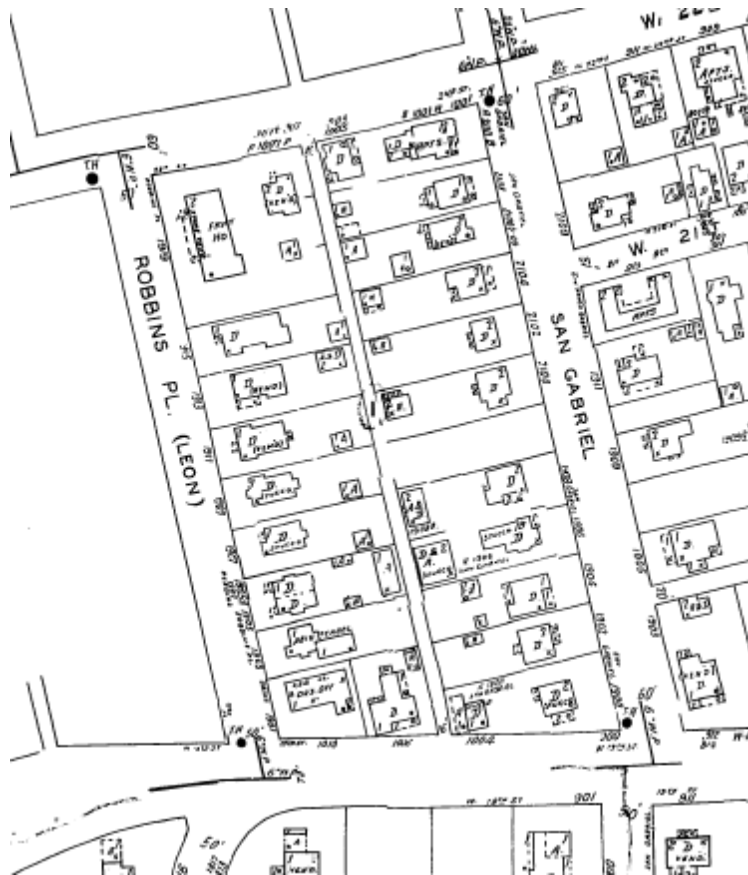
A portion of the 1895 Carrington Subdivision between 19th (now MLK) and 22nd Streets, from San Gabriel Street west and showing what is now Robbins Place as Leon Street.



The 1935 Sanborn map shows Robbins Place as Leon Street, with mostly empty lots along the east side of the street.



The 1935 Sanborn map shows the west side of Robbins Place (Leon Street) with only a handful of houses.



The 1961 Sanborn map shows that Robbins Place was formerly known as Leon Street; all the lots on the east side of the street have been developed.



1913 Robbins Place, the next house north of the subject property.



1915 Robbins Place, two houses north of the subject property.



The last remaining two-story brick duplex on the west side of Robbins Place.



House at the head of Robbins Place on W. 22nd Street



House at the southwest corner of 22nd Street and Robbins Place



House on the north side of W. 22nd Street between San Gabriel Street and Robbins Place



Newer multi-family development on the east side of Robbins Place between W. MLK and the subject property

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Encourage rehabilitation and adaptive re-use of this house, as it appears to retain a very high degree of integrity and structural soundness, and is one of the three houses remaining on the east side of Robbins Place that could contribute to a potential West Campus historic district. Staff does not believe that the house meets the qualifications for individual designation as a historic landmark, so must recommend release of the permit upon completion of a City of Austin Documentation Package, consisting of photographs of all elevations, a dimensioned sketch plan, and a narrative history, for archiving at the Austin History Center. However, staff hopes that the applicant will reconsider demolition in favor of adaptive re-use and development that would allow the building to remain articulated in its context.

LOCATION MAP



SUBJECT TRACT



PENDING CASE



ZONING BOUNDARY

1" = 168'

NOTIFICATIONS

CASE#: HDP-2019-0517

LOCATION: 1911 Robbins Place

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.



1911 Robbins Place
ca. 1934



OCCUPANCY HISTORY
1911 Robbins Place

From City Directories, Austin History Center
Prepared by the City Historic Preservation Office
October, 2019

- 1935 The address is not listed in the directory.
NOTE: Sidney C. and Georgia McIntosh are not listed in the directory.
- 1937 Sidney C. and Georgia McIntosh, renters
Engineer, Railroad Commission of Texas
NOTE: Andrew P. and Julia R. Montgomery are listed at 1914 Robbins Place; he was the office manager for The Robbins Company (R. Brown and Leonard A. Robbins, proprietors), rentals, surety bonds, general insurance, Elks Building, 618 Colorado Street.
- 1939 A.P. and Julia R. Montgomery, owners
Office manager, The Robbins Company (R. Brown and Leonard A. Robbins, proprietors), rentals, surety bonds, general insurance, Elks Building, 618 Colorado Street.
NOTE: Sidney C. and Georgia McIntosh are listed at 3008 North Guadalupe (now Hemphill Park); he was a civil engineer.
- 1941 Andrew P. and Julia Montgomery, owners

Office manager, The Robbins Company (R. Brown and Leonard A. Robbins, proprietors), real estate and insurance, 618 Colorado Street.
Also listed is Gertrude Hawkins, a maid.

- 1944-45 Andrew P. and Julia Montgomery, owners
U.S. Navy
Also listed is Lee F. Ferrell, no occupation shown.
- 1947 Andrew P. and Julia R. Montgomery, owners
Office manager, The Robbins Company (R. Brown and Leonard A. Robbins, proprietors), general insurance, surety bonds and rentals, 201-02 Nash Building, 618 Colorado Street
NOTE: R. Brown and Julia D. Robbins are listed at 1900 San Gabriel Street.
- 1949 R. Brown and Julia D. Robbins, owners
Proprietor (with Andrew Montgomery), The Robbins Company, general insurance surety bonds and rentals, 201-02 Nash Building, 618 Colorado Street.
NOTE: Andrew P. and Julia Montgomery are listed at 1900 San Gabriel Street. He was a proprietor of The Robbins Company. 1900 San Gabriel Street was the former address of R. Brown and Julia D. Robbins.
- 1952 R. Brown and Julia D. Robbins, owners
Proprietor (with Andrew Montgomery), The Robbins Company, general insurance, 201-02 Nash Building, 618 Colorado Street.
NOTE: Andrew and Julia Montgomery are listed at 1900 San Gabriel Street.
- 1955 Mrs. Julia D. Robbins, owner
Widow, Brown Robbins
Proprietor (with Andrew Montgomery and John P. Nieman), The Robbins, Montgomery and Nieman Company, general insurance, 201 Nash Building, 618 Colorado Street.
- 1959 Mrs. Julia D. Robbins, owner
Widow, Brown Robbins
Proprietor (with Andrew Montgomery and John P. Nieman), The Robbins, Montgomery and Nieman Company, general insurance, 201 Nash Building, 618 Colorado Street.
- 1962 Gerhardt J. and Carolyn Fonken, renters
Assistant professor, University of Texas
- 1965 Gerhard J. and Carolyn Fonken, renters
Assistant professor, University of Texas
- 1968 Charles W. and Gay N. Shaw, renters
Commercial artist
- 1973 Ricardo and Luz B. Cornejo, renters
Program coordinator, Southwestern Educational Development Lab, 711 Perry-Brooks Building, 800 Brazos Street.
- 1977 Julia M. Boffa, owner
Nurse, Medical Personnel Pool, national nursing service, 1206 W. 38th Street.

NOTE: The directory indicates that Julia M. Boffa was a new resident at this address.

1981	Gideon A. Sjoberg, renter Professor, University of Texas
1985-86	Gideon A. Sjoberg, renter Professor, University of Texas
1992	Gideon A. Sjoberg, renter Professor, University of Texas

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES:

Andrew P. and Julia R. Montgomery (ca. 1938 – ca. 1948)

The 1940 U.S. Census shows A.P. and Julia E. Montgomery as the owners of this house, which was worth \$9,000. A.P. Montgomery was 28, had been born in Wisconsin, and was a salesman and book-keeper in a real estate office. Julia E. Montgomery was 32, had been born in Texas, and had no occupation listed. They had a 2-year old daughter, Julia, who had been born in Texas.

The 1940 U.S. Census also reveals that the house next door to the Montgomery's, at 1909 Robbins Place, was rented by Ralph W. Yarborough and his family. Yarborough was an attorney.

His 1940 World War II draft card shows that Andrew Proudfit Montgomery was born in Dane County, Wisconsin in 1912 and was living in Austin at the time of his registration, where he worked for The Robbins Company. He was 6'-3" tall, weighed 200 pounds and had a light complexion with brown hair and gray eyes. His next of kin was Julia Montgomery.

Andrew P. Montgomery appears in the 1930 U.S. Census as the 17-year old son of Dudley and Josephine Montgomery, of Madison, Wisconsin, where they owned a substantial house (worth \$25,000). Andrew P. Montgomery was the oldest of the 3 Montgomery children listed, and the only son. His father, Dudley Montgomery, was the 46-year old vice-president of the street railway company. His mother, Josephine Montgomery, 43, had been born in Wisconsin and had no occupation listed. The family had a Norwegian-born servant living in their home. The 1920 U.S. Census shows that Andrew's father, Dudley Montgomery, was the vice-president of the electric streetcar line in Madison, Wisconsin.

Andrew P. Montgomery and Julia E. Robbins divorced in San Mateo County, California in March, 1971.

Julia E. Montgomery died in San Mateo County, California in May, 1972. There was no obituary in the Austin newspapers, but she is buried in Austin. Andrew Proudfit Montgomery died in Shasta County, California in 1988.

MONTGOMERYS TO LIVE IN AUSTIN

Following their wedding Wednesday in the First Methodist church, Andrew Prouditt Montgomery, of Madison, Wis., and his bride, the former Miss Julia Eilers Robbins of Austin, left by motor for a honeymoon in Monterrey, Mexico, and will be at home in Austin on their return.

In the presence of immediate families and close friends, the couple took the wedding vows before an altar banked with palms and adorned with tall candelabra holding ivory tapers.

The nuptial solo, "All For You," was sung by the bride's uncle, Walter Brown of Wichita Falls. He was accompanied at the organ by W. H. Barrett, who played Tannhauser's "Evening Star" as a prelude.

◆ ◆ ◆ Uncle Is Best Man

Groomsmen, Henry McCallum and William P. Devereaux of Dallas, Albert Haynes of Paris and Alex Hamilton of Cuero, preceded the bride and her father to the altar, and the bridegroom with his best man, Willis E. Maxson of Wichita Falls, uncle of the bride, entered from the rear and met the bride and her father.

The bride chose a tailored suit of powder puff cloth with blue fox collar and accessories in grey. She

were a shoulder corsage of sweet-heart roses and lilies of the valley.

Before leaving for their honeymoon Mr. and Mrs. Montgomery were entertained by the bride's parents, Mr. and Mrs. H. Brown Robbins, with a morning coffee which included families, out-of-town guests and a few close friends.

♦ ♦ ♦

U. T. Graduate

The bride, a graduate of the University of Texas and member of Pi Beta Phi sorority, has done graduate work in the University of California and the University of Wisconsin. Mr. Montgomery has lived in Madison, and it was there he met his bride.

Among out-of-town guests for the wedding were Mr. Montgomery's mother, Mrs. Dudley Montgomery of Madison; Mr. and Mrs. Walter Robbins and daughter, Mary Jane; Mr. and Mrs. Horace Robbins and John W.; Mr. and Mrs. Willis Maxson and Billy and Dan, all of Wichita Falls; Mr. and Mrs. Alex Hamilton, Miss Frances Hamilton, and Alex Hamilton, Jr., of

Cuero; Henry McCallum, San Antonio; William P. Devereaux, Dallas, and Albert Haynes, Paris, Tex.

Society page story on the wedding of Andrew P. Montgomery and Julia Eilers Robbins in Austin
Austin Statesman, December 28, 1933

Andrew Montgomery's Mother Visits Here

Mrs. Dudley Montgomery of Madison, Wis., is spending the Easter holidays with her son and granddaughter, Andrew Montgomery and Julia, 1900 San Gabriel.

Mrs. Andrew Montgomery has joined her parents, Mr. and Mrs. Brown Robbins, 1911 Robbins Place, in New York where they will spend the Easter week.

Society page story on the visit of Andrew Montgomery's mother to Austin for Easter
Austin American-Statesman, April 13, 1952

Andy Montgomery Believed Drowned



ANDY MONTGOMERY

Firemen Drag Lake For Body

Firemen were dragging Lake Austin Thursday morning in a search for Andrew (Andy) Montgomery, prominent Austin insurance man and civic leader, who is believed to have drowned at the Kennelwood Boat Docks some time after 6:45 p.m. Wednesday.

Montgomery left his home at 1900 San Gabriel about 3 p.m. Wednesday to go to the docks to work on his 21-foot cabin cruiser, the Julia R. He planned to return home about 10 p.m. but did not show up.

He was seen, alone on the docks about 6 p.m. He was last heard from about 6:45 p.m. when he telephoned a friend at the Austin Country Club, reporting he was still at the boat docks at that time.

When the 50-year-old former Austin Rotary Club president failed to return home by 1 a.m. Thursday, his wife went to the docks to search for him.

Unable to locate her husband, Mrs. Montgomery notified Austin police at 1:40 a.m.

Detectives L. L. Morgan and Frank Monk made a brief search around the boat docks but were unable to locate Montgomery.

When they found his billfold and items of clothing on the boat and his car parked in the parking lot overlooking the lake, the fire department was called in to begin dragging operations.

"There was nobody else down there all evening," Detective Morgan reported. "We think he fell into the water from his boat."

Dragging operations began shortly after 2 a.m. Thursday.

A search party went by boat past Ed Grimmer's place almost to Mansfield Dam but returned with no trace of Montgomery's having gone up the lake by boat.

Two divers from the Red Cross water safety corps were standing by at noon waiting for two more divers from the Game and Fish Commission at Marble Falls.

The divers will search in teams in an attempt to locate Montgomery's body.

City detectives and Lake Patrolman Thomas Allen found evidence that Montgomery had spent the late afternoon hours working on his boat where it was tied up in the docks. His billfold, a pair of trousers and watch were found on board. The boat was unlocked and the keys in the ignition. A mop and cleaning rags were found on the forward deck of the cruiser.

Woods B. Kyle Jr., owner of the Kennelwood Boat Docks, told searching officers that Montgomery came to his house, overlooking the boat docks about 6 p.m. for a drink of water. Kyle said Montgomery worked alone at the docks during the afternoon and was seen returning alone to his boat when he left the house shortly after 6 p.m.

Police surmised that Montgomery used a telephone located on the landing docks to call a friend, Country Club manager H. V. Nead, about 6:45 p.m. Nead told police that Montgomery reported he was working on his boat at the time.

Firemen worked throughout the early hours of Thursday probing the lake waters at dockside with grappling poles and hooks. Shortly after daylight a fireboat was launched to extend the dragging operations several yards distant from the boat dock.

The operation was a slow tedious, one. Firemen of District Car 4 from Central Fire Station worked alone until about 9 a.m. when additional personnel were added from District Car 3.

The search operation became increasingly difficult as the firemen extended their search from slip No. 9, where the Julia R. was tied up, through the full length of the dock. Other boats had to be removed from their berths to permit access to all sections of the dock.

Police investigators later found a pair of dress shoes in Montgomery's car. The vehicle had been parked in the parking lot at Kennelwood Docks and apparently had not been moved since Montgomery arrived at the docks in the mid-afternoon of Wednesday.

Montgomery has been a member of the firm of Robbins, Montgomery and Nieman Fire and Casualty Insurance Company for many years. Offices are in the Nash Building.

A member of the Chamber of Commerce, he served as a director in 1917 and 1948 and has been active on many committees, including fire prevention committee and the city planning committee.

He joined Austin Rotary Club in 1912 and was president of that organization in 1948-49. He was chosen to the board of directors of Rotary several different years and headed numerous major committees, including the present chairmanship of the Children's Home committee.

Montgomery was one of the founders of the Downtown YMCA at 700 Guadalupe, serving on the first board of directors, and was president the past year.

His interest in founding a Downtown "Y" here dates back some 20 years.

Always active in the United Fund, Montgomery helped with the advanced gifts division nearly every year, and was chairman of the professional division in 1955.

Montgomery holds membership in the First Methodist Church.

He and his wife have a daughter, Mrs. Karl Amelang, who lives at 1914 Robbins Place.

News story on the suspected drowning death of Andy Montgomery
Austin Statesman, February 20, 1958

Montgomery's Shoe Discovered in Lake

Dragging for Body Continues at Scene

The first break in the Lake Austin search for missing civic leader Andrew (Andy) Montgomery resulted Friday morning when firemen conducting dragging operations discovered one of his shoes floating in the lake about 100 yards from Kennelwood Boat Docks.

The shoe, a canvas - topped, crepe - soled type popular with boatmen, was found floating against some cattails near the spot where Montgomery is believed to have drowned. The blue shoe was tentatively identified by Montgomery's son-in-law, Karl J. Amelang, who took it to the Montgomery home at 1900 San Gabriel for Mrs. Montgomery to see. When he returned, he said, "It is definitely his."

Assistant Fire Chief R. H. Dickerson said the area near where the shoe was found was given a thorough search Friday morning. "We've covered every inch of it," Dickerson said. He said also that divers searched under the dock and walkways again just in

case they may have overlooked something earlier. "The grappling hooks and divers might have missed him somehow," he added. Dickerson said it was improbable that a body would drift too far from the spot it went under since there is little current in the lake, but that the search area has been widened. He said firemen will receive help from boats of the Game and Fish Commission.

The search for Montgomery, 50, has been going on around the clock since his disappearance Wednesday night. He had gone to the docks Wednesday afternoon to work on his 21-foot cabin cruiser and was supposed to return home by 10 p. m. He telephoned a friend from the dock around 6:45 p. m. Wednesday, 45 minutes after he was last seen along the docks.

When her husband failed to come home, Mrs. Montgomery became alarmed and went down to the docks Thursday around 1 a. m.

The search for Montgomery began when Mrs. Montgomery, alarmed by his failure to return home, went to the docks in search of him Thursday around 1 a.m.

The search in the frigid waters and on the lake by the lake patrol — in the chance Montgomery may have gone out in another boat — have been fruitless. Found in Montgomery's cabin cruiser were his billfold, watch and a pair of trousers. In his car was a pair of dress shoes.

No evidence of foul play was found, Lieutenant Merle Wells, head of the police homicide squad, reported. Other officers said they thought Montgomery fell into the water from his boat. Searchers reported no current near the Kennelwood Docks strong enough to drift a body any distance. They estimated that it would take at least 72 hours for a drowned person to surface in the current weather.

Montgomery, a member of the firm of Robbins, Montgomery and Nieman Fire and Casualty Insurance Company, is a former president of the Austin Rotary Club, a member and former director of the Chamber of Commerce, a founder and past president of the Downtown YMCA, United Fund official and member of the First Methodist Church.

His home is at 1900 San Gabriel.

Front page news story on the continuing search for the presumed drowned body of Andy Montgomery

Austin Statesman, February 21, 1958

KEEP VIGIL**Search
Continues
For Body**

Firemen are keeping vigil on Lake Austin in two boats Monday as the search for Andrew (Andy) Montgomery continues.

Dragging operations were suspended Sunday after four days of fruitless grappling for the body of the 50-year-old insurance man and civic leader who was last heard from the past Wednesday at 6:45 p.m. as he worked on his boat at the Kennelwood Docks.

Searchers reported a grotesque development at the scene near noon Monday.

A "dummy," made up to look like a man, was found floating on the surface of the lake about 11:30 a.m. It was picked up by volunteer searchers on the west side of the lake near the mouth of Bee Creek.

One witness who was present when the dummy was brought to the police dock said it "looked like a dummy of the type used in 'Roundup Parades'."

Austin police Detective Lieutenant Merle Wells began an immediate investigation. Police said searchers on the lake reported no one was seen in the vicinity of the area where the dummy was found until a passing motorist, identified as L. A. Van, stopped his car to pull the cloth image out of the water.

Despite around-the-clock operations, only two articles of Montgomery's clothing have been turned up by searchers of the Austin police department, fire department, Department of Public Safety, the Game and Fish Commission and other volunteers.

A blue canvas shoe was found among reeds south of the boat docks Friday. Saturday a felt hat was found across the lake from the boat docks on the beach at Lake Austin Inn. Both articles were identified by members of Montgomery's family.

When the search for Montgomery began, firemen indicated that the body of a drowned person should take about 72 hours to surface. That deadline passed sometime during the night Saturday, and men manning the boats are scanning the lake should the body surface.

Front page news story on the continuing search for the presumed drowned body of Andy Montgomery

Austin Statesman, February 24, 1958

Andy Montgomery Seen by Bill Weeg

Missing Man Said In Denver

Veteran American-Statesman reporter William J. Weeg and his wife came face-to-face with Andrew (Andy) Montgomery, prominent Austin insurance executive and civic leader, on a downtown street in Denver, Colo.

The couple disclosed this new clue to Montgomery's disappearance, missing and feared drowned in Lake Austin the night of February 19, on their return Thursday from a vacation trip to the Western city.

"There is no doubt in our minds that it was Andy," Mrs. Weeg said. "He recognized us just as we recognized him," she said.

Reading from notes made immediately after the couple stood face-to-face with the man whose disappearance touched off one of the most extensive lake searches ever conducted here, Mrs. Weeg told in detail of the "shock" of seeing Montgomery on the busy Denver street.

It was the morning of August 7, the couple recalled from their notes of the incident. They had breakfast across the street from their hotel and began walking up 17th Street about 8:15 a. m. They had crossed several intersections and reached Champa Boulevard when Mrs. Weeg looked up to see a man facing her.

"Bill there's Andy," she shouted.

At the mention of the name—"Andy"—the man broke and ran diagonally across the street.

"It was hard to tell who was

more shocked by the unexpected meeting," Mrs. Weeg said. "You could tell by the look on his face that he recognized us just as we recognized him."

The Weegs chased after him calling his name as they ran down the street.

"We chased after him and he ran into the post office and out another door where he ran behind some mail trucks," Mrs. Weeg continued. "At this point Bill and I decided that we had no right to pursue him and returned to the hotel."

Mrs. Weeg said Montgomery wore a light gray suit, a straw hat and was carrying a brief case when they encountered him.

Both Weeg, a veteran reporter of over 30 years with the American and Statesman newspapers, and his wife said their identification was positive.

Montgomery's disappearance on the night of Feb. 19 touched off a giant search in Austin that made banner headlines in his hometown for weeks. He was last seen at the Kennelwood Boat Docks about 7 p. m. working on his boat, the Julia R. When he failed to return home as expected about midnight and his wife could not locate him at the docks, a search by firemen, policemen and dozens of volunteers was launched in an all-out effort to clear the mystery of his disappearance.

City firemen, battling the cold and rain of the late winter, worked round-the-clock for two weeks dragging the waters around the boat docks and down stream to the Tom Miller Dam. Volunteer skin divers from the State Game and Fish Commission and local Red Cross Chapter braved the cold waters in a two-day underwater search.

Except for items of clothing and a billfold found in his cabin cruiser indicating that Montgomery had fallen into the lake while working on his boat, the only clues turned up in the search were a shoe and a hat identified as those of the missing man. The shoe was found about 100 yards from the boat docks during the second day of search. The hat turned up on the opposite side of the lake several days later.

When a month passed and efforts to recover Montgomery's body proved negative, his family—wife, Mrs. Andrew Montgomery, and father, Dudley Montgomery, appealed to Mayor Tom Miller to bring in a Navy diving team to probe the channel of the lake from the boat dock down to the dam.

On March 19—one month to the day after Montgomery disappeared—a Navy lieutenant commander and four divers were dispatched to Austin from the Corpus Christi Naval Base at the request of Congressman Homer Thornberry.

Using the best equipment available for underwater search, the experts in their field spent almost a week renewed attempt to recover the missing man's body. The divers were withdrawn when their search proved equally fruitless.

While the search was underway at the lake scene Austin police, acting on widespread rumors circulating around the city that information relating to Montgomery's disappearance could be obtained in Denver, made a quiet but exhaustive investigation there. Top detectives from the Austin Criminal Investigation Division travelled to Denver to conduct a personal investigation. They were satisfied that Montgomery was not in Denver at that time.

Montgomery was a member of the firm of Robbins, Montgomery and Nieman Fire and Casualty Insurance Company at the time of his disappearance—an association of many years.

As a member of the Austin Chamber of Commerce, he served as director in 1947 and 1948 and was active on many committees, including fire prevention and city planning.

He joined the Austin Rotary Club in 1942 and was president of that organization in 1948-49. He was chosen to the board of directors of Rotary several different years and headed numerous major committees, including chairmanship of the Children's Home Committee at the time of his disappearance.

Montgomery was one of the founders of the Downtown YMCA at 700 Guadalupe Street, serving on the first board of directors and was president the past year. His interest in founding a "Downtown Y" dated back some 20 years.

The 50-year-old civic leader was always active in the United Fund where he helped with the advance gifts division nearly every year and was chairman of the professional division in 1955.

He held membership in the First Methodist Church.

Mrs. Montgomery lives at 1914 Robbins Place. At the time of his disappearance their daughter, Mrs. Karl Amelang, was residing in Austin with them. Mrs. Amelang and her husband have since moved to California where their first child was born.

Reporter Bill Weeg and his wife had known Montgomery for many years. Weeg frequently met Montgomery in his coverage of many of Austin's civic organizations where Montgomery was a member. Montgomery often called on Weeg at The American-Statesman office to discuss projects and programs with which he was connected in his civic club activities.

News story on the sighting of Andy Montgomery in Denver a few months after his presumed drowning

Austin Statesman, August 14, 1958

Mrs. Montgomery Files Claim Suit

Mrs. Andrew P. Montgomery, whose civic leader husband disappeared a year ago, filed suit Tuesday for full control of community property resulting from their long marriage.

The suit was filed in Judge Charles O. Betts' 98th District Court. No hearing date was immediately set.

Julia Montgomery files for full control of community property after Andy Montgomery's presumed drowning death
Austin Statesman, March 4, 1959

THE STATE OF TEXAS

To whom it may concern:

You, and each of you, are hereby notified that Cause No. 113,243, entitled *Ex Parte: Julia Robbins Montgomery*, being a Petition for authority to control community property, was duly filed in the 98th District Court of Travis County, Texas, on Feb. 27, 1959; the same being an action and prayer for authority to control the community property and estate of petitioner and Andrew P. Montgomery.

Petitioner alleges that she is the wife of Andrew P. Montgomery who disappeared February 19, 1958, under circumstances indicating he may have drowned and that his whereabouts have been and remained unknown to petitioner continuously for more than twelve months and that facts exist which entitle petitioner to control, manage and dispose of the community property of petitioner and Andrew P. Montgomery under the provisions of law.

Plaintiff prays for an order granting her full control and management and disposition of such community property, decreeing that she have the same powers with reference thereto as are conferred by law upon a husband and that her acts be as those of a feme sole, all of which more fully appears from petitioner's petition on file in this office and to which reference is here made.

AND WHEREAS, said Petition has been duly set for hearing before the Hon. Chas. O. Betts, Judge of said 98th District Court, at the Court House Annex, Steck Building, or at the County Courthouse at 11th and Guadalupe Street, Austin, Texas, at 10:00 o'clock A.M. Mar. 20, 1959;

THESE ARE THEREFORE, to Notify, and you, and each of you, the parties interested herein are hereby notified to be and appear before the Hon. Chas. O. Betts, Judge of said Court, at said place and time of hearing, heretofore set out, then and there to show cause, if any, why said application should not be granted as prayed for.

WITNESS, O. T. MARTIN JR., Clerk of the District Courts of Travis County, Texas.

Issued and given under my hand and seal of said Court at office in the City of Austin, this the 3rd day of March, A. D. 1959.

O. T. MARTIN JR.
Clerk District Court,
Travis County, Texas.
By Geo. W. Bickler, Deputy

Legal notice of Julia Montgomery's suit for title to all community property
Austin Statesman, March 11, 1959

Friend Says Andy May Not Be Back

By WRAY WEDDELL JR.

A close acquaintance of long missing civic leader Andrew P. Montgomery said Wednesday he doesn't expect him to return to Austin for at least two weeks and perhaps never.

Attorney William Kay Miller told The Austin Statesman that Montgomery is on a leisurely vacation trip on the West Coast with his wife with whom he was reunited two weeks ago—14 months after he was presumed drowned in Lake Austin.

Miller had talked with Mrs. Montgomery in California. "I got the distinct impression he would not come back here right away," he said.

"If he does come back," said the lawyer, "it probably would be for a very brief visit."

"She told me they had no idea of living here at all," Miller said, quoting Mrs. Montgomery.

It was disclosed Tuesday that Montgomery was reunited with his wife at Menlo Park, Calif., at the home of their daughter, Mrs. Karl Amelang.

Fifty-one-year-old Montgomery—prominent in the insurance business and civic affairs here for years—vanished on a rainy Feb. 19, 1958, after telling friends he was going to the lake to work on his boat.

An intensive search turned up a shoe and a hat identified as his

but no other clues to what happened to him.

In an unusual written statement put out in California and signed by Montgomery and his wife this explanation was given:

"He now frankly explains that at the time of his disappearance he had simply gone to pieces and just could not think straight. At that moment the only hope seemed to lie in a complete break from his environment.

"Not until months later, after having had time to regain perspective, did he fully realize that his departure must have caused the great concern it did among his relatives and friends."

Miller—Montgomery's long time friend and legal counselor—said Montgomery went straight from Austin to New Orleans where he worked until last October.

From October until two weeks ago when he joined his wife in California Montgomery "wandered around" from city to city in the South, said Miller.

At no time was he in Denver as had been reported, the attorney said.

The extraordinary statement said Montgomery had been employed "in several southern cities" and had told no one, including his family, of his whereabouts.

"Contrary to rumors circulated

in Austin, at no time during that period was he ever west of the Mississippi," said the statement.

It concluded: "Both Mr. and Mrs. Montgomery are deeply grateful to all those in Austin who have given so generously to their help during the past year. They hope that now their need for privacy will be understood and respected."

The statement that Montgomery had not been west of the Mississippi during his 14 months disappearance conflicted with the story of a veteran Austin Statesman reporter, William J. Weeg, who had known Montgomery for many years.

Weeg and his wife reported having seen Montgomery on a Denver street while on a vacation trip last August.

Mrs. Weeg said at the time, "There is no doubt in our minds that it was Andy. He recognized us just as we recognized him."

Attorney Miller said Wednesday that Weeg was mistaken.

Reporter Weeg said: "We still stand by our statement."

News story on the future plans of Andy and Julia Montgomery after he resurfaced after his presumed drowning.

Austin Statesman, May 6, 1959

ABOUT ANDY

'I Never Lost Faith'

By LORRAINE BARNES

A telephone call that first went unanswered in an empty house finally brought the Andrew P. Montgomery family to a happy reunion and new confidence in the future.

Mrs. Montgomery Monday de-

scribed the ringing of the phone as an expression of heartfelt and lifelong religious faith—a faith that sustained her through many months when she believed her husband was dead.

"I never once lost faith in God or in my husband," she said with radiant assurance.

Montgomery, 51-year-old civic leader and Austin business man, was believed drowned 14 months ago when he disappeared from a boat dock on Lake Austin. A prolonged search of the lake area, including dragging operations, was futile. Then, early in May, the couple sent word that they had been reunited in Menlo Park, Calif., and were making plans to take up their life together in a new home and amid new associations.

In a statement May 4 Montgomery explained that at the time of his disappearance he had "simply gone to pieces" and "just could not think straight."

Mrs. Montgomery returned to Austin Sunday to put the couple's Austin home on the market and make arrangements to move their furniture to California. She was accompanied by the couple's daughter, Mrs. Karl Amelang, and Mrs. Amelang's baby son, Andrew.

Montgomery remained in Menlo Park with his son-in-law. He had planned to make the trip back to Austin, too, Mrs. Montgomery said, but then decided to stay on the West Coast to look for various business opportunities and find a place to live.

When Montgomery first attempted to contact his family, he put in a long distance telephone call to the couple's house at 1900 San Gabriel. There was no answer because Mrs. Montgomery was then visiting her daughter in California.

"Andy had already gone to a clergyman and talked with him. Andy was always a religious person and seeking a minister's advice was the natural thing for him to do," Mrs. Montgomery said.

When the Austin call could not be completed, Montgomery then The elder Montgomery contacted his daughter-in-law and told Mrs. telephoned his father, Dudley

Montgomery, in Madison, Wis. Montgomery her husband was alive and well. It was a profoundly moving experience — al-

most stunning in its impact—and it was followed by another call and happy conversation with her husband.

"I had come to know by that time that if Andy was himself I could count on him," Mrs. Montgomery said. "Now he is himself again, and there is the greatest humility and gladness in our hearts for God's goodness."

She said that while she was reluctant to discuss a deeply personal matter in an interview, "other people facing sorrow and sadness may learn what faith means also."

Mrs. Montgomery plans to remain in Austin only long enough to complete moving arrangements—probably a few weeks. The family's business interests and other property may also be disposed of but perhaps at a later date.

News story on the reunion of Andy and Julia Montgomery
Austin Statesman, May 18, 1959

Andrew P. Montgomery

Andrew P. Montgomery, 76, entered into rest on August 31, 1988. Born in Madison, Wisconsin, on June 16, 1912,

He married Julia Robbins of Austin, Texas, on December 27, 1933; and lived there 25 years, where he was a partner in the firm of Robbins, Montgomery Insurance Agency.

Andy was always active in church and civic affairs. He taught Sunday School and was on the board of First Methodist Church. He was past president of Austin Rotary, past president of the Austin Country Club, and was

active with the Austin YMCA, Salvation Army, and other charitable organizations.

In 1959, Andy moved to California to retire, residing in Atherton and Redding. He was active in the First Methodist Church of Palo Alto, as well as the Moose Lodge and American Legion in Redding.

Andy is survived by his devoted wife, Clara; daughter and son-in-law, Julia and Karl Amelang; stepson, Kurt Grossen; grandchildren, Andrew Amelang, Julia Brewater and Adele Amelang; seven great-grandchildren; and sisters, Mary Lobb and Elizabeth Ward.

Services will be at McDonald's Chapel on Saturday, September 3, at 11:00 AM. Interment at Redding Cemetery.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests that donations be made to the American Cancer Society, 3290 Bechtell Lane, Redding, California 96002.

Obituary of Andy Montgomery
Austin American-Statesman, September 3, 1988

R. Brown and Julia Robbins (ca. 1948 – ca. 1958)

The 1910 U.S. Census shows Brown and Julia Robbins renting the house at 702 West Avenue in Austin. Brown Robbins was 28, had been born in Texas, and was a real estate agent. Julia Robbins was 25, had been born in Texas, and had no occupation listed. They had a daughter, Julia E., 2, who had been born in Texas. Julia E. Robbins went on to marry Andrew P. Montgomery.

His 1918 World War I draft registration card shows that Richard Brown Robbins was living at 811 Riverside Drive in Austin. He was born in 1881, and was in the fire insurance business at 618 Colorado Street in Austin. Julia D. Robbins is listed as his wife. He was tall and slender with dark brown hair and gray eyes.

By 1920, Brown and Julia Robbins were living in Wichita Falls, Texas, where Brown was a real estate agent. He was 36, and had been born in Texas. Julia Robbins was 33, had been born in Texas, and had no occupation listed. Their daughter, Julia, was 12.

Brown and Julia Robbins appear in the 1930 U.S. census as the owners of the house at 1900 San Gabriel Street in Austin; their house was worth \$12,000. It is shown on Sanborn maps as a two-story stucco house, but it is no longer standing. Brown Robbins was 48, had been born in Texas,

and was an insurance man. Julia Robbins, 45, had been born in Texas and had no occupation listed. Their daughter, Julia, 22, had been born in Texas and had no occupation listed.

The 1940 U.S. Census shows R.B. and Julia Robbins as the owners of the house at 1900 San Gabriel Street; it was worth \$12,000. R.B. Robbins was 59, had been born in Texas, and was an insurance and real estate salesman. Julia Robbins was 54, had been born in Texas, and had no occupation listed. Their daughter, Julia, had married Andy Montgomery, and was living in this house, 1911 Robbins Place, at the time of the census report.

His 1954 death certificate shows that R. Brown Robbins was living at this address at the time of his death. He was born in Texas in 1881 and was a partner in an insurance company.

BROWN ROBBINS NAMED AS THE CHIEF CLERK

HE WILL SUCCEED MAJOR ROBERDEAU—APPOINTMENT WILL CAUSE PROMOTIONS ALL ALONG LINE IN DEPARTMENT.

State Treasurer Robbins, as indicated in *The Statesman*, announced the appointment yesterday morning of his son, Brown Robbins, to be chief clerk of the treasury department, to succeed Major Roger Roberdeau, who resigned a short time ago to accept the position of assistant cashier of the American National bank of Austin.

Brown Robbins was the chief bookkeeper in the department, and following out Treasurer Robbins' policy of civil service, the appointment caused a number of promotions to be made in the office. R. C. Lomax was promoted from assistant chief bookkeeper of the land department to be chief bookkeeper; H. A. Turner, clerk of the land department, was promoted to be assistant chief bookkeeper, succeeding Lomax; Wallace English was promoted to succeed Turner, and Arthur Taylor of Amarillo was appointed by the treasurer to succeed English.

With these promotions there is an increase in salary of each of the above employees. These changes become effective on November 15, 1905.

News story on the appointment of Brown Robbins as the chief clerk of the State Treasury Department

Austin Statesman, November 14, 1905

BROWN ROBBINS WILL BE MARRIED TONIGHT

HE LEFT WITH HIS GROOMSMEN
FOR BASTROP—MISS JULIA
EILERS IS TO BE HIS BRIDE.
LEADING SOCIETY EVENT.

Brown Robbins, chief clerk in the treasury department, and son of Treasurer Robbins, left yesterday for Bastrop, where he will tonight be united in marriage to Miss Julia Eilers, an accomplished young lady of that place. The ceremony will be celebrated at the Methodist church and will be a leading society event. Accompanying Mr. Robbins were Oscar Hudnall, Leonard Robbins, Oscar Robinson and Holland Turner. Leonard Robbins will act as best man and the others will act as groomsmen.

During the absence of Mr. Robbins Colonel Harry Haynes will act as chief clerk of the treasury department.

News of the marriage of Brown Robbins and Julia Eilers in Bastrop, Texas
Austin Statesman, June 6, 1906

AUSTIN'S NEED

Brown Robbins Joins Plea For Auditorium Here

An auditorium of adequate seating capacity to entertain conventions and accommodate concerts and other large public gatherings is the greatest need in Austin today in the opinion of R. Brown Robbins, director of the Austin Chamber of Commerce.

"The other night I went out to hear Morris Sheppard who spoke in the university men's gymnasium," he asserted. "I was more than ever impressed with the need of an auditorium here when I saw a distinguished speaker deliver an address in that gymnasium and the crowd forced to sit closely packed in that place."

Brown Robbins, as head of the Austin Chamber of Commerce, makes a plea for a municipal auditorium.

Austin Statesman, June 9, 1927

BROWN ROBBINS PROUD OF AUSTIN

Brown Robbins, new president of the Rotary club, member of the executive committee of the \$4,250,000 bond issue campaign, and one of the speakers employed frequently during the campaign, was as full of that Onward Austin spirit as any one else in the city Saturday morning.

"If you're going to say anything, say this," Mr. Robbins said.

"I am proud of the citizenship of Austin, and I love that fine group of hard-working, patriotic men who led the fight for the bonds. The voters of our city have shown fine confidence in their leaders, and such confidence must never be betrayed. A great challenge is presented to our present city officials and I am sure that they will discharge such obligations with credit to themselves and increasing value to the city."

Mr. Robbins' principal appeal during the campaign was for the voters to consider the type of men advising them to vote for the bonds, and to weigh in their own minds if these men would advocate anything which would injure Austin.

Brown Robbins, as president of the Rotary Club, voices his pride in Austin
Austin Statesman, May 18, 1928

Robbins Company Office Remodeled

Attractive Fixtures Are Installed

Since being remodeled the office of The Robbins company, pioneer insurance, rental, and real estate firm, is one of the most attractive in the entire city.

An entire new front has been put in, latest type desks and other equipment installed and attractive counters built in. The suite of offices has been attractively decorated, new floors laid and an up-to-date system of lighting installed.

Particular attention was given to lighting, ventilation, comfortable working conditions and efficiency of service when plans were drawn for the improvements, declares Brown Robbins, member of the firm.

Owners of the business are Brown Robbins and Leonard Robbins. Office personnel includes A. P. Montgomery, cashier, J. W. Grenwelge, rentals; W. Edgar Parker, real estate; Mary Mangelsdorf, policy writer; Ella Dittmar, office secretary.

The Robbins Company, headed by Brown Robbins, remodels their offices at 618 Colorado Street.

Austin American-Statesman, August 22, 1937

**Robbins
Puts Ideas
On Wing**

THE DAY before Brown Robbins was nine years old, the boy, his father and a Negro helper stepped off a freight train at a switch on the Fort Worth and Denver Railway. They alighted on barren mesquite land in northwest Texas. Their mission was to build a house about one-half mile from the switch and eight miles west of Vernon in Wilbarger County, which was to be the new home for the John W. Robbins family.

This last night in February, 1890, was bitter cold. Young Robbins walked a quarter mile to the house where he was to spend the night. His chin became set as he walked against the icy gusts that swept the sandy land. He could hardly open his mouth for the rest of the night.

Brown Robbins grew up with a firm set to his jaw and a willingness to express an opinion regardless of the circumstances.

Now, 58 year later, he reflects that his has been a rather hectic life. "I'm not complaining. I wanted it to be a hard job, and it has been."

That goes back to the first money he ever earned. He did that by skinning a skunk which three Italians, Dalamasco, Bonetto and Ringo bought. They paid him 35 cents for the pelt.

"I smelled bad for three weeks," Robbins recalls.

After the family moved to the finished house, he spent the next nine years milking three or four cows before daybreak, hauling drinking water, plowing and planting during the day, and milking again after dark.

He squeezed in time to attend a little country school and then the high school at Vernon.

John W. Robbins was elected state treasurer when his son was 18. When Brown heard of his father's success he was atop a wheat stack with a bandanna around his neck, goggles over his eyes, and a handkerchief over his nose—pitching wheat to an independent thresher.

The family moved to Austin in late December, 1898. Young Robbins arrived on a freight train the day before Christmas. He had ridden the train along with the household furniture and four horses so that he might feed and water the stock.

He entered Austin High School which was being conducted in the old temporary Capitol Building at the head of Congress Avenue.

The elder Robbins had acquired a sizeable debt in this race. As long as Brown Robbins can remember a debt in the family has been a blight that must be exterminated at all costs.

So it was decided that young Robbins quit the public schools and take a business course. This he did and entered Griffith's College of Commerce. On New Year's Day, 1900, he went to work for his father. Five years later he became chief clerk and cashier, succeeding the later Major Roger C. Roberdeau who had resigned to become cashier of the American National Bank.

Brown Robbins is a walking example that a college education is not the prerequisite of a flexible and intelligent mind.

While he says of himself "Frugality and industry are basic in life," he has an understanding tolerance of those who might not live by as stern a code.

His words are sermons at times,

but he does not preach. Fellow members of the Rotary Club know that when he speaks his words will be tinged with religious fervor. They do not feel preached to because his speech is simple and unembellished.

Robbins regards The Sermon on the Mount as the greatest utterance of all mankind. He is more likely to describe a person as having a sense of justice and mercy rather than as a man who plays a good game of golf.

Through good business judgment and frugality Brown Robbins had amassed \$10,000 in cash at the age of 24. So in 1906 when his father voluntarily retired as state treasurer, the pair entered the real estate and insurance business in Austin in partnership with General William H. Stacy. This was shortly after Brown married Julia Eilers, daughter of a Bastrop merchant.

The three partners were together for almost 10 years when the firm failed owing \$110,000. John Robbins retired from the firm and became the first financial agent of Southern Methodist University, and the second son, Leonard, took over his father's interest. A year later the brothers bought out General Stacy and the firm was renamed the Robbins Company.

With debts once again piled high, Brown Robbins had a nervous breakdown. His friends advised him to leave Austin, feeling the change would do him good. Sam Sparks suggested he go to Wichita Falls where the Burkburnett oil boom was underway. Will Caswell loaned him \$2,000 to start him in business there, and Robbins went.

He set up a real estate and insurance business similar to the one in Austin. He dealt in oil stocks and royalties. Nine months passed before his wife and daughter, Peachie, joined him. When the family arrived, they moved into a garage. Mrs. Robbins cooked under the eaves of the garage, getting up early in the morning and going to her outside stove in both good and rainy weather. A year later the third brother, Horace Robbins, joined the Wichita Falls firm.

Peachie was approaching college age at this time and her father was anxious to return to Austin so she might attend the University. His youngest brother, Walter Robbins, meanwhile had been in partnership with Leonard. Walter joined Horace in Wichita Falls, and Brown returned to Austin and his association with Leonard. These same two set-ups exist today.

Again by frugality and judgment Brown Robbins had turned the \$2,000 borrowed money into \$65,000 between January of 1919 and September of 1920. With enough hard work and heartbreaks behind to last the average man two life-times, everyone expected Brown to settle down to the life he deserved.

Not Brown Robbins. He poured the \$65,000 earnings into the sink-hole of his previous despair. In ten years Leonard and Brown Robbins paid off the old debt, although three Austin banks had charged the \$110,000 off to profit and loss seven years previously.

Even though the debt was legally cleared, the two wanted it cleared in dollars and cents.

The Robbins Company prospered, and in 1928 the Brown Robbins family went to Europe. That same year Brown was president of the Austin Rotary Club. To date, he has been a member of the Board of Stewards of the First Methodist Church for 40 years, has served several times as a member of the Board of Directors of the Austin Chamber of Commerce, was a member of the first Board of Directors of the Central Bank and Trust Company of Austin and is a member of the Town and Gown Club.

Robbins' interest in his fellow man is world-wide in scope. As one of the best informed men in Austin on economic and political shadings, he wants to swap opinions with any acquaintance he runs across. He is so earnest in this that he is often frustrated by what he believes is indifference to events which shape our everyday lives.

But in his preoccupation he also remembers the little things. He went to a great deal of trouble recently to find out the name of the boy who delivered his newspaper.

"He's a most decent fellow," he said. "When it's raining he sticks my paper in the screen door. I want to do something for him."

Although so far as Robbins is concerned life is real and earnest, he has a saving sense of humor which those in the office know and respect. There are two standing jokes with which he is well acquainted. His desk is a maze of clutter which only he can solve. When a particular piece of information is missing, son-in-law Andy Montgomery or Miss Mary Mangelsdorf will say:

"It's probably on Mr. Brown's desk."

Robbins also has a weakness for names. When a man's handle slips

from his tongue, he will introduce that person as "Mr. Smith." When a customer he should know, but doesn't, comes in, Robbins will whisper in Andy's ear:

"Now it's not Smith—who is he?"

His daughter Peachie married Andy Montgomery. There is a granddaughter, Julie Robbins Montgomery, who is her grandfather's hobby, and can twist the elder Robbins around her pretty finger.

Before Julia, Robbins' hobbies were hunting and golfing. In golf his style was so unorthodox that it is still legend around the Country Club. Alan Fraser, recently appointed District Attorney at Alpine, once described Robbins' stance thus:

"Brown is the only man who can expose his southern extremity to the green, fire at E. H. Perry's home, and make a par on the hole."

Robbins once made a hole-in-one and bragged to his friends—until someone showed him Morris Williams' account of it in the newspaper. It was described in glowing terms until the very last sentence, which said:

"Harry Bickler was with Robbins when the accident occurred."

Some of his hunting companions were Dr. Joe Gilbert, Horace Robbins, W. V. Brenizer, Will and Haskell Caswell, and they always took along a cook named Will Turner. Turner always liked to have a big fire going and the group finally discovered it was because of a fear of the dark.

So they decided to frame Turner, send him down to the tank for water, and delegated Robbins to trail the cook and hide behind a tree. As Turner came back up the trail Robbins jumped from the shadows and made an eerie sound.

Without dropping his bucket Turner leveled a six-shooter and said, "Drop to your knees, big boy."

Robbins did, hastily identifying himself at the same time.

Robbins' deep devotion to his family caused his most embarrassing moment. Returning from California Peachie went forward to the club car and was followed a few minutes later by her father. He saw her reading a magazine and could not resist an impulse to kiss her on the forehead.

Figuratively, Brown was on his knees a second time, apologizing. It was not Peachie, but someone who resembled her. Nothing would do for him but that he round up both Peachie and Mrs. Robbins and introduce them to the girl he had kissed.

MARGARET MAYER.



Brown Robbins analyzes a policy. Son-in-law Andrew Montgomery, right, double-checks.

Story on the career of Brown Robbins
Austin American-Statesman, January 11, 1948



RICHARD B. ROBBINS
... claimed by death ...

RICHARD BROWN ROBBINS DIES; FUNERAL TUESDAY

Richard Brown Robbins, 73, well known insurance man and senior member of the firm of the Robbins-Montgomery Company, died at his home, 1911 Robbins Place, Monday at 3 p.m. after an extended illness.

Funeral services will be held at the Cook Funeral Home Tues-

day at 10 a.m.

Pallbearers will be W. T. Caswell, H. P. Bickler, Judge James W. McClendon, J. E. (Pete) Smith, North Millican, John H. Chiles Sr., John C. Ross, William Kay Miller, Gordon McNutt, Richard Dan Maxson, Dr. Matthew Kreisle, Dr. Jim Kreisle, Dr. Warren Jackson and Dr. Sam Key Sr.

Born Near Tyler

Robbins was born on a farm near Tyler, March 1, 1881, the son of former State Treasurer John W. Robbins and Sarah Long Robbins. In 1890 the family moved to Vernon and on Christmas eve 1898 they came to Austin after the elder Robbins had been elected State Treasurer.

He attended the public schools here and a business college in Austin then known as Griffiths College of Commerce. In 1906 he became chief clerk in the State Treasurer's office, succeeding Roger Roberdeau.

In June 1906, he married Julia Duncan Eilers of Bastrop, who survives him.

He is also survived by a daughter, Mrs. Andrew P. Montgomery; a granddaughter, Julia Robbins Montgomery; and two brothers, Horrace Robbins and Walter Robbins, both of Wichita Falls, and by Mrs. John W. Robbins of Austin.

Insurance Entry

Robbins first entry into the insurance business was on Nov. 1, 1907, as a member of the Stacy-Robbins-Covert Insurance Company which later became the Stacy-Robbins Company, and finally The Robbins Company, composed of himself and his brother, Leonard Robbins. That partnership continued until the death of Leonard Robbins in February, 1948. At that time, Andy Montgomery, son-in-law of Brown Robbins, acquired the interest of Leonard Robbins and became a member of the firm. Recently the name has been changed to the Robbins-Montgomery Company.

Brown Robbins was active in civic affairs and the growth of Austin for the past 45 years. He was an active member of the Board of Stewards of the First Methodist Church for 30 years. He was a former president of the Austin Rotary Club, a member of the Austin School Board, a director of the Austin Chamber of Commerce, a member of the Town and Gown Club, and a 32nd Degree Mason.

Obituary of R. Brown Robbins
Austin American, June 1, 1954

Robbins Rites Held Today By Dr. Vance

Funeral services were held Tuesday morning at the Cook Funeral Home for Richard Brown Robbins, 73, well-known insurance man, who died Monday at 3 p. m. at his home, 1911 Robbins Place, after an extended illness.

Robbins was the senior member of the firm of The Robbins-Montgomery Company at his death.

The funeral rites were conducted by Dr. Marvin Vance, pastor of First Methodist Church. Burial was in Oakwood Cemetery.

Pallbearers

Pallbearers were W. T. Caswell, H. P. Bickler, Judge James W. McClendon, J. E. (Pete) Smith, North Millican, John H. Chiles Sr., John C. Ross, William Kay Miller, Gordon McNutt, Richard Dan Maxson, Dr. Matthew Kreisle, Dr. Jim Kreisle, Dr. Warren Jackson and Dr. Sam Key Sr.

Robbins was born on a farm near Tyler, March 1, 1881, the son of former State Treasurer John W. Robbins and Sarah Long Robbins. In 1890 the family moved to Vernon and on Christmas Eve they came to Austin after the elder Robbins had been elected state treasurer.

Robbins is survived by his widow; a daughter, Mrs. Andrew P. Montgomery; a granddaughter, Julia Robbins Montgomery; and two brothers, Horrace Robbins and Walter Robbins, both of Wichita Falls, and by Mrs. John W. Robbins of Austin.

After the family came to Austin Robbins attended the public schools here and a business college in Austin known as Griffiths College of Commerce. In 1906 he became chief clerk in the state treasurer's office, succeeding Roger Roberdeau of Austin.

In June 1906, he married Julia Duncan Eilers of Bastrop who survives him.

His first entry into the insurance business was on Nov. 1, 1907 as a member of the Stacy-Robbins-Covert Insurance Company which later became the Stacy-Robbins Company, and finally The Robbins Company, composed of himself and his brother, Leonard Robbins. That partnership continued until the death of Leonard Robbins in February, 1948.

Son-in-Law Enters

At that time Andy Montgomery, son-in-law of Brown Robbins, acquired the interest of Leonard Robbins and became a member of the firm. Recently the name has been changed to the Robbins-Montgomery Company.

Brown Robbins was active in civic affairs and the growth of Austin for the past 45 years. He was an active member of the board of stewards of the First Methodist Church for 30 years.

He was a former president of the Austin Rotary Club, a member of the Austin School Board, a director of the Austin Chamber of Commerce, a member of the Town and Gown Club, and a 32nd degree Mason.

Story on the funeral and career of Brown Robbins
Austin Statesman, June 1, 1954



MRS. R. BROWN ROBBINS

Austinite Succumbs In Hospital

Mrs. R. Brown Robbins of 1911
Robbins Place, wife of the late Brown Robbins, died Friday morning in an Austin hospital.

She was the former Julia Duncan Eilers, daughter of Louis Eilers and Emma Duncan Eilers, born in Bastrop April 9, 1885. Mrs. Robbins spent her childhood and primary school years in Bastrop and later attended St. Mary's Academy in Austin and Belmont College in Nashville, Tenn. She also attended the New England Conservatory in Boston, Mass., where she studied voice and the piano.

She came to Austin as a bride in 1906.

Deeply interested in the fine arts and the cultural development of the city, Mrs. Robbins gave her talent and support to many community activities. She was soloist for many years in the First Methodist, the First Baptist and the Southern Presbyterian churches, was a charter member of the Amateur Choral Club, the Austin Musical Festival, the Lotus Club and the Open Forum, and was a former member of the board of the YWCA and the Austin Art League.

She is survived by one daughter, Mrs. Andrew P. Montgomery of Austin; one granddaughter, Mrs. Karl J. Amelang of Menlo Park, Calif., and one great-grandson, Karl Andrew Amelang.

The funeral service will be private with only members of the family attending the graveside rites in Oakwood Cemetery. The family has requested that flowers not be sent. Dr. Marvin Vance of the First Methodist Church will conduct the service.

Obituary of Julia Robbins
Austin American, December 27, 1958

Mrs. Robbins Private Rites Held Saturday

Private funeral services for Mrs. R. Brown Robbins, wife of the late Brown Robbins, were held Saturday in Oakwood Cemetery with only members of the family attending the graveside rites.

Mrs. Robbins died Friday morning in an Austin hospital.

She was the former Julia Duncan Eilers, daughter of Louis Eilers and Emma Duncan Eilers, and was born in Bastrop April 9, 1885. Mrs. Robbins spent her childhood and primary years in Bastrop and later attended St. Mary's Academy in Austin and Belmont College in Nashville, Tenn. She also attended the New England Conservatory in Boston, Mass., where she studied voice and the piano.

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Story on the funeral of Julia Robbins
Austin Statesman, December 27, 1958