

**HISTORIC LANDMARK COMMISSION
DEMOLITION AND RELOCATION PERMITS
APRIL 26, 2021
HR-2021 044092
2040 EAST CESAR CHAVEZ STREET**

PROPOSAL

Demolish a ca. 1926-27 house.

ARCHITECTURE

One-story National Folk residence clad in board-and-batten siding. It features a pyramidal hipped roof clad in corrugated metal, exposed rafter tails, an inset partial-width porch supported by boxed columns, and screened 1:1 windows.

RESEARCH

The house at 2040 East Cesar Chavez Street was constructed around 1927 by Christian and Charlotte Kofahl for their family. The Kofahls were both born in Oldsloe, Germany and settled in Austin in 1878; Christian Kofahl was a successful barber and operated several barbershops and ladies' hair salons, including for the Driskill. Kofahl was an active member of the German Lutheran church, serving as one of the first elders of St. Martin's Evangelical Lutheran Church; the organization's first building of worship was constructed in 1885 on land donated by Christian Kofahl. Kofahl died in 1930, and his family vacated the home.

From 1932 into the 1940s, the property became primarily a rental house, with short-term residents including electricians, mechanics, salesmen, and bookkeepers. During the 1940s, it was occupied by a serviceman, a firefighter, and a driver and their families. By 1954, Otis Roe lived in the home and operated his service station across the street at 2027 East Cesar Chavez Street. In 1957, Albert G. and Zelma Gonzales purchased the house; they sold it two years later to Rosa M. Gillian.

STAFF COMMENTS

The 2016 East Austin historic resource survey lists the property as eligible for local landmark designation and individual listing on the National Register of Historic Places, as well as contributing to a potential local historic district and contributing to a potential National Register Historic District. The survey lists architecture and historical associations as qualifying NRHP criteria.

Designation Criteria—Historic Landmark

- 1) The building is more than 50 years old.
- 2) The building appears to retain high to moderate integrity.
- 3) Properties must meet two criteria for landmark designation (LDC §25-2-352). Staff has evaluated the property and determined that it may meet two criteria:
 - a. *Architecture.* The building is constructed in the National Folk style.
 - b. *Historical association.* The East Austin survey identifies the property's occupancy history as an example of demographic changes and settlement patterns among working- to middle-class renters in East Austin during the twentieth century.
 - c. *Archaeology.* The property was not evaluated for its potential to yield significant data concerning the human history or prehistory of the region.
 - d. *Community value.* The property 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 RECOMMENDATION

Consider initiation of historic zoning. Should the Commission choose to release the demolition permit, require completion of a City of Austin Documentation Package prior to permit issuance.

LOCATION MAP



PROPERTY INFORMATION

Photos



Google Street View, 2020



Applicant, 2020

Occupancy History: H-H-M, Inc., 2016 and Historic Preservation Office, 2021

- 1959 Rosa M. Gillian, owner
- 1957 Albert G. and Zelma Gonzales, owners
Mary J. Denson, renter
- 1954 Otis Roe
Proprietor, Otis Roe Service Station, 2027 E Cesar Chavez
- 1955 Mary J. Denson, renter (widow Bert D.)
- 1952 Harvey B. and Lottie P. Witcher, renters
Janitor, UT
Mrs. Lizzie Boyle, renter (wid. William)
- 1949 Harris R. and Alma Ward, renters
Driver
Lizzie A. Boyle, renter (wid. William)
- 1947 Raymond W. and Geneva Long, renters
Fireman, SP Lines
- 1944 Woodrow Anderson, renter
USA
Joseph and Violet Long, renters
Guard
- 1942 Charles W. and Edna D. White
Bookkeeper, Aransas Compress Co.
- 1941 Address not listed
- 1940 Horace E. and Ethel Miller, owners
Salesman, L. East Produce Co
- 1937 Listed as 2108 E 1st on Sanborn map
H. E. and Ethel Miller, renter
Deliveryman, L. East Produce Co.
- 1935 Vacant
- 1932 Joseph L. and Marion Barnett, renters
Meter mechanic, Texas Public Service Co.
Doyle H. and Annie Barnett, renters
Electrician
- 1929 Christian and Charlotte Kofahl, owners
Notary
Chris B. Easton, renter (son-in-law)
- 1927 Address not listed

Biographical Information

**MR. AND MRS. KOFAHL
CELEBRATE GOLDEN WEDDING.**

A golden wedding day is one to be fittingly celebrated and on Friday evening, August 18, the golden wedding of Mr. and Mrs. Christian Kofahl, long time residents of Austin was celebrated with a reception at their home, 311 East First street from 6 to 9 o'clock. Elaborate invitations in gold were sent out for the occasion, and the many friends of the couple called to offer their congratulations and best wishes upon such a momentous day. Beautiful gifts and flowers and messages were received, and most of the family, with the exception of two sons, Charles A. of San Francisco and Harry J. of San Diego, Cal., were present.

Among the gifts was a beautiful rug presented by the members of Windhurst Lodge of which Mr. Kofahl had been secretary for many years.

The house was decorated with marigolds in charming effect, a golden wedding bell made of marigolds forming a feature of the decorations.

Refreshments consisting of dainty sandwiches, cake and fruit punch were served the callers.

Among the children present were: Chris Kofahl, Jr., with his wife and married daughter and her husband, Mr. and Mrs. Joe Goerner, all of Houston and Mrs. J. D. Boston of Austin, the only daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Kofahl. Mr. and Mrs. Christian Kofahl were both born in 1850 in the city of Odesloe, Holstein, Germany, went to school and were confirmed together in the same church. Mr. Kofahl when he was nineteen was touched by a diphtheria, and went to Copenhagen, Denmark where he spent 18 months, and then to London, England. After sojourn there, he started for New York where he landed in April 1871. The first thing he did was to apply for naturalization papers. In 1872, after he had established himself in business, he sent for his bride. She traveled alone by Hamburg steamer and arrived in New York August 11. After staying with friends a few days they were married on August 18, 1872, just fifty years ago. In 1878, Mr. Kofahl became ill from pneumonia, and after he had recovered sufficiently to travel, and upon the doctor's advice, he left New York arriving in Austin with his wife and four-year-old son. Regaining his health completely, Mr. Kofahl decided to make Austin his home, and here he and his wife have resided until the present.

Austin, Texas, June 6, 1901.

We, the undersigned barbers, agree to close our shops from June 13 to October 1 at 7 p. m.; Saturdays at 11 p. m.:

O. B. Smith.
J. H. Gassaway.
Smith & Zimmerman.
Robert Harrison.
W. A. Turner.
Victor H. Kleabe.
James H. Johnson & Son.
Burnham Bros.
Chris Kofahl.

Austin Daily Statesman, Jun 10, 1901; *The Austin Statesman* (1921-1973); Aug 20, 1922;

BUILDING PERMITS ISSUED

Orin E. Metcalfe, City Engineer

Alec Teich, 1704 Frances street, residence, \$3368.

H. L. Maufrais, 908 Maufrais, residence, \$1200.

Fred C. Malone, 604 Travis Lane, residence, \$2350.

Fred C. Malone, 605 Travis Lane, residence, \$2350.

W. C. Bull, 613 East 21st street, residence, \$2100.

S. E. Basey, 1008 West 34th street, residence and store, \$2500.

H. A. Butcher, 1016 West 30th street, galvanized iron shed, \$20.

Chris Kofahl, 2108 East First street, garage, \$75.

CLOSE in, residence of 6 rooms, hall and bath; all conveniences; on main car line. Chris Kofahl, 2108 East First.

The Austin Statesman, Jan 31, 1927 and Feb 15, 1928

Chris Kofahl Observes Fiftieth Anniversary of Arrival in Austin

Fifty years ago this Sunday Chris Kofahl came to Austin from New York City with his wife and four year old son. Mr. Kofahl was affected with lung trouble and had been advised to leave for another climate before the March winds there, like our northers, set in.

The change did him good, but it took nearly a year to restore him to proper health, so he decided to stay here permanently. He never regretted it and has been gone only a few times for short visits.

Mr. Kofahl was engaged in the barber business and has had several shops, including one for 14 years in the Driskill hotel.

On account of trouble with his eyes he was forced to give up his business five years ago, and has had to confine himself to a little work at home with his flowers and shrubbery, a work that he always enjoyed. His yard was complimented by many.

Mr. Kofahl has always been interested in the welfare of the city, and has taken active part in the upbuilding and general improvement of Austin. Among other things he worked hard for the building of the dam and for the change of the old aldermanic form of government to a commission form in 1909, serving on several committees.

Born in Oldesloe, near Hamburg, on March 12, 1850, he left home in 1869 after serving his term in the German army, going to Copenhagen where he stayed two years. From there he went to London to learn the English language, preparing to go to New York where he arrived in 1871.

The following year after establishing himself in business, he sent for his wife whom he had known since childhood. She was born in the same town, and they went to school together and were confirmed in the same church. After he left home they corresponded regularly, looking forward to their marriage as soon as he had prepared

the "nest." They were married Aug. 18, 1872, by a Lutheran minister and the next day started housekeeping in a home of their own.

Mr. and Mrs. Kofahl have been happily married all these years and are the same lovers now in spite of sickness, loss of children and business troubles, each trying to do for the other the best they are able. Both of them have the friendship, love and confidence of a great many among all classes of people. The only regret they have is that they cannot get around to visit these friends as often as they would like.

The Austin American, Mar 11, 1928

KOFAHL.—News of the death of Charles A. Kofahl of San Francisco, Cal., has been received here by his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Chris Kofahl, of 2108 East First street, and a sister, Mrs. Katie Kofahl Easton.

He had been a resident of California for 30 years and was buried in Mt. Olive cemetery, San Francisco.

The Austin Statesman, Feb 4, 1929

KOFAHL—Funeral services for Christian Kofahl, a resident of Austin for many years, who died Friday night, will be held at 3 p. m. Sunday from the Thurlow Weed funeral home with the Rev. F. G. Roesener officiating. Services will be in charge of the Sons of Hermann lodge.

Mr. Kofahl was born in Oldersloh, Holstein, Germany, in 1850, and was married to Charlotte Mueller in 1872. The couple came to America in the same year.

He was a member of the Sons of Hermann and secretary of the Windhorst lodge for many years. Surviving him are his widow, one daughter, Katie Easton of Austin, and one son, Harry Kofahl, of Oxnard, Cal.

The Austin Statesman (1921-1973); Jan 11, 1930

WE CONGRATULATE

Special congratulations today go to a minister and his wife, the Rev. and Mrs. W. M. Sheffield, to whom was born a son Sunday at Brackenridge hospital. The Sheffields live at 4206 Avenue F.

We also congratulate:

Mr. and Mrs. R. W. Lorig, 2040 East First street, on the birth of a boy Sunday at St. David's hospital.

The Austin Statesman, Jan 15, 1945

Long Has St. Martin's History Been a Part of the Austin Story

Editor's note: The razing of the old St. Martin's Evangelical Lutheran Church near the State Capitol, brought many memories to old timers and historians. The church was dedicated in 1885. It was razed to make way for a landscaping project to further beautify the Capitol grounds. A brand new St. Martin's was dedicated last Sunday. The following story was written for the Junior Historian in May of 1957 by Emily Jo Flachmeier, daughter of Mrs. W. A. Flachmeier, 3206 Churchill Drive, while she was a student at Austin High School. She is now Mrs. Lars Engel, 1814-A West 38th Street, and is a senior majoring in education at The University of Texas.)

By EMILY JO FLACHMEIER
S. F. Austin High School

There are contradictory signs on an old building that has long stood just northeast of the State Capitol on a narrow one-way street—13th between Congress and Brazos. Above the door is a circular sign with an emblem and the words: "Texas State Parks Board." As though to emphasize the point, another black and white sign on one of the front buttresses repeats the words in bold letters. A little below that sign, however, other words in a foreign language are carved in stone—an old cornerstone. The words are: Deutsche Evangelische Lutherische St. Martin's Kirche. Thus, the old inscription informs the passerby that the old brick building was once a church where German

noon. No longer could persons say, "Nothing came of it in 1860 when Pastor Bohnenberger came through. Nothing happened when Pastor Lieb came in 1865. Who knows whether it will amount to anything now!"

Synod Invited

No wonder the members of St. Martin's Church invited the whole Texas Synod to join them in the services of dedication. For \$5,000 they had "a stately building of brick" of which they could be proud. As a matter of fact, the dedication was a little premature since the tower had reached only two-thirds of its intended height and the interior was still incomplete. The Texas Synod had been invited, however, and the Synod always met in April. Thus it happened that pastors and laymen from various parts of Texas entered the church in solemn procession on the morning of April 25, and the venerable pioneer and founder of the Texas Synod, Pastor J. C. Roehm, led the standing congregation in prayer, while the words of dedication were spoken by Pastor Merz. The convention was concluded in Gethsemane Lutheran Church on Thursday to permit the carpenters to complete their work at St. Martin's. Looking back a little, the mission committee reported at the next convention:

At Austin all difficulties have been overcome and the necessary church has been built. It was dedicated on April 25. Since then the mission has been making good progress. Ten new members have been won and many who have not been to church for years are at-

ing rise of prices, but this postponement paved the way to greater achievement. The necessity for work with Lutheran students at the University of Texas became more urgent, and a better location at 14th and Congress had become available. The Reverend Roesener convinced the Synod that it owed to Lutheran students and to its own future a contribution toward erecting a beautiful church within walking distance of the University. A committee was appointed to study the problem and the challenge to invest in Austin was accepted. Armed with the promise that the Synod would contribute \$50,000 if his congregation would raise a like sum, the Reverend Roesener conferred with some prominent members of his congregation. Eventually he secured their promise to complete the campaign for \$50,000 if he could raise \$20,000. In ten days he had collected pledges for \$23,000. On June 25, 1919, the land at 14th and Congress was purchased.

Named chairman of the fund raising committee in 1920—the year in which the adjective "German" was officially dropped from the name of the church—the pastor of St. Martin's spent two summers raising money throughout Texas for the "Austin Project." The Lutherans of Texas caught his vision and rallied to his support. He collected \$18,000 the first summer, and by the end of the second summer he had raised \$34,500. Because of other pressing needs, the Synod reduced its contribution to \$37,500, but the Austin congregation raised its goal accordingly to \$62,500. The goal was

Lutherans worshipped.

Which of the signs tell the truth? As one steps inside the building, it becomes clear from the desks, from maps on the walls, and from pictures that the men who work here, work in and with the great out-of-doors. If one studies the stairway that leads up to the second floor, however, he can tell that an old choir loft has been extended to create the second floor. A walk around the structure reveals further evidence of an earlier use. If one looks closely, he can see where high arched windows used to be between buttresses and where a circular window once occupied the rear wall. An old picture shows also a tower, two chimneys, and five small dormers on each side of the steeply pitched roof.

Examination of the cornerstone yields further information: "H. Merz, pastor" and "A. M. C. Nixon, architect." According to old records, Pastor Merz came to Austin in 1883, just a few months before eight professors, four assistants, and the proctor gathered on the Forty Acres to conduct first classes of the University of Texas. On March 9, Pastor Merz conducted his first services in the Swedish Lutheran Church which had been built a year earlier—some thirteen years after the organization of the congregation and nineteen years after the first Swedish Lutheran service.

Before long Pastor Merz gathered fifty members and secured a charter for the church. The men who served as elders the first year were: Christian Kofahl, Charles Schaeffer, Charles Wolf, Conrad Scheuermeyer, C. Steiner, Aug. Fuhrmann, and F. Straub. According to the charter, the intention was to open a parochial school in due time. A Sunday School had already been organized and five teachers were instructing more than seventy children. On March 26, 1884, three lots were bought for \$1,600 by Christian Kofahl, who transferred them to St. Martin's on April 15. The pastor was so hopeful that he invited the First Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Texas to meet in Austin for its thirty-third convention in the spring.

Architect Chosen

tending the services. The congregation has issued bonds of \$25, payable in three years, with 4 per cent interest and has thus temporarily covered its debts. In addition there is a lien of \$1,000 on the building which must be paid the contractor in the fall.

By 1886, the congregation had reduced the indebtedness to \$1,000 and the salary of the pastor was raised from \$250 to \$400 per year.

Data Scanty

Information on the years between 1886 and 1913 is scanty. A few facts, however, are known. There is, for instance, a roster of pastors. The Reverend Mr. Merz left in 1886 to become the first president of the German American College in Rutgersville, and was followed by the Reverend E. F. Metzenthin, who served from 1886 to 1894. He, in turn, was followed by the Reverend Wilhelm Bunge from 1894 to 1895, the Reverend John Harder from 1895 to 1898, and the Reverend O. W. Hartman from 1898 to 1901. The Reverend H. J. Romberg arrived in 1901. In the meantime, the interior of the church was completed, the debt was further reduced, and the old, hand operated organ was replaced by an electric one from Bonn, Germany.

An important forward step was taken in 1913. St. Martin's had a membership of 77 voting members (heads of families), 267 communicant members, and 411 baptized members. In the Sunday School ten teachers were instructing 115 children. The debt had been almost wiped out. Under the leadership of Pastor Romberg, the congregation appealed to the convention of the Synod for an appropriation to call a pastor who could launch an English language program in the interest of the younger people. The appeal was for the mission committee to appropriate \$400 for the first year, decreasing that amount by \$100 in succeeding years. To what extent the thought of the university students, whose numbers had increased from 221 to 2,254, influenced the action of the Synod cannot be determined at this date. Suffice it to say, the appeal was granted.

In response to the plea of the professors to accept the Austin

congregating to 302,000. The goal was reached in 1925. An architect, George Louis Walling, was employed and plans were drawn up in accordance with the pastor's dream of a church building along classical lines—one that would show up even in "the shadow of the capitol."

Just as in 1884, when the bids were opened lack of funds threatened the project. The price asked by the lowest bidder was \$30,000 above the anticipated cost. As the war had once delayed plans, so the excess cost delayed things until January, 1927, when the congregation decided to assume the greater indebtedness and actual construction could begin. It was interrupted when the first contractor, Richard Schmidt, ran into difficulties, but was resumed when J. F. Johnson, another contractor, was found.

Moving Day

The day came when the old bell could be hung in the new tower and the rose window given by Miss Mina von Rosenberg could be moved from the old church to the gable of the south wing of the new St. Martin's. Sixteen magnificent windows, telling the Bible story "from Creation of man to the final glorification of the church" in forty-eight panels, had already been installed. A little later, after the interior was finished, the organ, the pulpit, and the lectern were moved to the new church. A beautiful hand-carved altar of light oak in proportions matching the church has already been put in place. It said that the Jews who attended the dedication of the second temple wept when they compared the new temple with the old. It was not so at St. Martin's. The new outshone the old by far, and the second dedication of St. Martin's on April 28, 1929, was as joyous an occasion as the first.

In view of the language used on the old cornerstone, a note in the Sunday Bulletin on December 21, 1911, is significant. It announced that the number of members who found a German service more edifying than an English one had dwindled away and that the last communion service in German would be conducted on the following Christmas morning. The

Architect Chosen

Architect A. M. C. Nixon was engaged to draw up plans for a place of worship. Everything looked promising. A problem arose when the building plans had been completed, however. There was no money to pay for erecting the church that had been planned. Pastor Merz reported to the mission committee:

One thing is certain, if the mission of our church in Austin is to succeed, then the construction of a church dare not remain in doubt much longer. For three full months, there has been no rain. The streets are covered with dust half a foot deep and the sun burns down on us like fire. Under these conditions we have to meet from 1 to 3 p.m. for Sunday School and sermon because we cannot get a room in the morning. These are hard times. Because of crop failures, business is down and everybody complains and complains. Under such circumstances, to get money for a church building is a problem and yet, in another respect, this is the ideal time to build since many hands are looking for work and since lumber has dropped from \$20 to \$16 per 1,000 feet and since bricks dropped from \$12 to \$7 per 1,000. Are we to be forced to let this opportunity pass by unused? Has our church which left her children without spiritual care for twenty years, no means to make up for lost time? Working and praying, we hope for help. Help comes from the Lord, but through these men who hear His name. We hope that the many friends and lovers of our church will help carry on the work according to the ability God has given them.

The contract for the church was let to A. Gardiner and Company, and on December 18, 1884, the cornerstone was laid. By April 26, 1885, just a little more than two years after Pastor Merz had conducted the first services, the church was dedicated. At last, the little congregation had a church of its own. No longer would it have to borrow a building in which to worship. No longer were services and Sunday School limited to the hottest hour of the after-

noon. call, the Reverend F. G. Roesener dropped his plans to continue his studies at the University of Nebraska and came to Texas. English evening services at St. Martin's left the young pastor to minister to small groups in Onion Creek, Marble Falls, and Elgin. While he used a horse and buggy to get to Onion Creek, a convenient train schedule provided transportation to Elgin and Marble Falls. When Pastor Romberg accepted a professorship at Wartburg College, Waverly, Iowa, in 1915, the Reverend Roesener became full-time pastor.

Grew Rapidly

The Austin congregation grew rapidly and began to realize that it would need more room in the near future. By 1916 it was ready to build a \$15,000 church and bought a lot at 17th and Congress Street. The building program had to be postponed because of the entrance of the United States into World War I and the accompany-

ing Christmas morning. The last German preaching service had been held in November of the same year, bringing to a close the development that had begun in 1913. The transition to English had been gradual; at first only evening services had been in English, then a morning service, then two morning services, and finally all regular services had been conducted in English, leaving only early morning services for German. An exception to the gradual process occurred during World War I when the German services were omitted to prevent misunderstanding. In the short span of twenty-seven years, the all-German church had become all-English.

In its new location St. Martin's grew in both numbers and influence. In 1950 and again in 1954, two-story residences on lots adjoining the church property were purchased to house the growing Sunday School. The cause of service to Lutheran students of the University of Texas, which had long played an important part in the history of St. Martin's, had found new supporters in the Texas Synod—now the Texas District of the American Lutheran Church—and in the National Lutheran Council. St. Martin's continues to do its part, but the work is under the direction of the Lutheran Student Foundation, which has established the Bible Chair of which the Rev. Roesener dreamed.

Once again, in November, 1955, a forward step became necessary. Although the buildings recently purchased had not been paid for, no appeal was made for outside help this time. Under the leadership of the new pastors Edwin V. Long and Donald E. Saylor, a campaign to raise \$210,000 for expansion purposes was undertaken. In thirty days the amount was over-subscribed. What a change from the day Pastor Merz first set foot in Austin!

Another chapter in the history of St. Martin's Lutheran Church was written Sunday in opening services held Sunday morning and in an open house held Sunday afternoon in the new edifice at 15th and Nueces Streets.

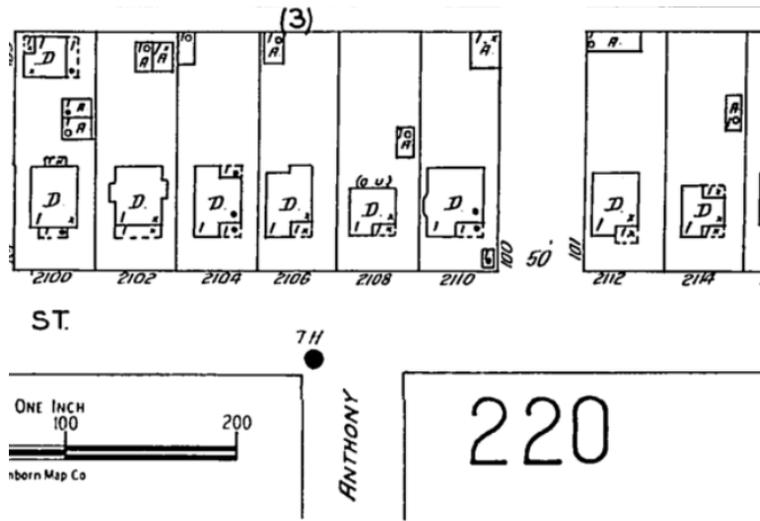
The Austin Statesman, Apr 2, 1960

MILLER, Mrs. Lillian Helen, 66, 2710 Metcalfe Road, died Thursday. Services 1:30 p.m. Saturday at Wilke-Clay Funeral Home. Survivors: husband, Horace Miller of Austin; daughters, Mrs. Jerry (Frances) Duseck of LaGrange, Mrs. Robert (Ivy) Henson of Austin, Mrs. Mike (Dorothy) Schuhmacher of San Antonio, Mrs. C.L. (Cathy) Jones of Houston; sons, Melvin Miller, Leonard Miller, Ernest Miller, Larry Miller, all of Austin; sisters, Mrs. Katie Schnider of LaGrange, Mrs. Lonie Ploss, Mrs. Ruby Hermis, both of Houston, Mrs. Evelyn Peeples of Lyford; brothers,

Edwin Karstedt, Wilbur Karstedt, Vernon Karstedt, Verna Lee Kristoff, all of LaGrange; 25 grandchildren; 18 great-grandchildren; several nieces and nephews.

The Austin American Statesman, Feb 20, 1976

Maps



1935 Sanborn map

Permits

