

**HISTORIC LANDMARK COMMISSION**  
**PERMITS IN NATIONAL REGISTER HISTORIC DISTRICTS**  
**AUGUST 2, 2023**  
**PR-2023-071143; GF-2023-087237**  
**WILLOW-SPENCE NATIONAL REGISTER HISTORIC DISTRICT**  
**81 WALLER STREET**

## **PROPOSAL**

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Demolish a ca. 1880 house.

## **ARCHITECTURE**

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The 1985 Willow-Spence National Register Historic District nomination describes the building as follows:

Ca. 1882...One-story, central entrance, board-and-batten, frame structure with intact brick chimney, 6-over-6 windows, and small front porch. Site No. 127 (81 Waller Street) appears to be one of the earliest (if not the earliest) structure in the survey area.<sup>1</sup>

## **RESEARCH**

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The house at 81 Waller Street was built around 1880 by Robert K. Brydson. Brydson, a fruit grower and dairyman, died around 1888; his wife, Pauline, and their children remained in the house and worked to support themselves. After rolling cigars at the Phoenix Cigar Manufacturing Company, sons John J. and Robert W. Brydson began working in carpentry and opened and operated the Brydson Lumber Company. John J. Brydson had a landmarked 1896 house at 1605 Cesar Chavez Street during the 1980s; the house appears to have been demolished when its historic zoning was inadvertently removed through the adopted rezonings of the 2000 East Cesar Chavez Neighborhood Plan.<sup>2,3</sup> Their nephew, William Warren, is honored with the landmarked William and Eleanor Warren House at 1502 Hardouin Ave. for his association with the company in its later years.<sup>4</sup> However, the family home at 81 Waller Street appears to be the original home of the Brydson brothers' carpentry business before the Brydson Lumber Company became one of Austin's most prolific builders. The Warren House's zoning review by Steve Sadowsky describes the Brydsons' impact:

Brydson Lumber and Construction Company was one of Austin's largest lumber suppliers, but also, on the same model as Calcasieu Lumber Company and East End Lumber Company, Brydson designed, built, and financed houses for their customers. The Brydson family came to Austin around 1888, and John J. and Robert W. Brydson began working as house builders. They brought in another brother, Burt Brydson, and their company was known as Brydson Brothers...Brydson continued to be a strong presence in Austin's growth and development, providing lumber and building supplies to various contractors, as well as furnishing designs and contractor services. Brydson also carried a full line of paints and varnishes, built cabinets, and milled their own lumber. Brydson grew to be one of the two major lumber companies in Austin, and was responsible for many houses in north-central Austin, including the Brydson Addition near the University of Texas campus.<sup>5</sup>

After the Brydson family moved, the home was occupied mostly by working- and middle-class renters, including laborers, clerks, carpenters, Navy sailors and airmen, and a gunsmith.

## **PROPERTY EVALUATION**

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The property contributes to the Willow-Spence National Register district. The 2016 East Austin survey lists the property as contributing to a potential local historic district.

### *Designation Criteria—Historic Landmark*

- 1) The building is more than 50 years old. It appears to be the oldest building in the Willow-Spence National Register Historic District.
- 2) The building appears to retain high to moderate integrity. Windows have been replaced and a small bay added to each side elevation, where existing windows have been infilled. Board-and-batten siding has been replaced by compatible

<sup>1</sup> <https://atlas.thc.texas.gov/NR/pdfs/85002264/85002264.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> <https://services.austintexas.gov/edims/document.cfm?id=12307>

<sup>3</sup> <https://services.austintexas.gov/edims/document.cfm?id=71945>

<sup>4</sup> Sadowsky, Steve. "C14H-2016-0005, William F. and Eleanor-Warren House." 2016. <https://services.austintexas.gov/edims/document.cfm?id=256477>

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

vertical siding. The central transom at the front has been covered by siding, and the original brick chimney has been removed.

- 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 a good example of a vernacular structure with National Folk influences. It appears to be the oldest building in the Willow-Spence National Register Historic District, with simple styling and form indicating its age and distinction from the district's later Folk Victorian buildings.
  - b. Historical association. The property is associated with the Brydson family. J. J. Brydson opened and operated the Brydson Lumber Company with his brothers Robert and Burt. He had a landmarked 1896 house at 1605 Cesar Chavez St.<sup>6</sup> during the 1980s, but the house appears to have been demolished when its historic zoning was inadvertently removed through the adopted rezonings of the 2000 East Cesar Chavez Neighborhood Plan.<sup>7</sup> Their nephew, William F. Warren, is honored with the landmarked William and Eleanor Warren House at 1502 Hardouin Ave. for his association with the company in its later years.<sup>8</sup> However, the family home at 81 Waller Street appears to be the original home of the Brydson brothers' carpentry business before the Brydson Lumber Company became one of Austin's most prolific builders.
  - 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 was not evaluated for its ability to convey 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 does not appear to be a significant natural or designed landscape with artistic, aesthetic, cultural, or historical value to the city.

#### **STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

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Consider whether the building's integrity and historical associations are sufficient to meet the designation requirements. If so, initiate historic zoning. If the Commission chooses to release the demolition permit, require completion of a City of Austin Documentation Package. New construction drawings must be reviewed by the Historic Landmark Commission prior to demolition permit release.

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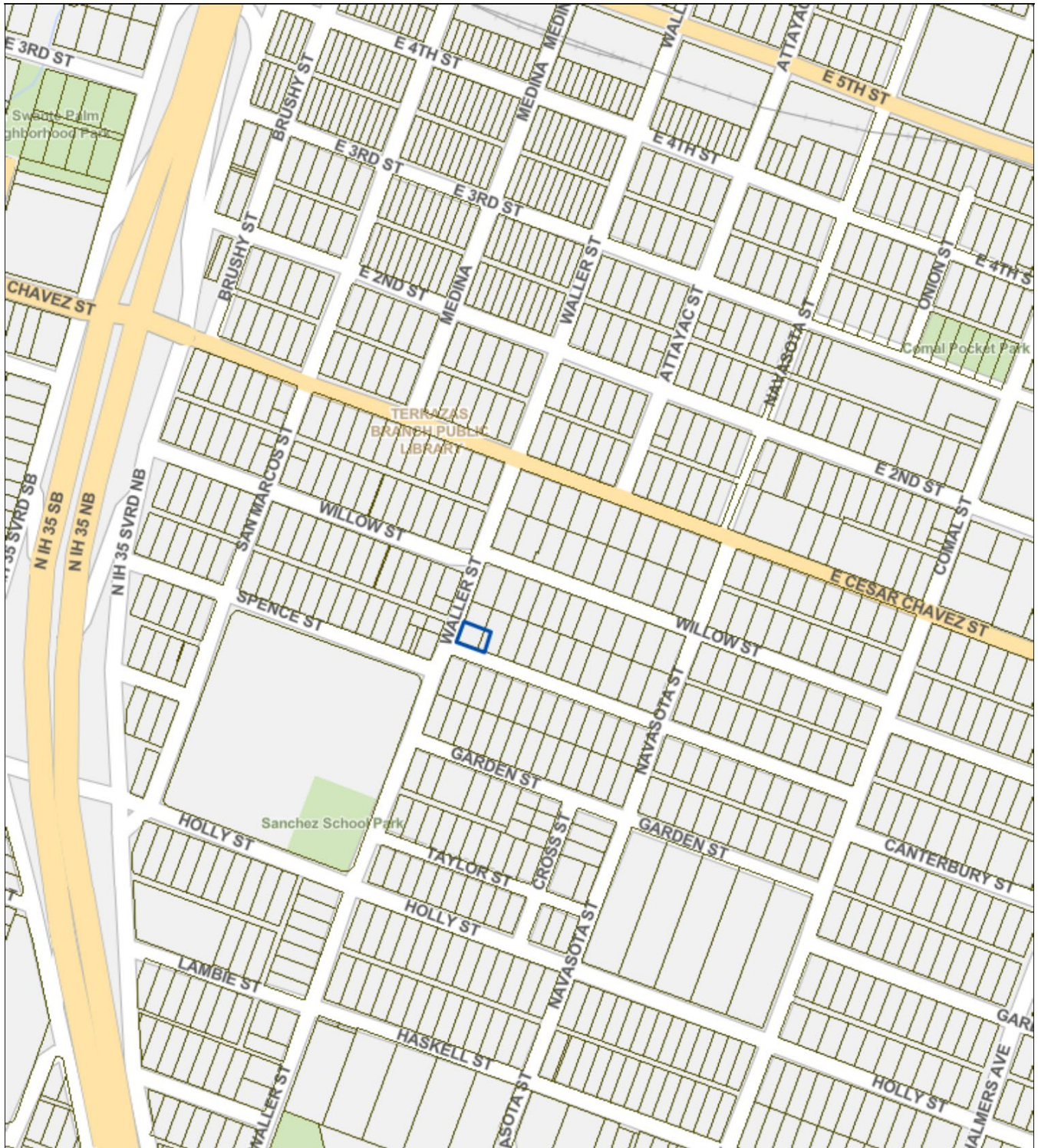
<sup>6</sup> <https://services.austintexas.gov/edims/document.cfm?id=12307>

<sup>7</sup> <https://services.austintexas.gov/edims/document.cfm?id=71945>

<sup>8</sup> Sadowsky, Steve. C14H-2016-0005, William F. and Eleanor-Warren House. <https://services.austintexas.gov/edims/document.cfm?id=256477>



# LOCATION MAP



Lot Lines

Lot Line



1: 4800

7/19/2023

**GF 23-087237**

**81 WALLER STREET**



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



**PROPERTY INFORMATION***Photos*





*Demolition application, 2023*





*Texas Historical Commission via University Of North Texas, 1980: <https://texashistory.unt.edu/ark:/67531/metapht971272/m1/1/>; <https://texashistory.unt.edu/ark:/67531/metapht675533/m1/1/>*

### *Occupancy History*

City Directory Research, July 2023

- 1959 Lano Garza, renter
- 1955 Leondro and Alicia Trevino, renters - Employee, Don Miller
- 1952 Claude and Sadie Pittman, renters - Employee of Calcasieu Lumber
- 1949 Harry S. and Violet Boatright, renters - Carpenter
- 1947 Eugene W. and Lucille Larson, renters - Mechanic
- 1944 George and Hattie Bryant, renters - Helper
- 1941 Ira F. and Thelma Reese, renters - Laborer, City Parks

- 1939 Ira F. and Thelma Reese, renters - Laborer
- 1935 Ira F. and Thelma Reese, renters - Laborer, Texas Public Service Company
- 1932 *81 Waller not listed; address change to 95 Waller*  
95 Waller: Vacant
- 1929 Lee and Susie Bishop, renters - Carpenter  
LeRoy J and Lucille Ricks, renters - Painter
- 1927 Lee and Susie Bishop, renters - Carpenter
- 1924 James W. and Maggie Weaver, renters - Laborer, Lone Star Ice Co.
- 1922 Henry W. and Dollie Leverett, renters - Blacksmith  
Arthur Leverett, renter - Clerk  
Herbert Leverett
- 1920 Vacant
- 1918 Vacant
- 1916 Henry L. Kramer—Driver  
Lonnie King, renter - Dogcatcher
- 1914 Columbus H. Richey  
Joseph H. Richey – gunsmith between 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> on Congress Ave.
- 1912 Vacant
- 1910 Vacant
- 1909 Alexandro Ruiz – clerk, Murchison-Lee Co.  
Mrs. Maria Aleman  
Ed Gress – presser  
Miss Justina Guerrero
- 1906 Frederick Hauer – laborer
- 1905 Charles Corbin
- 1895 Pauline Brydson, widow of R. K.  
Burt Brydson – clerk with W. F. Warren  
Miss Alice C. Brydson – saleslady, George A. Brush  
Miss Daisy Brydson – operator, telephone exchange  
Robert W. Brydson – carpenter  
Miss Sallie Brydson – cashier Scarbrough and Hicks
- 1893 John J. Brydson – carpenter, contractor, builder; shop and residence at 95 Waller  
Mrs. Pauline Brydson, widow R.K. Brydson  
Miss Alice C. Brydson – works at bookbindery of Ben C. Jones & Co.  
Miss Maggie Brydson – bookkeeper for George A. Brush
- 1889 Mrs. Pauline Brydson, widow of R. K. Brydson  
Miss Alice Brydson – works at C. J. Shumake & Co.  
John Brydson – cigarmaker, Phoenix Manufacturing Co.  
Robert Brydson – works at Phoenix cigar factory
- 1887 R. K. Brydson – dairyman
- 1885 Robert K. Brydson – fruit grower
- 1881 *Addressed as northeast corner of First Street east of Medina and Market Streets*  
Robert K. Brydson – gardener
- 1880 *1880 Census indicates that the Brydson family lived “between Spence and the river” on an unnamed street. Occupants included Scottish-born gardener Robert Brydson as the head of household, as well as his wife Pauline and children Maggie (13), John (11), Mary (10), Alice (7), and Robert Jr. (11).*



## Historical Information

### Biography of the Brydson Family

Pauline and Robert Brydson came to Austin from their homelands of Germany and Scotland, probably around 1888, with their two sons, J. J. and R. W. and daughter Margaret. Upon arriving in Austin, the two boys began working as home builders. Early records show *Brydson Brothers Planing Mill and Lumber Yard* was located at 1612-1618 Guadalupe Street. In 1909, along with Margaret's son, William Frederick Warren, the three men began operating a retail business known as *Brydson Lumber Company*. They built a reputation of turning out some of the finest residences and cabinet work in the city, as well as financing these homes.

Due to their rapid expansion, the *Brydson Lumber Company* and its plant opened a new location at 19th and Guadalupe in early 1924. That same year, the Brydson Addition (subdivision) was platted near 22nd St. and Duval. The Austin Statesman said that it was one of the newer and more attractive additions to the city, and it featured "tarviated" streets. The *Brydson Lumber and Construction Company* "was prepared to build pretty homes in this addition." A number of residents who had sold their homes to UT in order to make the land acquisition program of the University possible built their new homes in the Brydson Addition. Those houses were later sold to UT, as well.

Minutes of a 1926 City Council meeting show that the council accepted Brydson's bid to build the new city jail. They are listed as the contractors for the Brogan House, a city landmark at 3018 West Avenue, the Blue Bonnet Courts on Guadalupe, St. Mary's Baptist Church, the Charles Moreland House on E. 1st, the Sparks House at 16th and West, the 1896 Ruggles-Smith House, to name just a few among the many homes and businesses they built.

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*Bryson Lumber Company and Construction* was one of the most active builders in Hyde Park, which made them part of a list of who's who of local builders and lumber yards in the late 19th- and early 20th-century Austin. Many of these houses were probably erected from plans appearing in pattern books or other publications used by builders and buyers alike, rather than having drawings done by an architect.

The lumber company eventually moved or expanded its operations to the corner of 19th and San Antonio. On April 30, 1952, a night fire destroyed the lumber company. The fire had started in the mill part of the lumber yard and also leveled almost half a block on 19th Street. The company rebuilt the business at 18th and San Antonio and remained in this location until 1966. While no records were found of the sale or closure of the company, there were no listings in the city directories for *Brydson Lumber* after 1966.

The *Brydson Lumber Company* was in business in Austin for 78 years.

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C14H-2016-0005, William F. and Eleanor-Warren House, <https://services.austintexas.gov/edims/document.cfm?id=256477>

**WANTED—Gentleman to occupy two large front rooms; well furnished, pleasant location, street car convenient. Address 95 Waller st.**

*Austin Daily Statesman (1891-1902); 21 Aug 1892: 6.*





**The Wright Formette Corset.**

The best Corset on the market. These Corsets are designed especially for stout women and have features possessed by no other Corsets. The partial separation of the upper and lower parts of the front eliminates the stiffness, which is unavoidable in all other styles of Corsets, and permits a freedom of movement so necessary to comfort and ease. Wearers of these Corsets are as comfortable sitting as when standing. Besides being the most comfortable stout woman's Corset, it is also the most healthful, for the reason that there is no pressure on the respiratory muscles or upon any organ of the abdominal cavity.

**MRS. SARAH YOUNG, Agent**

Residence 95 Waller.  
New phone 238.

## WOMAN SUFFERS WOUNDS

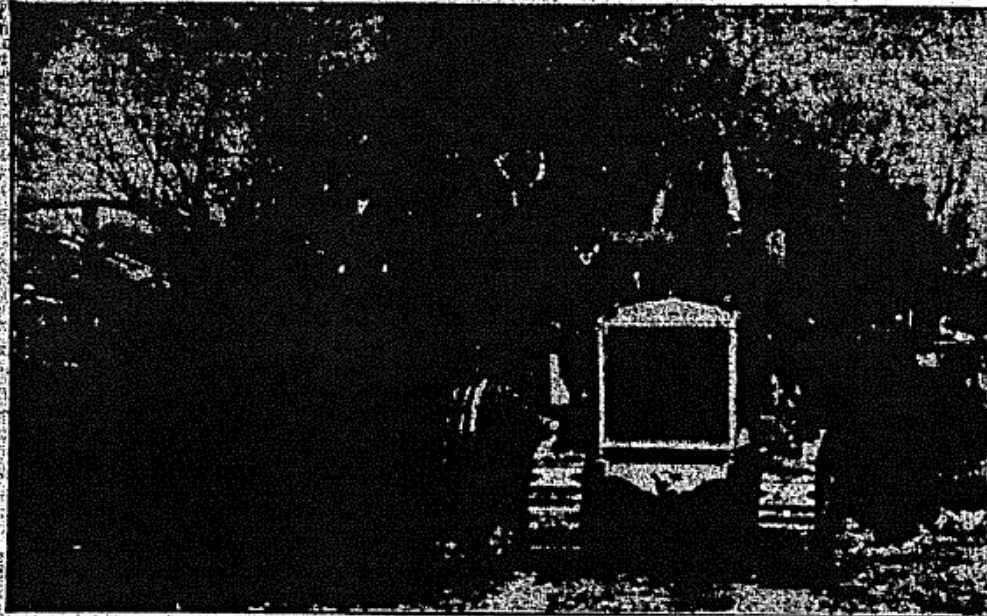
**Policeman Arrests Man—City Physician Attends Injured.**

Mrs. John Hart was cut severely across both sides of her neck, stabbed in the breast and suffered knife wounds on her arm yesterday, and Burleson Fleet, a boarder at the same residence, 95 Waller Street, is under arrest. His clothes were bloody when he was taken into custody by Policeman Martin a block from the residence.

The attending physician says Mrs. Hart's wounds are not necessarily serious. A board bill is reported to have started the difficulty.

Display Ad 21 -- No Title. The Austin Statesman (1902-1915) 29 Apr 1906: 7.  
WOMAN SUFFERS WOUNDS. The Austin Statesman (1902-1915); 17 Aug 1913: 2.

## BRYDSON ADDITION AMONG CAPITAL CITY'S REAL BEAUTY SPOTS; IDEALLY LOCATED AS A RESIDENTIAL SECTION



Street Commissioner George Searight's workmen are shown here removing a large tree at the corner of Rio Grande and Twenty-Ninth Street, thereby making possible a better entrance to the Brydson Addition, one of Austin's newer and more attractive additions. Brydson Lumber & Construction Company is prepared to build pretty homes in this addition on easy monthly payments.

Among Austin's newer, prettier, and more attractive additions is the Brydson Addition, bounded on the south by West Twenty-eighth and a Half Street, and on the north by West Twentieth. This delightful addition, located just two blocks west of Rio Grande, is really one of the beauty spots of the city. It is one of the closest in of all Austin additions, but it possesses a suburban quietness and retreat.

It is with a mingled feeling of surprise and pleasure that one comes onto the pretty homes tucked away in this addition. Located just two blocks west of the Rio Grande Street car line, and three blocks from the Main street car line, where it turns on Guadalupe, this addition offers every convenience.

The addition is on high ground, with perfect drainage.

Soon another big asset is to be added to the addition. Street Commissioner George C. Searight has promised that the streets of the Brydson Addition will be tarliated and the home owners of this beautiful addition are looking forward eagerly to the obtaining of tarliated streets. The force of Street Commissioner Searight has been most helpful in aiding in the beautifying of the addition, according to Burt Brydson, who owns the largest interest in the addition.

For those who love the delights of beautiful scenic views, a home in the Brydson Addition would hold many joys. A splendid view of the hills west of the city may be obtained from this addition. The early morning and late afternoon views are unbeatable.

Another distinct advantage of the Brydson Addition is its proximity to the University of Texas. This factor has been an important one in the choice of a number of those who have built homes in the addition. A number of residents who sold their homes to the University, in order to make possible the land acquisition program of the University, have built homes in this delightful addition.

The Brydson Lumber and Construction Company, with which the owners of the Brydson Addition are connected, is prepared to build homes in the new addition. Any type of building, whether of lumber or brick, will be built to suit the tastes of the individual. Many residents in the Brydson Addition are paying for their homes in monthly payments. Those interested should phone 6249.

### BRYDSON LUMBER CO. SEES BUSY DAYS AHEAD

House builders in Austin for 40 years is the record behind Brydson Lumber company of this city. J. J. Brydson, R. W. Brydson, and W. F. Warren are the partners in the business, whose volume has grown steadily with the years. Warren has been with the company since its establishment in the retail business in 1909.

The business thus far in 1928 has been just about equal to that of 1927, but the large amount of building projects for Austin this year in almost all departments practically assures the company, of one of its best years, Mr. Warren stated.

Specializing as "general contractors and builders of beautiful homes" the company has planned and constructed many homes for Austin residents, furnishing all materials, even to the hardware and paint. They have also built several homes themselves, after which they are offered for sale. Only the best grade lumber obtainable is used in their construction, which includes Edgewood red cedar shingles and Bird and Son's roofing, of which the company is sole Austin distributor.

Connected with the lumber warehouse is Brydson's planing mill, which has the reputation in Austin and surrounding territory of being the best in this section of the country.

The company also does a large trade in window glass, and keeps in stock fine paints and varnishes and hardware for builders.

*The Austin Statesman* (1902-1915); 18 May 1924: C10. Via <https://services.austintexas.gov/edims/document.cfm?id=256477>.

BRYDSON LUMBER CO. SEES BUSY DAYS AHEAD *The Austin Statesman* (1921-1973); 03 Mar 1928: 8.



# Pioneer Builders Of Austin

"Among the pioneers in home building in Austin is the Brydson Lumber company. The organization today is the outgrowth of a general contracting partnership begun more than forty years ago by J. J. Brydson and his brother R. W. Brydson. Officers of the company are Wm. F. Warren, R. W. Brydson and A. R. McTee," according to Mr Wm. F. Warren, president of the company, "as the volume of general contracting work grew, it became advisable to enter the retail lumber business, and the first yard and planing mill was built between 16th and 17th street, on the vacant block now owned by the Scottish Rite bodies.

"In 1922, the company acquired the property which it now occupies at 19th and Guadalupe street, and built the present plant.

"From the beginning, the Brydson Lumber company has devoted its energies to home building in Austin, and the institution today can point with pride to its part in helping to build Austin, and especially Austin homes.

"Today, the company operates a modern lumber yard and planing mill at 19th and Guadalupe streets, where complete home-building service may be had. The company has made a continuous effort to keep abreast of modern ideas and trends in building and through its

staff is equipped to give up-to-the-minute advice and assistance on building problems and materials.

"Also through the general contractors associated with the lumber yard, the company offers reliable and efficient building service.

"The planing mill is a manufacturing plant where items necessary to building are made, and this service is a further attempt of the company to offer a complete building set-up.

"All kinds of building materials are offered for sale at the retail yard."

*Pioneer Builders Of Austin. The Austin American (1914-1973); 28 Mar 1937: 10.*  
SOUTH OF 12TH AVENUE A.

Mr. and Mrs. George Bryant, 81 Waller street, have one son still in Texas to make up for the two sons overseas. Pfc. Raymond (Dick) Bryant, 28, has been in England for the past six months serving with the army medical corps. Before joining the army in November, 1942, he was employed at the Calcasieu Lumber company. Corp. James Bryant, 24, is an infantryman in North Africa. He left his work at the Capitol Lumber company to join the army in 1940. The youngest, Pvt. William Bryant, was inducted last October and is stationed in the medical corps at Camp Barkeley. Before induction he worked for the Central Trucking company.

*FIGHTERS for FREEDOM. The Austin Statesman (1921-1973); 15 Feb 1944: 3.*



**VISITS PARENTS**—James Pittman, seaman apprentice, US Navy son of Mr. and Mrs. Claude Pittman, 81 Waller Street, has been home on a two weeks leave visiting his parents. He returned to Naval Air Service Station at Miramor for duty in San Diego.

## Austin Navy Man Gets Commendation

Exceptional energy and hard work have paid off for an Austin Navy man, Claude B. Pittman, son of Mr. and Mrs. Claude S. Pittman, 81 Waller Street. Young Pittman was awarded a letter of commendation Feb. 4 at a meritorious mast held by the officer in charge of the LSM 455.

Pittman was awarded the citation because of his outstanding work as an electrician's mate striker aboard the LSM 455. He has been aboard the vessel since August 18, 1953. Previous to that he spent three months at the US Naval Station, Long Beach, Calif., in connection with the Reserve Officer Corps program.

As a matter of coincidence, the Austin sailor received his letter of commendation on the day marking the completion of his first year of active Naval Reserve. He enlisted in the Navy on Feb. 5, 1953, at Houston.

*VISITS PARENTS. The Austin Statesman (1921-1973); Austin, Tex. [Austin, Tex]. 06 Aug 1951: 2.  
Austin Navy Man Gets Commendation. The Austin American (1914-1973); 21 Feb 1954: A11.*

### GUADALUPE GODOY

Guadalupe Godoy, 58, of 81 Waller died Saturday in a local hospital. He was a Catholic. Rosary will be Sunday at 7 p.m. at the Angel Funeral Home. Mass will be celebrated Monday at 2 p.m. at Cristo Rey Catholic Church, Rev. Father Daniel Villanueva officiating. Burial will be in Hornsby Bend Cemetery.

Survivors include his widow Mrs. Antonio Godoy; two daughters, Mrs. Mary Bourque and Miss Pauline Godoy, both of Austin; a son, Arthur Godoy of Austin; two sisters, Mrs. Merced Nunez and Miss Tomasa Godoy, both of Austin; and two brothers, Vincent Godoy and Pat Godoy, both of Austin.

### MISS PAULINE GODOY

Funeral services for Pauline Godoy, 23, of 81 Waller St., were held Monday at Cristo Rey Catholic Church with Rev. Dan Villanueva officiating. Burial was in Hornsby Bend Cemetery under direction of Mission Funeral Home. Pallbearers were Alice Godoy, Mary Nunz, Rose Maria Rodriguez, Mary Ganos, Sylvia Rodriguez and Mary Cisneros.

GODOY, Mrs. Antonia, 62, 81 Waller St., died Friday. Services pending at Angel Funeral Home. Survivors: son, Arturo Godoy of Austin; brothers, Matias Herrera, Pete Herrera, both of Barstow, Calif.

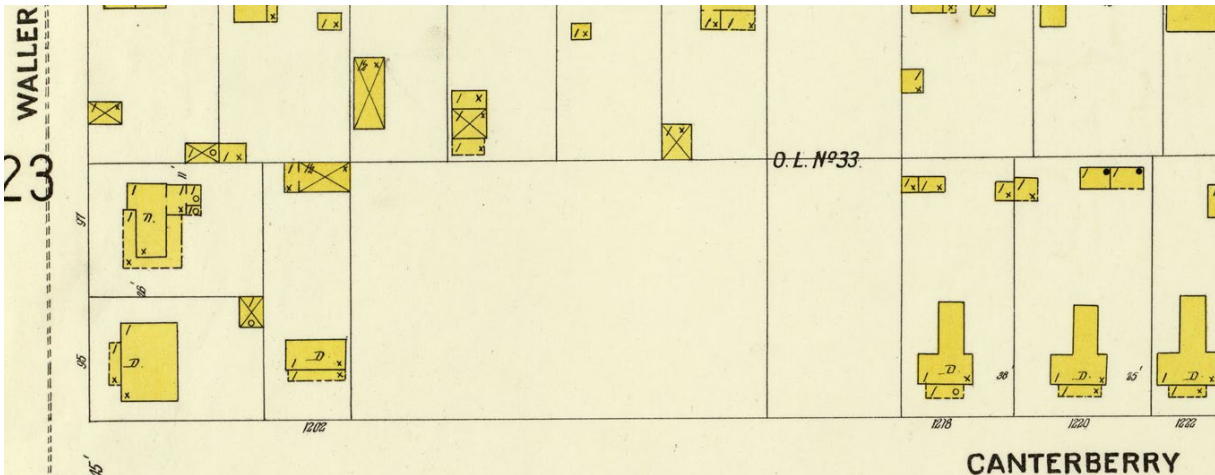
*DEATHS and SERVICES. The Austin Statesman (1921-1973); 01 Mar 1970: A8*

*Deaths and Services. The Austin Statesman (1921-1973); 28 Feb 1972: 19.*

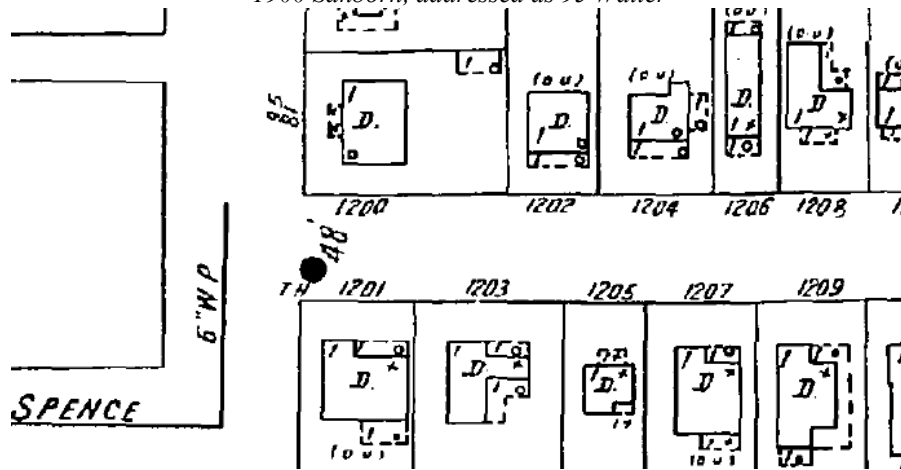
*deaths and services. The Austin American Statesman (1973-1980), Evening ed.; 01 Aug 1976: B5.*



## Maps



1900 Sanborn, addressed as 95 Waller



1962 Sanborn, addressed as 1200 Canterbury, 95 Waller, and 81 Waller

## Permits

OWNER	W. A. Campbell		ADDRESS	81 Waller
PLAT	135	LOT	31. & 22.5 of 32	BLK--
SUBDIVISION	Canterbury Square			
OCCUPANCY	Residence			
BLD PERMIT #	102149	DATE	1-25-67	OWNERS ESTIMATE 500.00
CONTRACTOR	owner		NO. OF FIXTURES	5
WATER TAP REC #	Exist		SEWER TAP REC #	Exist
Remodel & Repair Frame Residence to min Stand				