

HISTORIC LANDMARK COMMISSION
PERMITS IN NATIONAL REGISTER HISTORIC DISTRICTS
JANUARY 24, 2022
PR-2021-193601/GF-2022-001166
TRAVIS HEIGHTS - FAIRVIEW PARK NATIONAL REGISTER HISTORIC DISTRICT
201 PARK LANE

PROPOSAL

Demolish a ca. 1939 duplex.

ARCHITECTURE

One-story Minimal Traditional duplex with symmetrical plan. Each side of the duplex features a cross-gabled roofline with shallow eaves, asbestos shingle siding, and 1:1 windows.

RESEARCH

The duplex at 201 Park Lane was built in 1939 by Sophia Sullivan, who lived in half of the duplex part-time while renting out the other half. Her son and his family also inhabited one half of the duplex for some time. Most of the home's early renters were there short-term, including a mechanic, a barbershop manager, insurance salespeople, and the secretary-treasurer of the Sheriff's Association.

Shortly after the duplex was built, Sophia Sullivan became involved in a high-profile investigation when her significant other, a married cabinetmaker from Arkansas, was found dead of a shotgun blast in her car. Despite the intensively covered inquiry, the culprit was never found.

PROPERTY EVALUATION

The property contributes to the Travis Heights-Fairview Park National Register district.

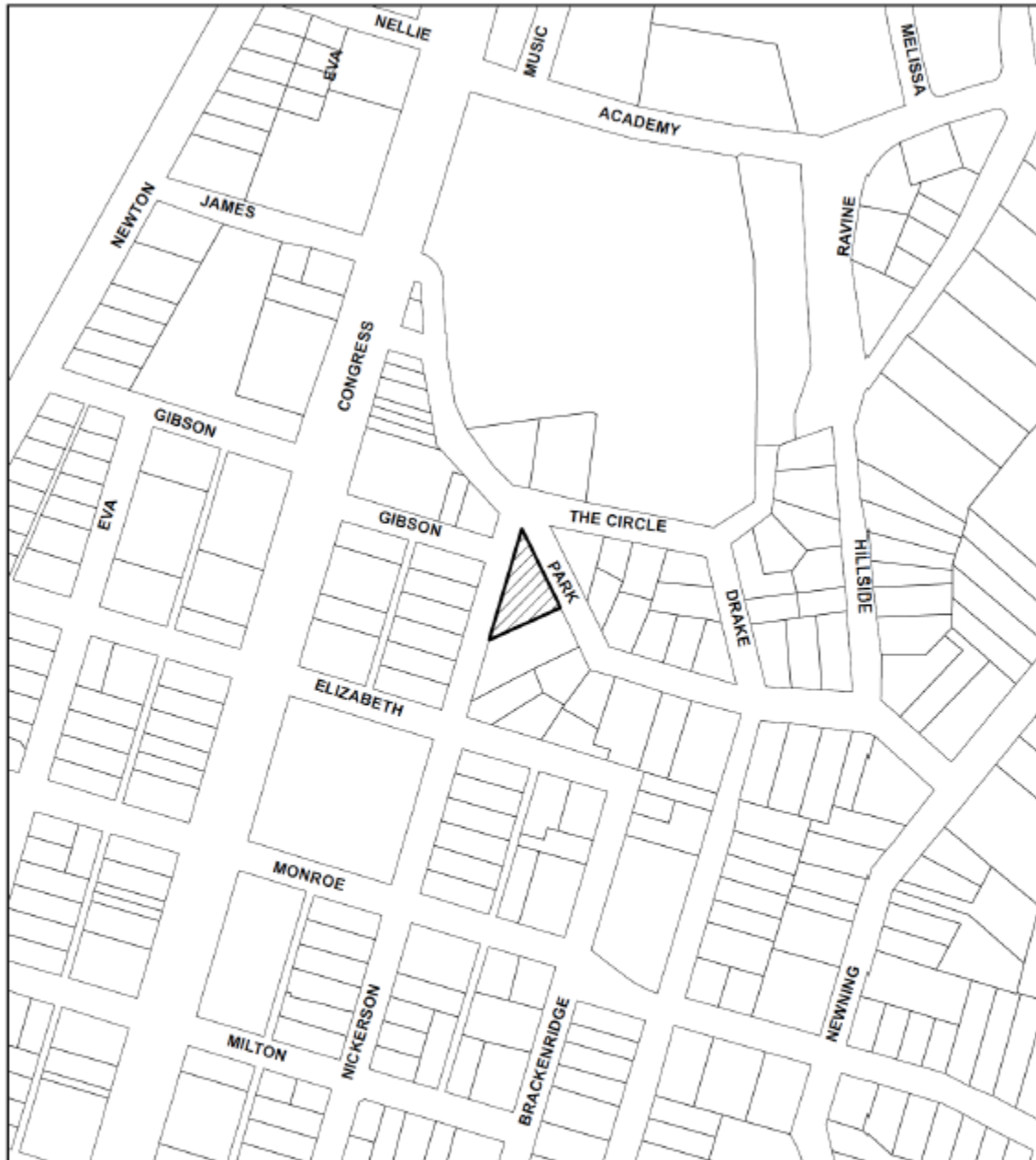
Designation Criteria—Historic Landmark

- 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 does not meet two criteria:
 - a. Architecture. The building is constructed in the Minimal Traditional style.
 - b. Historical association. The property does not appear to have significant historical associations.
 - 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

Encourage rehabilitation and adaptive reuse, then relocation, but approve the demolition application upon completion of a City of Austin Documentation Package. The demolition permit may not be released until plans for new construction are reviewed by the Historic Landmark Commission.

LOCATION MAP



SUBJECT TRACT

PENDING CASE

ZONING BOUNDARY

1" = 250'

NOTIFICATIONS

CASE#: PR 21-193601
 LOCATION: 201 PARK LANE

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.



PROPERTY INFORMATION

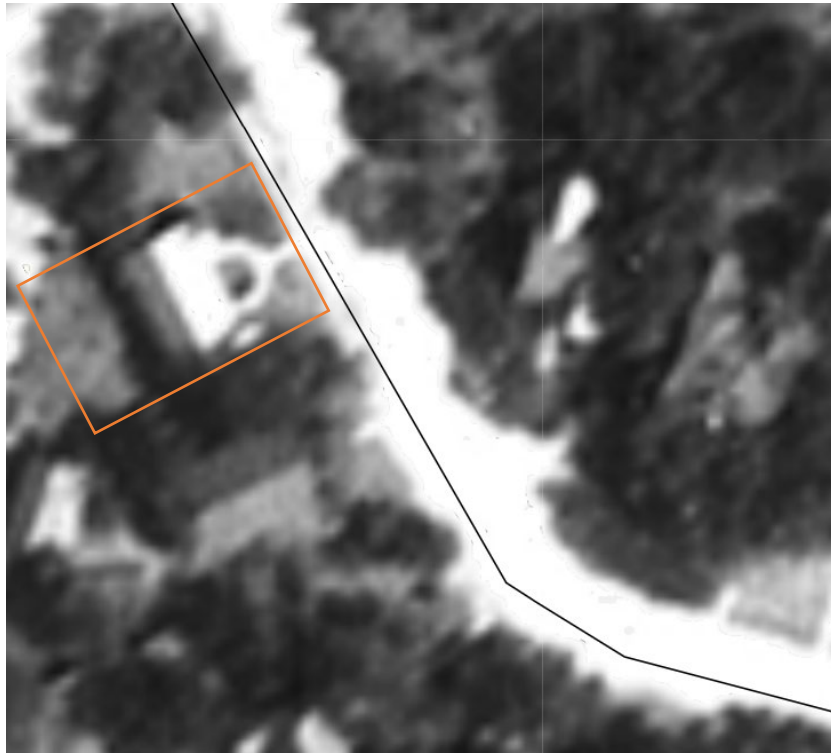
Photos



Google Street View, 2020



[Zillow.com](https://www.zillow.com), 2021



Aerial view, 1940

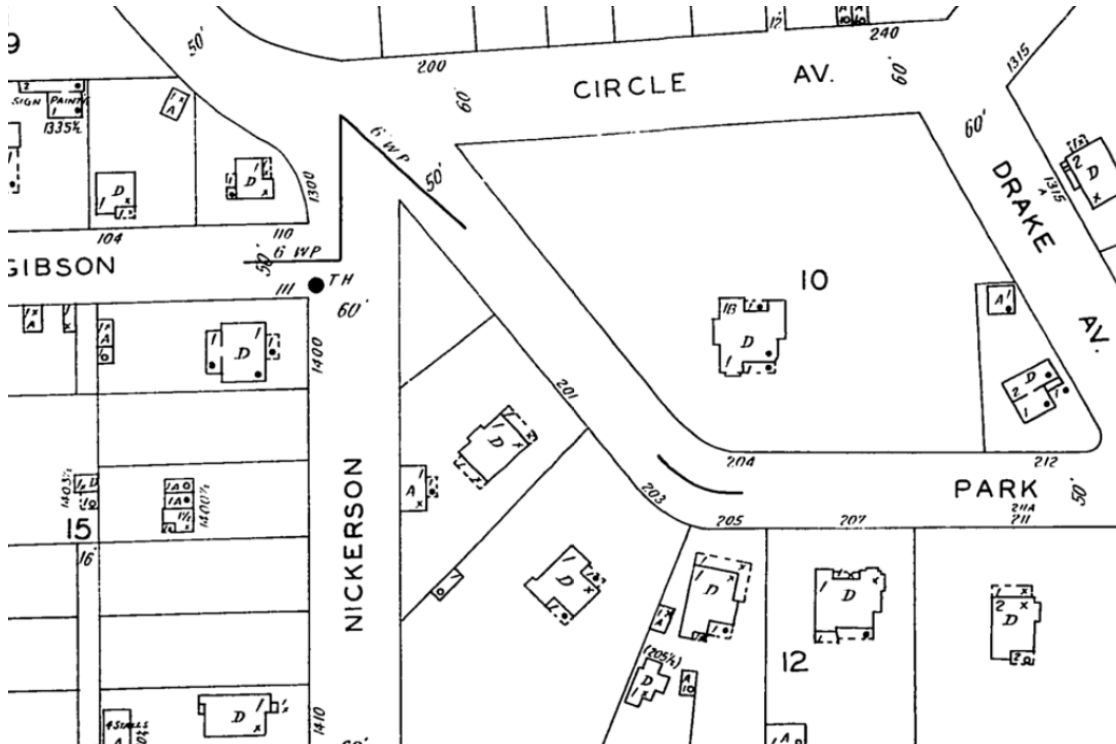
Occupancy History

City Directory Research, December 2021

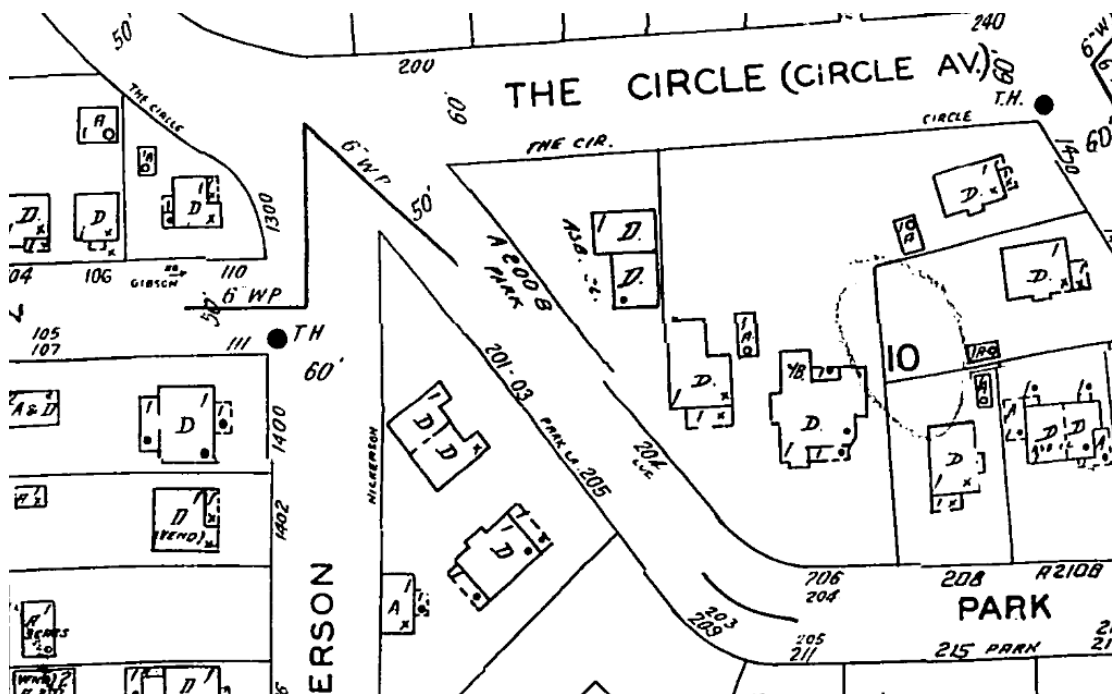
- | | |
|------|---|
| 1959 | Address change to 203 Park Ln.
Edna E. Fowler, renter |
| 1957 | Address change to 201 Park Ln.
A. Vacant
B. Edna E. Fowler, renter
Telephone operator, Terrace Motor Hotel |
| 1955 | 201 Park Ln. – Vacant
203 Park Ln. – Dean H. Fowler, renter
Salesman, American Empire Life Insurance Co. |
| 1952 | 201 Park Ln. – George E. and Blanch M. Ashcraft, renters
USAF
203 Park Ln. – George R. and JoAnn Van Fleet, renters
Clerk, International Life |
| 1949 | 201 Park Ln. – Roy E. and Monnie J. Simpson, renters
Lineman
203 Park Ln. – Bill E. and Frances L. Sullivan, owners
City firefighter |
| 1947 | 201 Park Ln. – William W. and Winnie M. Garrett, renters
Manager, Stephen F. Austin Hotel Barber Shop
203 Park Ln. – William and Frances Sullivan, renters
Student, St. Edward's |
| 1944 | 201 Park Ln. – William W. Garrett, renter
Manager, Austin Stephen Hotel Barber Shop
203 Park Ln. – Joe L. Ray, renter
Secretary-treasurer, Sheriffs' Association of Texas |

- 1941 201 Park Ln – Ophelia Ormsby, renter (widow of Walter H.)
 203 Park Ln – R. Dillon and Dorothy Stringer, renters
 Mechanic, University of Texas
- 1939 Address not listed
- 1937 Address listed as 205 Park Ln.

Maps



Sanborn Map, 1935



Sanborn Map, 1961

Permits

WATER SERVICE PERMIT
Austin, Texas

N^o 13964
126

Received of Sophie Sullivan Date August 3, 1939

Address 203 Park Lane

Amount Two and 50/100 - - - - \$ 2.50

Plumber Compton Size of Tap 1/2

Date of Connection 8/9/39

Size of Tap Made 3/4

Size Service Made 3/4

Size Main Tapped 6"

From Front Prop. Line to Curb Cock 16"

From S. Prop. Line to Curb Cock 15'

Location of Meter C.H.M.B.

Type of Box LOCK

Depth of Main in S. C.H.M.B. 18"

Depth of Service Line 12"

From Curb Cock to Tap on Main EAST OF MAIN 1'

Checked by Engr. Dept. 9-26-39 LE

No. Fittings	Size.
1 Curb Cock	3/4
1 Elbow	3/4
1 St. Elbow	3/4
1 Bushing	3/4 x 1/2
1 Reducer	3/4 x 1/2
1 Pipe	3/4 COPPER
1 Lead Comp.	1/4 COPPER
1 Nipples	3/4 x 1/2
1 Union	1/2 x 1/2
Plug	1/2
1 Tee	1/2
1 Stop	1/2
1 Box	1/2
1 Lid	1/2
Valves	
Job No.	<u>38722</u>
Req. No.	<u>Benson</u>

Water Service Permit, 1939

WATER SERVICE PERMIT
Austin, Texas

N^o 14303
126

Received of Sophie Sullivan Date Sept 27, 1939

Address 203 Park Lane

Amount Two and 50/100 - - - - \$ 2.50

Plumber Compton Size of Tap 1/2

Date of Connection 9/29/39

Size of Tap Made 3/4

Size Service Made 3/4

Size Main Tapped 6"

From Front Prop. Line to Curb Cock 16"

From N. Prop. Line to Curb Cock 16'

Location of Meter C.H.M.B.

Type of Box LOCK

Depth of Main in S. C.H.M.B. 2'

Depth of Service Line 12"

From Curb Cock to Tap on Main OVER 14'

Checked by Engr. Dept. 10-30-39 LE

No. Fittings	Size.
1 Curb Cock	3/4
1 Elbow	3/4
1 St. Elbow	3/4
1 Bushing	3/4 x 1/2
1 Reducer	3/4 x 1/2
1 Pipe	3/4 COPPER
1 Lead Comp.	1/4 COPPER
1 Nipples	3/4 x 1/2
1 Union	1/2 x 1/2
Plug	1/2
1 Tee	1/2
1 Stop	1/2
1 Box	1/2
1 Lid	1/2
Valves	
Job No.	<u>40113</u>
Req. No.	<u>BENSON</u>

INDEXED

Water Service Permit, 1939

COMPANION OF SLAIN MAN RECALLED BY HOLT

Mrs. Sophia Sullivan, companion of J. Clifford Whitfield, 51-year-old cabinet maker, on an automobile ride Friday prior to the fatal shooting of Whitfield at Ideal Retreat near Deep Eddy Friday afternoon shortly before 2:30 p. m., was recalled to a court of inquiry held by Justice Paul T. Holt for appearance Saturday at 1 p. m.

Justice Holt made no advance statement as to the character of the questioning, but officers during the morning made inquiry into the events preceding the shooting while Mrs. Sullivan and Mr. Whitfield were on an automobile ride that ended fatally at Ideal Retreat.

Tells of Seeing Pair

Before Mrs. Sullivan was recalled Justice Holt revealed that he had questioned Mrs. L. L. Haehnel, who lives on the Webberville road east of Austin.

Mrs. Haehnel, Holt said, told him that Mrs. Sullivan and a man she introduced as "Mr. Whitfield" came out to her home Friday at 9 a. m. They did not come into Mrs. Haehnel's house, and Mrs. Haehnel said she went out to her back yard where "they had stopped their car." She said Mrs. Sullivan wanted to buy a chicken and asked her to put the chicken away and she would return for it later.

Mrs. Haehnel, Justice Holt said, told him that while Mrs. Sullivan, Mr. Whitfield and Mrs. Haehnel were standing out in the yard near Mrs. Sullivan's car that all three took three drinks of whisky. Mrs. Haehnel was quoted by Holt as having said the whisky belonged to her.

Holt said Mrs. Haehnel told him Mrs. Sullivan reached into her purse to get a cigaret and gave her

COURT QUIZZES WOMAN AGAIN

(Continued from Page 1.)

one, and while her purse was open, Mrs. Haehnel said she saw Mrs. Sullivan had a small pistol in a small leather scabbard and that the pistol had a brown handle.

Search for Relatives

Holt said Mrs. Haehnel told him Mrs. Sullivan and Whitfield left her place at 10 a. m. and went toward Austin. Officials at the Cook funeral home and Sheriff Lee O. Allen worked unsuccessfully Saturday morning to locate relatives of Whitfield. Allen said telegrams sent to Atlanta and Macon, where a brother and sister were reported residing, brought replies they could not be located.

Mrs. Louise M. Johnson, 205 East Seventh street, where Whitfield had been rooming since Feb. 7, 1934, was informally questioned again Saturday morning by Sheriff Allen and Justice Holt, but her testimony related mainly to the habits of her tenant and had little bearing on the tragedy itself. She told of Mrs. Sullivan coming by her place on a number of occasions and asking for Whitfield.

Mrs. Johnson said she had not seen Whitfield but casually in the last six or seven months, but that at all times he seemed to be in good spirits, was never despondent nor apparently laboring under disappointment.

Seek Trace of Relatives

Officers questioned her about her knowledge of Whitfield's relatives in an effort to locate them. Mrs. Johnson said Whitfield once told her he had a brother, Will Whitfield, a railroad man living in Chattanooga, Tenn., and a sister, Mrs. Lillian Ivy, living on Palm street in Atlanta. She also said he once told her that he had a sister living on a farm 17 miles from Hot Springs, Ark., and that she understood the sister's name to be Mrs. Annie Kinney.

With that information, officers started a new effort to locate these relatives.

Charles Duffy, manager of the Davidson Sash and Door company where Whitfield had been employed since last March 1, said Whitfield also had a son, Joe, and understood that the son was in the navy.

Sheriff Lee O. Allen ordered fingerprints to be taken of Whitfield at the Cook funeral home, hoping by this means to locate relatives of the dead man.

Two Women Testify

Two women, Mrs. Sophia Sullivan of 201 Park lane, and Mrs. Dixie Horst, resident of Ideal Retreat, told their stories of the affair to Justice Holt at the court of inquiry Friday.

Whitfield's death came to attention of officers Friday at 2:35 p. m. when Mrs. Sullivan drove her sedan into the ambulance driveway of the Cook funeral home with Whitfield's body resting in the blood-soaked back seat, a large blue hole in his left chest just below the collar bone. The hole was made by a charge of 3 1-4 shot from the right barrel of a sawed-off 12 gauge shotgun, and the wound was seared with powder burns. The wound was fully an inch in diameter, and the charge had ranged upward and inward.

Justice Holt called the court of inquiry after a study of the case with Sheriff Allen and Deputies Sam Rogers and Paul Blair. He subpoenaed Mrs. Sullivan, who had gone home, and Mrs. Horst, who had not left her home at Ideal Retreat where the shooting occurred.

Neither of the two women heard the shot, although the man was found in Mrs. Sullivan's car not 10 feet from where they were, they asserted.

Women Released

Both women were released and allowed to go home after they had been questioned. Mrs. Louise M. Johnson, 205 East Seventh street, landlady at the place where Whitfield stayed, was also questioned after her name had been brought into the testimony by Mrs. Sullivan.

Aiding local officers in the questioning was Ranger Manny Gault. Sheriff Allen at 10 a. m. an-

nounced process had been drawn for summoning two witnesses, both of them women, but declined to reveal their names pending serving of the subpoenas. The sheriff said additional evidence had come to their attention and the witnesses had been summoned for questioning at the court of inquiry to be resumed when the witnesses are located.

No charges had been filed in the case, pending further investigation, Sheriff Allen said.

Whitfield is survived by a son, Joe, a sister, Mrs. Lillian Ivy of Atlanta, Ga., and a brother, Will Whitfield of Macon, Ga. He had worked in Austin for about three years, at the Davidson plant and at the Van C. Kelly Lumber company. He had been in and out of Austin for many years, fellow employees said. They considered him an expert workman, and he was making a good salary.

Funeral arrangements are held up pending word from relatives.

Officers To Keep Up Inquiry On Mysterious Case

Hours of Questioning
Fail To Result In
Decision on Case

BAFFLING ANGLE

Peace Officers, Justice
And Prosecutor
Talk With Woman

Further inquiry into the fatal shooting of J. Clifford Whitfield, 51-year-old cabinet maker, Friday afternoon near the home of Mrs. Dixie Horst in Ideal Retreat, will be resumed Monday by Justice Paul T. Holt. It was decided after a conference Saturday afternoon between Sheriff Lee O. Allen, Justice Holt and Asst. Dist. Atty. Edwin G. Moorhead after Mrs. Sophia Sullivan, his companion on an automobile ride prior to the shooting, had been informally questioned by sheriff's officers for two hours.

The investigation was continued after a day of probing into the case in which the officers were as far away from a solution of it as when they first got word of the shooting Friday afternoon.

Baffling Points

Baffling points in the case which sheriff's officers are trying to unravel are: Why neither Mrs. Sullivan nor Mrs. Horst heard the report of the gun which officers declare was fired within three feet

(Continued on Page 8, Col. 5)

of Mrs. Horst's back door, and what happened to a diamond ring several witnesses said Whitfield was wearing prior to the shooting and which was missing when his body came into the morgue at the Cook Funeral home.

The officers also are trying to determine what happened to a large sum of money one witness said Whitfield told her he had and which was not in a wallet found in the car after the tragedy.

Mrs. Sullivan was questioned by Deputy Sheriff Sam Rogers for more than an hour. Calmly, she told Rogers that she had no knowledge of Whitfield carrying any large sum of money, saying he paid for a soft drink and a cup of coffee at the Cantina Friday noon out of some change.

Says Ring Hers

Mrs. Sullivan during the questioning by Rogers said the ring that Whitfield was wearing Friday was a diamond ring belonging to her and that he returned it to her en route to Ideal Retreat before the fatal shooting occurred.

Mrs. Sullivan calmly told Dep. Sheriff Rogers that she believes that Whitfield was shot accidentally after he returned to the car from a trip down the river to hunt some squirrels. During the inquiry Friday night before Justice Holt, Mrs. Sullivan expressed the opinion that Whitfield did not commit suicide but did not account otherwise for his death.

After sheriff's officers had questioned her, Mrs. Sullivan was questioned for a short time by Asst. Dist. Atty. Moorhead in his office behind closed doors. Moorhead said after the questioning that she told the same story that she told at the court of inquiry.

Says Story Plausible

"There's nothing in her story that does not sound plausible," Moorhead declared.

He added that the case will remain in the hands of Justice Holt until he completes his inquiry and hands down a verdict as to how Whitfield met his death.

During the day, Mrs. L. L. Haehnel, who lives on the Webberville road, in a sworn statement made before Justice Holt and several deputy sheriffs at her home Saturday morning, said Mrs. Sullivan and a man introduced to her as "Mr. Whitfield" drove their car into the rear yard of her home, and Mrs. Sullivan wanted to buy a chicken. Mrs. Sullivan requested that she place the chicken in a coop and said she would return for it later. Mrs. Haehnel's statement said.

While the three were standing outside in Mrs. Haehnel's yard near the automobile of Mrs. Sullivan, Mrs. Haehnel testified, each of the three had three drinks of whiskey, and added that the whiskey belonged to her. While they were in the yard, Mrs. Haehnel said Mrs. Sullivan opened her purse to get a cigarette and "she gave me one."

"I saw that she had a small pistol in a small leather scabbard," Mrs. Haehnel said. In her statement, she took the pistol out of the purse and she put it up to my face."

Mrs. Haehnel continued: "I said let me see that gun—is that a real gun," and quoted Mrs. Sullivan as saying it was a real gun.

Whitfield Claimed He Had Cash

Mrs. Haehnel said "Mrs. Sullivan and Mr. Whitfield left my house about 10 a. m. and went to Austin when they left my home."

Mrs. Haehnel amplified the statement when Dep. Sheriff Sam Rogers took the written statement prepared by Justice Holt out to her to read and sign early Saturday afternoon and added:

"Mr. Whitfield had a ring on his hand, when Mrs. Sullivan called my attention to it and Mrs. Sullivan made the remark that it came out of a 10-cent store. It looked a diamond ring.

"Mr. Whitfield said he had \$90 in cash and a \$120 check when he mentioned about buying some more whiskey."

Davidson Sash and Door mill said he saw Whitfield wearing a man's diamond ring Monday and also that he saw Whitfield with seven bills in his purse, when he paid a debt at a local tavern.

Relatives Hunted

Leonard Wright, city fingerprint expert, took Whitfield's prints at the funeral home Saturday. Sheriff Allen said he intended to send them to the federal bureau of investigation in an effort to locate relatives of the dead man.

Telegrams were sent by Sheriff Allen Saturday morning to the chief of police of Chattanooga, Tenn., hoping to locate Will Whitfield, a brother; to the chief of police at Riverside, Cal., hoping to locate Joe, a son; to Fort Smith, Ark., to locate Anna Kennedy, a relative said to be living on Whitfield's farm near Hot Springs, Ark.; and to Atlanta, Ga., police, asking them to notify Mrs. Lillian Ivy, a sister. Saturday night, Allen received telegrams from Atlanta, Hot Springs and Riverside, reporting that they were unable to locate the persons inquired about.

Funeral arrangements were deferred pending the location of relatives.



Two Austin women questioned by Justice of the Peace Paul T. Holt and members of the sheriff's department in the shotgun death Friday afternoon of J. Clifford Whitfield, Austin cabinet-maker, are shown above. Left, Mrs. Sophia Sullivan, companion of Whitfield on an automobile ride just prior to the fatal shooting, is shown using the

telephone in the office of Peace Justice Holt, where the inquiry was held. At right, Mrs. Dixie Horst, near whose home Whitfield's lifeless body was found, is shown demonstrating to the court of inquiry how Mrs. Sullivan reacted when Whitfield's death was discovered. "She raised her hands like this," Mrs. Horst said, "and said: 'My God, he's been shot.'" The camera caught the gesture.

MRS. SULLIVAN IN CAR MISHAP

Mrs. Sophia Sullivan, 201 Park Lane, who has appeared before Justice Paul T. Holt's court of inquiry into the death a week ago of J. Clifford Whitfield, escaped injury late Thursday night in an accident in which E. Ivey of Atlanta, Ga., brother-in-law of the dead man, was her companion.

Mrs. Sullivan's Pontiac sedan and a Chevrolet sedan driven by R. M. Young of 4504 Avenue F, collided in front of The Tower, 311 South Congress, at 11:30 p. m., according to Officer H. H. Kullenberg, who investigated the collision.

An Eyewitness

Both cars were damaged, Mrs. Sullivan's more seriously, but no one was injured.

Hamilton Depew of 1604 Newton, who was standing near the small liquor package store adjacent to The Tower, witnessed the accident. He said both cars were traveling south on South Congress and that he noticed the Pontiac when it appeared to be veering toward the east side of the street, on which The Tower is located.

"I saw they were going to hit, and I stepped sort of back of the corner of the building. I was afraid the cars were coming right at me and I didn't want to get run over."

No Charges Filed

Mrs. Sullivan told Officer Kullenberg, according to Depew, who she was and introduced her companion as the brother-in-law of Whitfield.

Mrs. Sullivan also said, according to Depew, that she had not intended turning in at The Tower but was merely indicating it to Ivey.

Officer Kullenberg turned in a report on the accident to the police traffic bureau. No charges had been filed Friday.

Justice Declares Unknown Person Killed Whitfield

Deputy Sheriff Asserts Charge May Be Filed On New Evidence

Any further inquiry into the fatal shooting of J. Clifford Whitfield, 54-year-old cabinet maker, which occurred near Deep Eddy last Friday one week ago was left to the next Travis county grand jury in a verdict reached Saturday by Justice Paul T. Holt.

Holt said he would enter a notation on the inquest docket, after giving some of the details of the investigation he conducted for nine days, Whitfield met death of gunshot wounds "at the hands of unknown person or persons."

The next grand jury likely will be empanelled at the opening of the 53rd district court's January term the first Monday in January.

Holt said after reaching his verdict that he telephoned the Cook funeral home and directed that the body be released to E. M. Ivey of Atlanta, Ga., brother-in-law of Whitfield. Mr. Ivey arrived here last Thursday from Atlanta, and following his arrival a fresh investigation was started by Dep. Sheriff Warren (Rip) Collins.

Collins called for the questioning Mrs. Dixie Horst, near whose home the fatal shooting occurred, and Mrs. Sophia Sullivan, 201 Park Lane, in whose automobile Whitfield's body was found.

Collins Saturday announced he had secured some new evidence in the case but declined to reveal its nature. He said he would continue his investigation of the case.

No charges had been filed in connection with the case Saturday, although Collins indicated one might be filed later.

Sarah Frances Sullivan Feted on First Birthday

Sarah Frances Sullivan celebrated her first birthday Saturday at a lawn party given by her parents, Mr. and Mrs. Bill E. Sullivan, at their home, 203 Park Lane.

A pink and white color scheme was highlighted by a birthday cake decorated in pink and white and centered with one pink candle.

Guests were Karen Brown, Mary Ann Hooper, Bridget Hood, Lynette Hooper, Janie Powell, Kenny

Baker, Terry Ross, Gerry Ross, Larry Lay, Robert Harris and Bobby Ford.

Also Mesdames Tod Ford, Wallace Lay, Eugene Brown, Dee Logue, Lou Fruth and the honoree's grandparents, Mr. and Mrs. O. L. Franklin.

The Austin Statesman (1921-1973); Jul 20, 1948