

Texas Historical Commission staff (AD), 11/6/2008, rev. 2/18/09, rev. 3/31/2009, rev. 4/7/2009  
18" x 28" Recorded Texas Historic Landmark Marker without post for attachment to brick  
Traivs County (Job #08TV06) Subject (Atlas) UTM: 14 620864E 3346177N  
Location: Austin, 906 Mariposa

### **WALTER AND MAE SIMMS HOUSE**

AUSTIN ARCHITECT ROGER Q. SMALL DESIGNED THIS UNIQUE 1935 HOME FOR WALTER AND MAE (MOORE) SIMMS, WHO ESTABLISHED SIMMS FISH MARKET IN 1915 AND DELIVERED GULF COAST SEAFOOD TO HOTELS AND RESTAURANTS THROUGHOUT CENTRAL TEXAS FOR NEARLY FORTY YEARS. THE SIMPLIFIED CLASSICAL REVIVAL STYLE HOUSE IS A SIDE-GABLED RECTANGULAR PLAN RESIDENCE SET INTO A SLOPING LOT, WITH BUTLER BRICK AND LARGE MULTI-LIGHT WINDOWS. BELOW THE HOUSE IS AN INTEGRATED FIVE-BAY GARAGE, FRAMED BY A ROUGH-CUT LIMESTONE FAÇADE. THIS INCORPORATION OF A GARAGE INTO THE HOUSE'S MAIN STRUCTURE DID NOT BECOME COMMON UNTIL AFTER WORLD WAR II, REFLECTING THE RISING INFLUENCE OF AUTOMOBILES ON ARCHITECTURE AND URBAN PLANNING DURING THE EARLY 20TH CENTURY.

RECORDED TEXAS HISTORIC LANDMARK – 2008  
MARKER IS PROPERTY OF THE STATE OF TEXAS

**RECORDED TEXAS HISTORIC LANDMARK MARKERS:  
2008 Official Texas Historical Marker  
Sponsorship Application Form**

Valid November 1, 2007 to January 15, 2008 only

This form constitutes a public request for the Texas Historical Commission (THC) to consider approval of an Official Texas Historical Marker for the topic noted in this application. The THC will review the request and make its determination based on rules and procedures of the program. Filing of the application for sponsorship is for the purpose of providing basic information to be used in the evaluation process. The final determination of eligibility and therefore approval for a state marker will be made by the THC. This form is to be used for Recorded Texas Historic Landmark (building marker) requests only. Please see separate forms for either Historic Texas Cemeteries or subject markers.

**Proposed marker topic** (official title will be determined by the THC): **WALTER & MAE SIMMS HOUSE**

**County:** Travis

**Town** (nearest county town on current state highway map): **Austin**

**Street address of marker site or directions from town noted above:** **906 Mariposa Drive**

**NOTE:** Recorded Texas Historic Landmark markers must be placed at the structure being marked.

**Recorded Texas Historic Landmark markers definition:** Recorded Texas Historic Landmark (RTHL) markers are awarded to structures deemed worthy of preservation for their historical associations and architectural significance. RTHL is a legal designation and comes with a measure of protection; it is the highest honor the state can bestow on a historic structure, and the designation is required for this type of marker. The RTHL designation becomes effective upon approval by the THC. Official Texas Historical Markers signify the RTHL designation, which comes only through application to and approval by the THC and must include public display of an Official Texas Historical Marker. Owners of RTHL-designated structures must give the THC 60 days written notice before any alterations are made to the exterior of the structure. RTHL status is a permanent designation and is not to be removed from the property in the event of a transfer of ownership. Only the THC can remove the designation or recall the marker. The marker must remain with the structure and may not be removed or displayed elsewhere until or unless the THC gives express approval in writing for such action. Once designated as RTHL, properties are subject to provisions of Texas Government Code, Section 442.006(f).

**Criteria:**

1. **Age:** Structures eligible for the RTHL designation and marker must be at least 50 years old.
2. **Historical significance:** Architectural significance alone is not enough to qualify a structure for the RTHL designation. It must have an equally significant historical association, and that association can come from an event that occurred at the site; through individuals who owned or lived on the property; or, in the case of bridges, industrial plants, schoolhouses and other non-residential properties, through documented significance to the larger community.
3. **Architectural significance:** Structures deemed architecturally significant are outstanding examples of architectural history through design, materials, structural type or construction methods. In all cases,

eligible architectural properties must display integrity; that is, the structure should be in a good state of repair, maintain its appearance from its period of significance and be considered an exemplary model of preservation. Architectural significance is often best determined by the relevance of the property to broader contexts, including geography. Any changes over the years should be compatible with original design and reflect compliance with accepted preservation practices, e.g., the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation*.

4. **Good state of repair:** Structures not considered by the THC to be in a good state of repair are ineligible for RTHL designation. The THC reserves the sole right to make that determination relative to eligibility for RTHL markers.

**Special National Register considerations for RTHL marker applications:** If a structure has been individually listed in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) under either Criterion A or B and Criterion C (Architecture), the historical text compiled as part of the National Register nomination process may be submitted as part of the marker process, provided it includes the required reference notes and other documentation. Acceptance of the National Register information for the purposes of the marker process will be up to the sole determination of the THC. Listing in the NRHP does not guarantee approval for an RTHL marker. See the THC web site at <http://www.thc.state.tx.us/markerdesigns/madnrcrit.html> for National Register criteria.

## APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

Any individual, group or county historical commission (CHC) may apply to the THC to request an Official Texas Historical Marker for what it deems a worthy topic. Only complete marker applications that contain all the required elements and are submitted online as required can be accepted or processed by the THC. For RTHL markers, the required elements are: sponsorship application form; narrative history; documentation; online map (see details below); site plan; floorplan; historic photograph; and current photographs clearly showing each side of the structure.

- Completed applications must be duly reviewed, verified and approved by the county historical commission (CHC) in the county in which the marker will be placed.
- The sponsorship application form, narrative history and documentation must be submitted as Microsoft Word or Word-compatible documents and sent via email attachments to the THC by no later than January 15, 2008.
- Required font style and type size are a Times variant and 12-point.
- Narrative histories must be typed in a double-spaced (or 1.5-spaced) format and include separate sections on context, overview, significance and documentation.
- The narrative history must include documentation in the form of reference notes, which can be either footnotes or endnotes. Documentation associated with applications should be broad-based and demonstrate a survey of all available resources, both primary and secondary.
- Applications for RTHL markers must include a current city or county map through TopoZone.com that clearly denotes the proposed marker location. Instructions for using TopoZone.com are available on the THC web site.
- Upon notification of the successful preliminary review of required elements by the THC, a non-refundable application fee of \$100 is required. The fee shall be submitted to the THC within ten working days of application receipt notification.

## APPROVAL BY COUNTY HISTORICAL COMMISSION

The duly appointed marker representative (chair or marker chair) noted below for the county historical commission will be the sole contact with the THC for this marker application. To ensure accuracy, consistency and efficiency, all information from and to the THC relative to the application—and throughout the review and production processes—will be via direct communication with the CHC representative. All other inquiries (calls, emails, letters) to the THC will be referred to the CHC

representative for response. By filling out the information below and filing the application with the THC, the CHC representative is providing the THC with notice that the application and documentation have been reviewed and verified by the CHC and that the material meets all current requirements of the Official Texas Historical Marker program.

**As chair or duly appointed marker chair, I certify the following:**

- Representatives of the CHC have met or talked with the potential marker sponsor and discussed the marker program policies as outlined on the THC web site. CHC members have reviewed the history and documentation for accuracy and made corrections or notes as necessary. It is the determination of the CHC that the topic, history and documentation meet criteria for eligibility.

**CHC comments or concerns about this application, if any:**

**Name of CHC contact** (chair or marker chair): Marty Moulthrop

**Mailing address:** 7400 Anaqua Drive **City, Zip:** Austin, TX 78750

**Daytime phone** (with area code): 512-343-0814 **Email address** (required): jmoulthrop@austin.rr.com

**PERMISSION OF PROPERTY OWNER FOR MARKER PLACEMENT**

**Property owner:** Elana Einhorn and Will Andrews

**Address:** 906 Mariposa Drive **City, state, zip:** Austin, TX 78704

**Phone:** 512-445-5553 **Email address:** anarene@io.com

**Legal Description of the property** (metes and bounds, lot and block, etc.): All of Lot 1 & the South 37.5 Ft. Avg. of Lot 2 in Block 21, Travis Heights Subdivision (1913) UTM References: Zone 14, Easting 620862, Northing 3346180. Boundary corresponds to dimensions of lot purchased by the original owner in 1935 and includes all property historically associated with the house.

Upon receipt of the application, the THC will provide the owner with a letter that outlines the legal responsibility of ownership under the Recorded Texas Historic Landmark statute. The letter must be signed by the owner and returned to the THC before the evaluation can be completed.

**NOTE:** The property owner will not receive any additional copies of correspondence from the THC. [All other correspondence—notice of receipt, request for additional information, payment notice, inscription, shipping notice, etc.—will be sent via email to the CHC representative, who is encouraged to share the information with all interested parties as necessary.] Given the large volume of applications processed annually and the need for centralized communication, all inquiries about applications in process will be referred to the CHC for response. The CHC is the sole liaison to the THC on all marker application matters.

**SPONSORSHIP PAYMENT INFORMATION**

Prospective sponsors please note the following:

- Payment must be received in full within 45 days of the official approval notice and must be accompanied by the THC payment form. The THC is unable to process partial payments or to delay payment due to processing procedures of the sponsor. Applications not paid in the time frame required may, at the sole discretion of the THC, be cancelled or postponed.
- Payment does not constitute ownership of a marker; Recorded Texas Historic Landmark markers and other Official Texas Historical Markers are the property of the State of Texas.

- If, at any time during the marker process, sponsorship is withdrawn, a refund can be processed, but the THC will retain the application fee of \$100.
- The Official Texas Historical Marker Program provides no means of recognizing sponsors or property owners through marker text, incising or supplemental plaques.

**Marker sponsor** (may be individual or organization): Elana Einhorn and Will Andrews

**Contact person** (if applicable): Phoebe Allen

**Mailing address:** 2510 Cedarview Drive **City, zip:** Austin, TX 78704

**Email address** (required): phoebezink@aol.com **Phone:** 512-444-1326

**SHIPPING INSTRUCTIONS**

In order to facilitate delivery of the marker, neither post office box numbers nor rural route numbers can be accepted. To avoid additional shipping charges or delays, use a business street address (open 8 a.m.—5 p.m., Monday through Friday).

**Name:** Elana Einhorn and Will Andrew

**Street address:** 906 Mariposa Drive **City, zip:** Austin, TX 78704

**Daytime phone** (required): 512-445-5553 **Email** (required): anarene@io.com

**TYPE AND SIZE OF RECORDED TEXAS HISTORIC LANDMARK MARKERS**

As part of its review process, the THC will determine the appropriate size marker and provide options, if any, for the approved topic based on its own review criteria, including, but not exclusive of, historical significance, replication of information in other THC markers, relevance to the Statewide Preservation Plan and the amount of available documented information provided in the application narrative. In making its determination, however, the THC will also take into account the preference of the CHC, as noted below.

The sponsor/CHC prefers the following size marker:

- 27" x 42" RTHL marker with post (\$1500)
- 27" X 42" RTHL marker without post\* (\$1500)
- 18" x 28" RTHL marker with post (\$1000)
- 18" x 28" RTHL marker without post\* (\$1000)
- RTHL medallion and 16" x 12" plaque with post (\$750)
- RTHL medallion and 16" x 12" plaque without post\* (\$750)

\*For an RTHL marker without post, indicate to what surface material it will be mounted:

- wood
- masonry
- metal
- other (specify)

**SUBMITTING THE APPLICATION (via email required)**

When the CHC has determined the application is complete, the history has been verified and the topic meets the requirements of the Official Texas Historical Marker Program, the materials should be forwarded to the THC via email at the following address: [markerapplication@thc.state.tx.us](mailto:markerapplication@thc.state.tx.us).

- The CHC or marker chair should send an email containing the following attachments (see attachment function under file menu or toolbox on your computer):
  - This application form
  - A TopoZone.com map of the proposed marker location
  - The narrative history (including documentation)

**RECORDS RETENTION BY CHC:** The CHC must retain hard copies of the application as well as an online version, at least for the duration of the marker process. The THC is not responsible for lost applications, for incomplete applications or for applications not properly filed according to the program requirements. For additional information about any aspect of the Official Texas Historical Marker Program, see the Markers page on the THC web site (<http://www.thc.state.tx.us/markerdesigs/madmark.html>).



**WALTER & MAE SIMMS HOUSE**

906 Mariposa Drive

Austin, Texas 78704

**Recorded Texas Historic Landmark Nomination**

Prepared for

Elana Einhorn & Will Andrews, Owners

November 2007

By

Phoebe Allen  
2510 Cedarview Drive  
Austin, Texas 78704  
512-444-1326  
phoebezink@aol.com

## **ARCHITECTURAL & HISTORICAL NARRATIVES**

### **Architectural Summary<sup>i</sup>**

The Walter & Mae Simms House at 906 Mariposa Drive is a unique, two-story, vernacular home, situated in the historic Travis Heights neighborhood of South Austin, Texas. Built in 1935 at the intersection of Mariposa with Travis Heights Boulevard, its striking arrangement of rough-cut limestone and Elgin-Butler brick, and the integrated 5-bay garage system that dominates the bottom floor, represent a local translation of the Colonial Revival style that proliferated in Austin and other parts of the country during the early part of the 20th century.

The structure's rectangular plan and regular, geometric massing are set back into the sloping hillside, and its simple gable roof is sheathed in original asbestos shingles. The primary elevation, marked by the five adjacent garage bay doors and rising limestone half-columns, is oriented south-southwest and fronts onto Mariposa Drive. The upper floor is recessed along its primary elevation creating a long, concrete patio space that continues in limestone flag around the east end of the house. The property steps down gradually from east to west, and is bounded on its south side by a similarly stepped, limestone masonry retaining wall. With the exception of a few minor changes made to its exterior, the house has retained a high level of historic and architectural integrity.

### **Introduction**

The Simms House is a two-story, five-bay, double-pile building with a masonry load-bearing frame, covered in a brick and limestone veneer. (Photo #1, South Façade) The main (second) level of house is wood frame. It is located at 906 Mariposa Drive, at the corner intersection of Mariposa with Travis Heights Boulevard. It occupies the western end of a parcel of land



comprising all of lot #1 and the southern 37.5 feet of lot #2 in block 21 of the Travis Heights Addition (as recorded in Plat book #3, page 15, of the Plat records of Travis County, Texas). The long axis of the building's rectangular plan is oriented in a northwest-by-southeast direction and its primary elevation—the southern aspect—fronts onto Mariposa Drive (See Site Plan in Appendix).

The building's unusual structural arrangement—a bottom story of rough-cut limestone walls, supporting an upper floor of Elgin Butler brick—represents a local translation of the Colonial Revival architectural style that was popular in Austin, and across America, when the house was built in 1935. The lower floor's integrated five-bay garage system, accessed through five adjacent garage doors, reflects an early manifestation of the wide-scale impact that the automobile had on American architecture during the early decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

The Simms family had originally planned to construct a one- or two-story building on the east side of the property (fronting onto Travis Heights Boulevard) to house a duplex or several rental apartments. The multi-garage component of the main house would have been used to house the vehicles of future boarders. The architect, **Roger Q. Small**, chief draftsman for well-known local architect Hugo Kuehne, designed a number of residential structures in Austin, including residences with garages or garage apartments.<sup>ii</sup> It is unclear as to why the building project never materialized, but the Depression was one probable cause.

### **Exterior: First Floor**

The building's concrete slab foundation is set partially into the hillside. The bottom story exhibits masonry construction and a veneer of large, rough-cut limestone fastened with Portland cement. The stone was reportedly excavated from the hills west of the city, near the Bee Caves Road area (Simms Jr. 2004; personal communication). The unusual five-bay garage system (each

bay approx. 10.5 x 19 feet) accounts for nearly two-thirds of this floor's functional space. Five multi-paneled garage doors dominate the lower half of the home's primary elevation. Each door contains two contiguously spaced, single-pane windows, the placement of which mimics that of the windows in the original doors (Photo #1 - South Façade). The original garage doors visible in the 1930s photo of the house (Historic photograph circa late 1930s) were first replaced in the early 1950s.<sup>iii</sup>

A clear line of demarcation separates the two floors at the point where the lower limestone masonry wall ends and the horizontal courses of Elgin-Butler brick begin (Photo #2 - West Elevation). The east and west side-gables have louvered, semi-circular vents in the attic level, both trimmed with brick edging (Photos #2 & 4).

### **Exterior: Second Floor**

The upper story (comprising 1540 square feet) serves as the primary living space, and exhibits a veneer of Elgin Butler brick set in an all-stretcher bond configuration (Photo #3 – Upper front/south façade). It is slightly recessed along its primary elevation, creating a concrete patio space (approximately 56 feet long by 10 feet deep) that extends the full length of the building and wraps around its east end in limestone flag. Limestone masonry half-columns extend upward from the lower story to partially frame this area. Simple, black iron rails connect the half-columns near their cement caps.

The fenestration visible in the primary façade is configured in an unbalanced, asymmetrical pattern. There are nine double-hung, one-over-one sash windows of varying sizes, spaced both singly and in contiguous pairings. All windows are one-over-one double-hung sash, and a rear door (Photo #6a – rear door), also in good condition, leads from the west end of the north elevation to the narrow back-yard space (Photo #4 - East façade; #5 & #6 - North (rear) façade).

The gable roof with original asbestos shingling remains in good condition. There are two interior chimneys visible: one at the peak's center point and one positioned slightly east of center on the southern down-slope. The latter was incorporated to accommodate a small woodstove which was to have been located in the bedroom directly below, but, according to former resident testimony, it was never utilized. Both chimneys exhibit a brick exterior sheathing.

### **Landscape Features**

The property is bounded by Travis Heights Boulevard on the east, Mariposa Drive on the south, a narrow alleyway (15 feet wide) to the west, and a line of vegetation on the north. (Photo #8 – View from Travis Heights Boulevard)

Two exterior concrete stairways provide access to the upper story of the house. One is located off Mariposa Drive near the east end of the building (Photo #9 - Stairway). The other set of steps lies just off the west end and leads up to the rear of the house (Photo #2). Both have simple iron support rails.

The yard slopes gradually downward from east to west and north to south (Photos #8 above & #10 - View from southeast of house). At the top, a short walkway provides access to an original, decorative limestone well/cistern (Photo #11 - Cistern). The current owners have added a playhouse on stilts for their young daughter, visible in Photo #8.

A limestone masonry retaining wall borders the yard space along Mariposa Drive. Beginning at a large Arizona ash near the Travis Heights intersection, it steps down with the sloping terrain before terminating at the east end of the house (Photo #10).

### **Historic and Physical Integrity**

Overall, the house has retained excellent historical and architectural integrity. A small section of the stone wall/patio has been repaired twice due to water damage, once in 1982 and again in

1998. Care was taken in matching the stone and fastener and only a slight color difference is visible between the original and repaired sections. The garage doors were replaced in the early 1950s due to rot, and the awnings that once covered the upper-story windows have been removed. The garage doors were replaced more recently, likely in 1982, with overhead doors similar in appearance to the originals.

The new owners have reinstalled the original awning frames and plan to have the awnings restored (frames are visible in Photo #3). The windows are original, though each of the 3-over-3 and 6-over-6 window screens (visible in the 1930s historic photo) has been removed—excepting the small 3-over-3 screen affixed to the lower quadrant window in the western façade. A small brick addition was made to the rear of the upper story in the 1950s to provide a recessed alcove to house a refrigerator (Photos #5 & #6). The same Elgin brick and same roofing materials were used to blend the addition with the rest of the façade.

The second story's interior oak floors and all of the door and window hardware are original and in good condition.<sup>iv</sup> The tiling and fixtures in the two Art Deco bathrooms are likewise intact. Sheet rock has been added to the walls in each room and painted off-white.

A short set of wooden steps was added to the interior of the garage space to provide access to the small room located in the northwest corner of the house (previously accessed exclusively through an exterior door in the western elevation).

## **HISTORICAL NARRATIVE**

*See Historical Illustration #1 – Walter & Mae Simms House, 906 Mariposa, circa late 1930s*

### **Introduction<sup>v</sup>**

The Simms House inspires a very memorable and lasting first impression. The whole structure is set partially back into the hillside. Thick, rough-cut limestone seems to rise up from

the ground to lift skyward the upper story's stacked courses of Elgin-Butler brick. Attention then quickly shifts to the five, cream-colored garage bay doors punctuating the bottom floor's main façade. At first glance, their presence seems incongruous—an oddity among the quaint, single-family homes and garden-community feel of the surrounding neighborhood.

Upon reflection, however, another picture emerges. As the building's overall sense of symmetry begins to assert itself, the visual impact of the doors shifts from one of incongruity to one of balance. You begin to get a sense of what the architect intended here; a design that acknowledges both the unique natural features of the surrounding landscape and the practical needs of an emergent automobile culture.

To understand the historical significance of the Simms House, it is also important to consider the broader social, geographic, and technological contexts that gave rise to its design. Prevailing architectural tastes, natural and planned elements of the Travis Heights subdivision, and the significant impact effected by the rise of the automobile on the city's built environment, all contributed to the finished product.

## **GEOGRAPHICAL CONTEXT: TRAVIS HEIGHTS<sup>vi</sup>**

The Travis Heights neighborhood is bordered on the north by the Colorado River and Riverside Drive, on the south by Oltorf Street, South Congress Avenue on the west, and IH-35 on the east. A six-span truss bridge on stone piers—the first permanent bridge that replaced the previous pontoon bridge and ferries so affected by flooding—was built across the river at Congress Avenue in 1883, opening the city to development south of the Colorado. But traffic across the iron bridge was congested and a new, wider concrete bridge replaced the first, narrow bridge in 1910.

Gen. William Harwood Stacy, a former commander of the Texas National Guard, had partnered with Charles Newning in 1886 to purchase 200 acres of land in the north part of South Austin. Taking into

consideration the failure of Newning's early development in Fairview Park, which had been geared strictly to the wealthy, Stacy made sure there were varying sizes and prices of lots in Travis Heights, which he opened in 1913. (Sanborn Map, South Austin 1921, below) He did, however, incorporate deed restrictions that prevented multi-family and commercial development, ensuring that the neighborhood would remain a residential area. He laid out both curving and grid streets in the heavily wooded, hilly terrain, and ran full streetcars of prospective buyers out to Travis Heights Boulevard from the Capitol. An immediate success, a great surge of homebuilding took place in Travis Heights in the 1920s.

*See Illustration #2 - Sanborn Map, South Austin 1921*

By the time of his death in 1928, 600 lots had been sold and more than 160 homes built. Following his death, his sons Harwood, Gillespie and Franklin Stacy continued development in Travis Heights. The Stacy family is remembered for their donation of Stacy Park along Blunn Creek.

By 1939, the *South Austin Advocate* newspaper claimed that 10,000 people lived in South Austin in 2,360 homes. Access to work in the downtown business district was a key to the success of Stacy's project. The automobile had arrived in relatively small numbers by 1913, so Stacy made sure streetcar service between the Capitol and Travis Heights was available.<sup>vii</sup> (Sketch of Travis Heights Neighborhood with Streetcar, see illustration #3.<sup>viii</sup>)

## **SOCIAL CONTEXT: RISE OF THE AUTOMOBILE<sup>ix</sup>**

The early success of Travis Heights, and its contemporary status as one of Austin's oldest surviving streetcar suburbs, are both related to the emergence and refinement of that form of public transportation. But the rising popularity of the automobile, which had only begun to manifest when Stacy started selling lots in 1913, would have significant implications for this South Austin community, and the city in general, over the course of the next several decades.

*(Please refer to the National Register nomination for a full discussion of the role of the garage and automobile in the architecture of the period, if needed.)*

### **Travis Heights Garages**

While the garage form evolved in Travis Heights in a manner largely consistent with the broader national trend, a small group of 1930s homes with “autos in the basement,” deviated somewhat from the general timeline. Specifically, their manifestation of a fully integrated garage space in the 1930s anticipated the broader trend by up to a decade in a few cases. Collectively, they signify a unique design adaptation that evolved in Travis Heights, and in isolated cases around Austin, in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century; an adaptation derived from the intersecting influences of Austin’s emerging car culture and the area’s distinct topographical qualities, specifically its undulating, hilly landscape.

The **Simms House** is the most clearly articulated example of this design adaptation. Constructed in 1935, its five contiguous garage bays are particularly distinctive, not only within the Travis Heights area but among middle-class homes citywide. An analysis of the property’s history, reveals important insights into the social, geographical and technological factors that gave rise to this unique architectural phenomenon.

Walter and Mae Simms owned and operated Simms Fish Market, a prominent fixture in Austin’s service economy during the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Established in 1915, the market sold fresh seafood out of the local store and offered wholesale delivery service to hotels and restaurants in Austin and other towns within a one-hundred-mile radius. In the early 1930s, despite the onset of the Depression, the business was holding steady. Walter Simms had just purchased several new delivery trucks to enhance the wholesale side of the business and to facilitate his supply runs to Galveston and Port Lavaca.<sup>x</sup>

In 1934, Mr. And Mrs. Simms purchased property for a new home in Travis Heights; a home that would better reflect their social and economic standing. They selected a corner lot with sloping contours and wide views to the west. They hired architect **Roger Q. Small** to design it, and local contractor **Richard Schmidt** to build it.

The project posed several design challenges for Small. First he had to find a way to create a flat space on a sloping hillside without adversely affecting the property's views and other natural assets. Also, as Travis Heights was a flourishing *suburban* community, well removed from the downtown location of Simms Fish Market on Congress Avenue, Small had to accommodate space for the family car. His solution on both counts was unique. Over the next two decades Roger Small went on to design a number of new homes in Austin, several of which called for two-story structures with integrated garage space on the first floor.

Abstracts indicate that the lot was purchased in October 1934, that the contractor was hired in February 1935 to build the house according to Small's existing plans, and that the foundation had already been built by 1935, when construction on the house began. About halfway through, the Depression finally caught up with the Simms family, and money became tight. As a cost saving measure, the contractor, Schmidt, suggested altering Small's design somewhat, using Elgin-Butler brick for the second floor veneer rather than the more expensive limestone.

The finished product raised some eyebrows in the neighborhood. Some residents wondered what all the garages were for given that deed restrictions in Travis Heights allowed only single-family homes. Whether Walter Simms had intended to store his delivery trucks here is not known. It is known however, that the family had planned to build another two-story structure on the property to accommodate a duplex, whose tenants would have used the extra garage spaces. They had a portion of



the front yard, fronting onto Travis Heights Boulevard, leveled for that purpose. The project never materialized, and the extra garage bays became primarily storage space.<sup>xi</sup>

## **WALTER SIMMS & SIMMS FAMILY HISTORY<sup>xii</sup>**

Walter Simms was born in Austin to **John Simms** (1851-1938) and his second wife, German native **Camilla Mary Rathmann** (1867-1934).

According to an article in the Austin Statesman,<sup>xiii</sup> John Simms was quite a character.

“To his last frontier has gone John Simms of the twinkling eyes, the white mustache and a fund of frontier anecdotes ... The 86-year-old pioneer who settled in Austin more than 50 years ago and reared a family of outstanding sons and daughters died late Monday... Young Johnny Simms reached the frontier by punching cattle on Buffalo Bayou for old Sam Allen in '67, and he was then a smooth-faced youth fresh from his native New Orleans. By '69 he was in the “wild country” near San Angelo. Johnny was the driver for the El Paso stage coach lines on the run from Concho to Fort Phantom Hill, a drive that lasted from 10 in the morning to 3 p.m. the next day, and had in its crowded hours its share of Indian threats and outlaw depredations. A government escort with a “Long Tom” rifle sat beside the driver on those trips, and so it was a matter of more than passing luck that Johnny Simms came across the Colorado 33 miles out of Concho one day with a whole skin on his back and some jolted but otherwise unharmed passengers in the coach. Indians driving stolen cattle were also making the crossing, and in the exchange of pleasantries the government escort did his best with the “Long Tom” while Johnny Simms helped out by holding the reins between his knees and giving fire for fire. It was right after that trip that Johnny resigned his job and tried a clerkship at Fort Griffin, but the work was dull to his way of thinking and soon he was back at Concho. He handled the Jacksboro run for a time and then drove on the Fredericksburg-Austin line. When he decided to settle down he chose the thriving town of Austin and here his family was reared.”

John Simms is listed in the Austin City Directories beginning in 1881, working as a transfer agent for Monroe Miller. Two other Simms men are listed in 1881, quite probably John’s brothers or family members: Frank L. and William A. Simms, who lived together east of the city limits that year. William was a delivery clerk with Pacific Express Company, “Forwarders of Merchandise, Specie & Valuables of all kinds to all points in Texas and (in connection with other Express Companies) to all points in the United States, Canada and Europe.”<sup>xiv</sup> John is

listed as a driver for the Pacific Express wagon beginning in 1883 (his eldest son Walter was born in 1885) and as a clerk for the company beginning in 1889. By 1889 John is a clerk and in 1891 a front clerk with the company, which was then located in the Driskill Hotel on Sixth Street just off Congress Avenue, advertising that it “Operates over 22,000 miles of railway, ocean and stage routes and has over 2,200 offices. It offers the safest and cheapest transportation facilities to and from all points in the East, Northeast, North, Northwest, Canada and Europe. Order and ship merchandise, jewelry, valuables and money by the Pacific Express.”<sup>xv</sup>

After the death of his first wife, who bore him two daughters, John Simms married again and built a home at 400 East First Street in 1893, where he raised a family of seven children that included four “prominent Austin business men.”<sup>xvi</sup> John continued working for the Pacific Express Company until at least 1905 and is listed as a collector beginning in 1912. Camilla died in 1934 and John followed in 1938; both were Christian Scientists.

*See Illustration #4 Walter & Mae Simms, circa 1906*

**Walter Eugene Simms** (1885-1949) was born in Austin. From 1901 to 1904 he worked as a clerk at Fulton Market, and in 1905 he became a delivery clerk for Pacific Express, where his father worked.

Walter was married on July 4, 1906, to **Mae Lois Moore** (1885-1966), the daughter of Olin T. and Sally Shuford Moore; Olin Moore was an engineer with H&TC railroad and lived in Austin for 35 years before his death. According to daughter Olin Harrell, her parents moved to Palestine for a short time right after their marriage to work for the railroad, but soon returned to Austin. Mae was very active in the Eastern Star as early as 1914.<sup>xvii</sup> A photo from Houston District #5 in 1931 lists her as District Deputy Grand Matron of Texas.<sup>xviii</sup>

From 1909-1913 Walter Simms is listed in the City Directory as a brakeman with the H&TC Railroad. According to his son, Walter worked as a fireman for the railroad, serving as an employee representative in the capacity of ‘union leader’ before unions existed.<sup>xix</sup> It was during this period, in 1910, that Walter built his first family home at 909 East First Street, where they lived until 1935. The couple had two children, daughter **Olin** (Mrs. Wilburn Harrell), born in 1910, and **Walter E. Simms Jr. (“Bud”)**, born in 1916.

*See illustration #5 - 1007 Willow Street, where Walter Sr. lived from 1912-1920; early 1900s/AHC; 2004 photo by S. Maroney*

Family connections were obviously very important to both John and Walter Simms, so it is no coincidence that Walter’s younger brother **Paul O. Simms** (1891-1969) had in 1912 joined the Stacy-Robbins Company, which began developing Travis Heights in 1913 (Walter would build there in 1935). Paul Simms began a successful insurance and real estate career in 1906 and was a well-known developer before selling his firm in 1937 to Harrison-Wilson, who added Forrest Pearson, Simms’ nephew, to the firm. Paul developed Barton Heights, Loma Linda, and McKinley Heights – the first African-American subdivision.

In 1934, Walter and Mae Simms bought property in Travis Heights from the Stacy Realty Company and commissioned architect Roger Q. Small to design their new home, which they lived in until their deaths in 1949 and 1966 respectively. Both of their children were young adults when the Travis Heights home was built, but Walter Jr. lived there from 1935 to 1942, when he joined the service, and again from 1948 to 1949.

Walter ran for City Council at one time (one of several candidates in a race with Tom Miller) but did not win the seat. As a Mason, he was a member of the Austin Shriner Lodge #12, Ben Hur and Scottish Rite.<sup>xx</sup> In the late Twenties and Thirties he was involved with Austin’s B team. The baseball players traveled five to a Model T. On one road trip to San Antonio, he had 13 flats.

Walter was also active in the Austin Pioneers, with Austin Baseball Club Incorporated in the Big State League – he was president of the club one year and lost money at it.<sup>xxi</sup>

After Walter Sr.'s death, Mae took in boarders; one was Bonnie Stockerbrand, who owned Twin Oaks Cafeteria. Students from Nixon-Clay Business College also roomed with her, helping with chores rather than paying rent. Mae's mother lived in the basement rooms of the house for some time before her death, to avoid climbing the stairs. During the Cold War days of the 1960s, Walter Jr. equipped the room as a bomb shelter.

Walter Jr. first married Dorothy Jackson. He and his second wife, Margaret Harper Buchanan (1918-1956) had two daughters, **Donna** (Flippin) and **Roxan** (Staff). Margaret died in January of 1956 after a long illness, and Walter Jr. brought his two daughters to live with his mother (now in her seventies) in the family home in January of 1956. Mae had been caring for the young girls while their mother was ill, and their Aunt Olin sewed for them.

See illustration #6 *Walter Simms Sr. & Margaret B. Simms @ 906 Mariposa*

After Mae's death in 1966, the two girls continued to live there with their father. The girls moved out in 1975. Walter Jr. married **Aileen Marschner Shufflebarger** (1925-living) in 1977 (she was a cousin of his first wife), and they moved out on their own.

Donna lived in the home from 1977 to 1979 with her first husband, John Wesley Hardin, Jr. The house served as rental property from 1979 to 1982. After renovations, Walter and Aileen returned to the house from 1983 until 1999, when they could no longer climb the stairs. They currently live in a retirement center in Austin.<sup>xxii</sup>

### **Simms' Markets<sup>xxiii</sup> 1915-1954**

According to daughter Olin, her father became a butcher and then owner of a neighborhood grocery store. Walter Simms opened his first store about 1915, a "Meat Market" at 1201 East 1<sup>st</sup>

Street,<sup>xxiv</sup> followed by “Simms Market” in 1918, when he sold ice and meat at 1200 East 1<sup>st</sup> and 1116 East 12<sup>th</sup>, indicating diversification and expansion. An advertisement in the Statesman on January 17, 1918, notes, “Simm’s Meat Market has moved from 1200 E. First St. to 315 East Sixth St. where it is more conveniently located for its patrons, carrying a full line of fresh meats at living prices.”<sup>xxv</sup> According to W.E. Jr., the store was “burned out a couple of times” while at the 1200 E. First Street location.

Soon afterward Walter began selling fish exclusively. In 1920, City Directories list Walter’s profession as “Manager, City Fish Market” at 423 East 6<sup>th</sup> Street, and the 1920 Census lists him as a 37-year-old “Merchant-Fish & Oyster.” In the 1922 directory is the first reference to “Simms Fish Market,” located at 701 East 6<sup>th</sup> Street, and then, in 1924, at 206 West 6<sup>th</sup> Street, where the business stayed until relocation to 1005 Congress Avenue circa 1930.

From 1935 to 1940, the market was located at 1007 Congress Avenue. Walter E. Simms Jr, began helping out in the store for \$1.50 a week in the summers while he was in grade school or junior high. He recalled working afternoons in the market while it was on Congress Avenue, after his classes at the University of Texas.

In the early years of the business, fish and oysters were express shipped in big barrels by train from South Texas ports such as Galveston, Brownsville and Corpus Christi, and from as far away as Mexico and Maryland. Shrimp came in 100 pound barrels; fish 150 pounds, both packed with broken ice.

During the 1930s, after the move to Congress Avenue, Simms purchased two delivery trucks and drove to the Texas coast with the largest truck, which carried ice, to purchase fish straight off the docks. On one particular trip to Port Lavaca, Walter Jr. and his father purchased 100

gallons of oysters at \$1.00/gallon, packed them in ice in the back of the trucks and returned to Austin where they sold them for \$1.25/gallon.

Simms' son also recalled watching parades down Sixth Street from in front of the building that housed Ben Garza's Meat Market and his father's store. For several years Garza and his father also participated in the event, driving a truck along the parade route. One year his father mounted a large tarpon frozen in ice onto the back. Over the course of the morning, the ice melted and the big fish slid off into the street. "A Mexican fella ran over, scooped it up and hurried it back to my father, telling him 'you lost your fish!'" Another year, Mr. Simms packed a huge red snapper into 300 pounds of ice.<sup>xxvi</sup>

Though the Market sold retail for local customers, a large part of the business involved wholesale delivery with the smaller of the two trucks to various restaurants, hotels, and grocery stores around town. The client list included the Driskill Hotel, the Confederate Home, Luke's Café, the Longhorn Café, and Lung's Restaurant which once stood on the 500 block of San Jacinto. Simms would take orders at the various cafes in the early morning, return home for breakfast, and then go back to work.

Service also extended well beyond city limits, ultimately reaching a 100-mile radius. Regular deliveries were made to Central Texas towns as far away as Temple to the north, Brenham to the east, Lampasas to the west and San Marcos to the south.<sup>xxvii</sup>

During the post-Depression years, as the economy began its recovery, other seafood establishments appeared on the Austin scene, including Quality Seafood Market, established in 1938 and located adjacent to Simms Market at 1005 Congress Avenue.

By 1941, Simms had moved his business to 405 East 7<sup>th</sup> Street (a building that belonged to his brother Paul) where it remained until his death in 1949. In 1947, Simms began diversifying,

listing 'Seafood and Produce' as his main products. While cleaning fish, he got a fish bone in his hand that caused an infection that led to blood poisoning and his death. His wife Mae thus became the temporary president of the newly incorporated Simms Seafood Market. **Henry G. Moreno**, born in Travis County in 1911 to a ranch foreman, had started out as a young delivery clerk in 1924 and had risen to general manager and vice-president, was elected president in 1950. Moreno bought and took over the business, which was moved for the final time to 1013 East Avenue.<sup>xxviii</sup>

The 1953 City Directory lists Simms Fish Market, Inc. for the last time. In 1954 Simms Seafood and Grocery is still listed at the same location, but Moreno is listed as a clerk at Safeway Stores, and Quality Seafood is the only fish dealer listed in 1955.

At the time of Walter E. Simms' death in 1949, *Simms Market* had been the longest continuously running fish market in the city.<sup>xxix</sup> It defined the retail fish industry in Austin for nearly 40 years. In many ways, the story of its founding, development, and ultimate demise reflect the changing scene of Austin's service economy during the first half of the Twentieth Century. When the *Simms Fish Market* faded away in the 1950s, it marked the decline of the mom-and-pop corner store and the emergence of the city's large, retail market industry, embodied in store chains like *Safeway* and *HEB* that offered one-stop shopping for their customers.

**ARCHITECT: Roger Q. Small**, (See illustration #7 - photo circa 1945)<sup>xxx</sup>

Roger Quarles Small (1891-1960), who designed the Simms House for Walter Simms, was born in Chappell Hill, Texas. His father, Joseph Small, sold his properties in the Chappell Hill area by 1910 and moved his wife and four of his five children to Austin, Texas, so the children could attend the University of Texas.

Roger attended the University for seven years from 1910 until 1917. According to his son<sup>xxx1</sup>, Small did not graduate from the UT School of Architecture, but was president of the senior class of architecture for two terms. Small was known for his great sense of humor. He told his son, for example, that he did not pass English 1b, but made very good grades in French.

Small studied under **Hugo Kuehne** (1884-1963), who founded the School of Architecture at UT in 1910, and worked for Kuehne as chief draftsman for eleven years. Kuehne was a native of Austin, having attended Austin High School; he received a bachelor's degree in civil engineering from the University of Texas in 1906, and a bachelor's in architecture from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in 1908. Subsequently Kuehne worked as a draftsman for G. Henri Desmond, a Boston architect, before he was called back to Austin to organize an architectural program in the UT College of Engineering. Kuehne served as an adjunct professor from 1910 to 1915 and founded the architecture library, which became one of the most important collections in the country. Kuehne was involved in the master plans for the Enfield suburb in 1915, and in the development of Austin's first master plan in 1928. Kuehne is probably best known for the Old Austin Library (1933), now the Austin History Center, at 400 West Ninth Street.

On March 30, 1918, during World War I, Roger Q. Small was inducted into the army and went overseas at the age of 26 as a French interpreter, Headquarters Company, 90th Division; just before going to the front lines he was transferred to the Commissary Unit where he was in charge of dispensing food goods from two homes in a small town behind the American lines. He was honorably discharged on August 19, 1919. Small married Clara Belle Hook on January 8, 1921 (they shared January 8<sup>th</sup> as their birthdate) and had two children, Betty and Roger Jr. In a 1942 resume, Small states his work record up until that date as follows:

Austin	1919-1921	H. F. Kuehne	Chief Draftsman
San Antonio	1921-1922	H. H. Harrington	Draftsman
Austin	1922-1931	H. F. Kuehne	Chief Draftsman <sup>xxxii</sup>



Having received on-the-job training at the Kuehne architectural firm, Small was certified by the State of Texas as an architect on his birthday in 1938. According to Roger Small Jr., “My father was "grandfathered" and assigned license number 481, since he had been in private practice since 1931 at the time the licensing act was passed in 1938.”

During WWII, Small worked at the Houston Sash & Door Company in Houston, Texas. He was involved in drafting and design of buildings for military installations. After his return to Austin following the conclusion of WWII, Small did some drawings for a contractor/developer involving mass production techniques coming out of the concept of manufacturing for the war effort. Although he was not comfortable with the concept, he worked on the project because his regular business had not redeveloped during this recovery period. Subdivisions built by the mass production concept were replacing the custom designed homes he had built his reputation on.<sup>xxxiii</sup>

Small’s private career ran from 1931 until the late 1950s, with work on at least 37 projects between 1934 and 1956 referenced in the architectural files of the Austin History Center. The great majority of projects in those files are for realtor Edward J. Hofheinz, most for repairs and/or additions. Among those architectural drawings are 18 files described as residential apartment or multi-family projects, with at least three mentioning or depicting an integrated garage component. At least 32 projects involved designs for Hofheinz, including 1944 plans for a residence and/or a duplex at 1402 Hartford Road, floorplans for 3300 Windsor Road (one-story 2BR, no date), 4702 Ramsey Avenue (one-story, 2BR w/ separate garage, no date), and a 1940 “cottage” with elevations and floor plans for Mrs. Hofheinz at 1608 Poquito.

Small often pointed out to his family the Fireman’s Drill Tower on Cesar Chavez just west of Congress Avenue as one of the many projects he worked on. (Designed by Roy White and the Kuehne firm circa 1931, the six-story tower served as a practice tower to train firefighters. The

tower became obsolete in 1974 and was restored as an Austin Landmark in 1978, when the carillon was installed.) Small's granddaughter, Sally Small Fly, who currently serves as the executive director of the American Institute of Architects' Austin Center for Architecture in Austin, holds drawings from Small's UT days as a student, as well as 1932 plans which Small worked on for the original Austin Public Library.

### **ADDITIONAL PROPERTY OWNERS**

**Jennifer K. and Jerry Patterson** purchased the property from the Simms family June 1, 1999. Jerry Patterson served from 2002 to current as Commissioner for the Texas General Land Office. Born in Houston in 1946, Patterson served as a U.S. Marine for over 20 years and as a state senator for six years. He graduated from Texas A&M in 1969 and retired from the Marine Corps Reserve as a Lieutenant Colonel in 1993. Jennifer Patterson received her Bachelor of Arts in 1992 from the University of Texas at Austin, her Juris Doctor in 1995 from the UT School of Law, and a Master of Laws in Taxation in 1996 from Southern Methodist University School of Law. She is presently in private practice. Expecting twins and in need of a larger home, they sold the house in December of 2003.

**Elana Einhorn and Will Andrews** purchased the house from the Pattersons and are the current owners and occupants, together with their young daughter. Elana is originally from Miami Beach, Florida, and has lived in Austin for over 20 years. A former long-time staff attorney for the Texas Supreme Court, she is presently in private practice. She received her undergraduate degree from Florida International University (B.A., with high honors, English, 1986), and her law degree from the University of Texas School of Law (J.D., with honors, 1989). She is board certified in civil appellate law by the Texas Board of Legal Specialization. Will is a fifth-generation Texan, and was raised in Archer City; his family arrived in Archer County in 1879,

the second family to settle in that county. He received his undergraduate degree from Texas A&M University (B.B.A., Finance, 1985), and, after working in Dallas for a few years, found his home in Austin. Since 1994 he has worked as a consultant for a number of local non-profit organizations.

## **SUMMARY**

The following **RTHL criteria** are applicable to the Walter Simms House and have been illustrated in detail in the narrative above:

1. Age: The Simms House is well over 50 years old.
2. Historical Significance: through individuals who designed, built, owned and lived in the structure
3. Architectural Significance: excellent integrity, has maintained its original appearance and design
4. Good State of Repair: excellent physical condition
5. The Simms House is listed in the **2005 National Register of Historic Places** under Criteria C for Architecture. This additional biographical information in this RTHL narrative shows that the property also meets Criteria B at the local level.

The 1935 Simms House's first owner, merchant Walter Simms, defined the wholesale and retail fish industry in the city for almost 40 years with his seafood markets. His story reflects the changing scene of Austin's economy during the first half of the Twentieth Century and marks the decline of mom-and-pop grocers in favor of supermarket chains. His contributions to the economy and thereby the culture of the city, were considerable and consistent.

The home's architect, Texas native Roger Q. Small, actively participated in the development of the city from his days at the University of Texas throughout the first half of the century. His work as Chief Draftsman for well-known architect Hugo Kuehne - which included work on the Austin Public Library (currently the Austin History Center) - and in his subsequent private

practice is deserving of historic commendation, particularly in relation to the home that he designed for the Simms family.

Already on the National Register, the Simms House is also nominated for status as a City of Austin Historic Landmark; it has been unanimously approved by the City of Austin Historic Landmark Commission and Planning Commission; it is expected to be approved by the City Council in December of 2007. Everyone in the neighborhood knows the “House with All the Garages” as it’s on a main approach to the local elementary school, thus neighboring residents pass it every day. The fully integrated, five-bay garage system comprising the lower half of the home’s main façade communicates the significance of the house in two important ways. First, it represents an early and very clearly articulated manifestation of the automobile’s growing influence over Austin’s, and the nation’s, architectural landscape during the early decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Second, it is the defining element in a unique, localized design adaptation that manifested among a small group of homes constructed in Travis Heights during the 1930s and 1940s—an adaptation whose general design anticipated a similar national trend by nearly a decade. The Simms House, as the most prominent example of this group, represents an invaluable link to an important period in the City’s past—a time when the practical demands of Austin’s emergent car culture intersected with local geography in sometimes surprising and unusual ways.

**APPENDIX #1: Photo List & Endnotes**

[See separate Appendix #2 for Deed Chronology, Occupancy Record, Site Plan, Sanborn Map, Floor Plans (2)]

**Photographs** [via postal mail]

Historic Photograph circa late 1930s, from Simms Family

B&W photos by Phoebe Allen, August 2007:

- 1 - South (front) façade
- 2 - West facade
- 3 - Upper front/south façade
- 4 - East façade

- 5 - North (rear) façade from west end
- 6 - North (rear) façade from northeast corner
- 6a –Rear door
- 7 – Fireplace with mantel
- 8 - View from Travis Heights Boulevard (includes slope of property and view of playhouse)
- 9 – Stairway from Mariposa to upper level of house and retaining wall
- 10 – View of lot from southeast, indicating slope in property and retaining wall
- 11 – Cistern, decorative, east of house

Inserted family photos (see illustration section):  
 Walter & Mae Simms, from daughter Olin Harrell  
 Walter Jr. & wife, from Olin Harrell  
 Roger Q. Small, from his son Roger Small Jr.

## ENDNOTES

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- <sup>i</sup> Architectural component was written by Sean Maroney (National Register of Historic Places, 2005), 2004 as part of his Master’s Degree at the University of Texas at Austin. Edited by Phoebe Allen.
- <sup>ii</sup> Architectural Records, Roger Q. Small, on file at the Austin History Center.
- <sup>iii</sup> Walter Simms Jr. 2004, personal communication with Sean Maroney.
- <sup>iv</sup> The Pattersons removed two doors leading into the kitchen and one where the living room meets the hallway; they are stored downstairs and could be reinstalled.
- <sup>v</sup> Written by Sean Maroney, edited by Phoebe Allen
- <sup>vi</sup> Written by Phoebe Allen.
- <sup>vii</sup> McGraw, Marsburger & Associates, 2003, South Congress Avenue Preservation Plan, prepared for City of Austin, Texas.  
 Travis Heights history, compiled by Peter Flagg Maxson, Heritage Society Homes Tour, 2005.  
 Copeland, Robert (compiler), “Travis Heights...A Critical Period.” A report prepared for South River City Citizens by University of Texas School of Architecture, 1975.
- <sup>viii</sup> Sketch of Travis Heights Neighborhood with Streetcar, Austin History Center, Travis Heights file.
- <sup>ix</sup> Written by Sean Maroney, liberally edited by Phoebe Allen. For more details about automobile development and illustrations, see Maroney’s National Register nomination.
- <sup>x</sup> Walter E. Simms, Jr., personal communication to Phoebe Allen 6/16/07, and to Sean Maroney 8/2004.
- <sup>xi</sup> Op. cit. Walter E. Simms Jr.
- <sup>xii</sup> Written and researched primarily by Phoebe Allen, with acknowledgement to Sean Maroney for his initial work.
- <sup>xiii</sup> Barnes, Lorraine, “John Simms, Who Drove Stage Coach, Goes to Last Frontier,” Austin Statesman, March 15, 1938.
- <sup>xiv</sup> Austin City Directory, 1881-82.
- <sup>xv</sup> Austin City Directory, 1891-92, advertisement for Pacific Express Company, Driskill Hotel
- <sup>xvi</sup> “Final Tribute Paid John Simms,” Austin American, March 16, 1938.
- <sup>xvii</sup> Austin Statesman, 10/12/1914, lists Madame W.E. Simms of Austin in an article on the Eastern Star.

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- <sup>xviii</sup> Family photo in possession of W.E. Simms Jr.
- <sup>xix</sup> Simms, W.E., Jr, personal communication with Sean Maroney, 2004.
- <sup>xx</sup> Walter Simms, Jr. to Phoebe Allen, 2007.
- <sup>xxi</sup> Olin Simms Harrell, his daughter, in an interview with Phoebe Allen on June 23, 2007.
- <sup>xxii</sup> Austin City Directories, interviews of Olin Harrell 6/2007 and W.E. Simms, Jr. 6/2007, e-mails from Donna Simms Flippin.
- <sup>xxiii</sup> Section written by Phoebe Allen, with elements from Sean Maroney
- <sup>xxiv</sup> Austin City Directory, 1916.
- <sup>xxv</sup> Newspaper Ad: Simms Meat Market, 1/17/1918, Statesman.
- <sup>xxvi</sup> Walter E. Simms, Jr., personal communication with Sean Maroney; 2004.
- <sup>xxvii</sup> Walter E. Simms, Jr. 2004/2007; Austin American Statesman, 2/14/1942; Central Texas Business and Professional Directory, 1952, pp. 197-198.
- <sup>xxviii</sup> Central Texas Business and Professional Directory, 1952, pp. 197-198.
- <sup>xxix</sup> Central Texas Business and Professional Directory, 1952, pp. 197-198.
- <sup>xxx</sup> Written by Phoebe Allen.
- <sup>xxxi</sup> Roger Q. Small, Jr. in phone conversations June 2007, with Phoebe Allen, and e-mails of June 29 and August 6, 2007. Roger Jr. (979-968-3840); Sally Small Fly (512-452-4332, sally@AIAustin.org).
- <sup>xxxii</sup> It is likely that Small worked on the Kuehne firm's 1927 design of 300 West 33<sup>rd</sup> Street, a project of Paul O. Simms, brother of Walter Simms.
- <sup>xxxiii</sup> According to Roger Small Jr., 2007

## WALTER & MAE SIMMS HOUSE

906 Mariposa Drive  
Austin, Texas 78704

### Recorded Texas Historic Landmark Nomination

#### Appendix 2:

Deed Chronology, Occupancy Record, Site Plan, Sanborn Map, Floor Plans (2)

#### Deed Chronology for 906 Mariposa Drive, Austin, Texas 78704

Year	Transaction, Grantor/Grantee, date, Vol./Page
1835	State of Coahuila, Texas → Isaac Decker (Title; Filed: 3/17/1835; Book 16, pg. 177; General Land Office) Two tracts of land in the City of Austin, Travis Co., Texas part of the Isaac Decker League and fronting on the south side of the Colorado River. Said two tracts containing 230 acres and 4 acres respectively.
1840	Isaac Decker → Mathew Cartwright (Special Warranty Deed; 3/13/1840; Recorded in Book A, pp. 342-343, Travis Co.) League of land situated on the western bank of the Colorado River fronting on the said river opposite the city of Austin, and known as the lower half of a league of land granted to Decker by the State of Coahuila and Texas to Decker, a citizen of said state and Gov. of the Republic of Mexico
1853	Mathew Cartwright → James G. Swisher (Special Warranty Deed; 5/4/1853; Filed 5/4/1853; Book "G", pp. 163-4; Travis Co.) 1266 acre tract out of Isaac Decker league, situated on the right hand bank of the Colorado River
1853	James G. Swisher et al. (Agreement; 4/25/1853; Filed: 3/8/1854; G/484-87) James G. Swisher, Jas. E. Bouldin, Jno. Swisher, and Jas. H. Raymond (Witnessed by Jos. Lee, H. B. Slaughter) Equitable division of 1266 acre tract out of the Isaac Decker league
...	[Land changed hands numerous times; complete transactions available if needed]
1927	The American National Bank of Austin → Stacy Realty Co., Inc. (WD; 2/5/1927; 397/565; included lots 1, 2 in Block 21)
1934	(10/15) <b>Stacy Realty Co. → Mae M. Simms (&amp; Walter E. Simms);</b> Warranty Deed [Travis Co. Deed Records; <b>Vol. 510, Pg. 301; 1934</b> )
1935	Walter E. & Mae Simms → Richard Schmidt; Mechanic's lien (for house construction) [2/12/1935; Vol. 518; Pp. 378-382, Travis Co. Deed Rec's; Filed 7/23/1935]  2/13/1935 – Mechanic's lien and Mortgage note transferred to Kuntz-Sternenberg Lumber Company (526/14) 7/18/1935 – Mechanic's lien transferred to North Millican (526/232) (This information recorded in a note on pg. 24 of Abstract D)
1966	(12/7) <b>Olin M. Harrell &amp; F. W. Harrell (husband) → Simms, W. E. Jr.;</b> Transfer of undivided interest in property (Sum of \$7,500.00) [Travis Co. Deed Records; <b>Vol. 3227, Pg. 133</b> ]

[Olin M. Harrell is Walter E. Simms Jr.'s sister; transfer of inheritance conveyed after death of their mother, Mae Simms]

- 1999 (6/1) **Walter E. Simms, Jr. → Jerry E. & Jennifer K. Patterson**; Warranty deed; Lot 1 and south 27.5 ft. of lot 2; Blk 21; Travis Heights subdivision [Travis Co. Deed Records; Instrument #: 1999039920; 1999]
- 2003 (12/19) Jerry E. & Jennifer K. Patterson → **Elana Einhorn & Will Andrews**  
[Travis Co. Deed Records; Instrument #: 2003292447]

## OCCUPANCY & RELATED RECORDS

**Year Occupant Name & Reference** Source: Austin City Directories unless otherwise noted

**1879-80** No listing for John Simms or Pacific Express

**1881-82** Simms, John, transfer agent Monroe Miller, r. se corner Pecan & Guadalupe  
Simms, William A., delivery clerk, Pacific Express Company, r. ss Pecan, east of city limits  
Simms, Frank L, r. ss Pecan e of city limits  
Pacific Express Company, east side Congress bet. Pecan & Pine, John Potts, Mgr.  
Advertisement: Forwarders of Merchandise, Specie & Valuables of all kinds to all points in Texas and (in connection with other Express Companies) to all points in the United States, Canada and Europe

**1883-84** Simms, John, driver, Pacific Express wagon  
Pacific Express Company, J.H. Morrill agent, office 509 Congress

**1885-86** Simms, John, driver, Pacific Express Company, r. 105 Trinity bet. Water & Live Oak

**1887-88** Simms, John, driver, Pacific Express Company, r. 105 Trinity

**1889-90** Simms, John, clerk, Pacific Express Company, r. 105 Trinity

**1891-92** Simms, John, front clerk, Pacific Express Company, r. 105 Trinity  
Pacific Express Company, Driskill Hotel, 114 E. 6th, Edward E. Bane, agent  
Advertisement for Pacific Express Co: "Operates over 22,000 miles of railway, ocean and stage routes and has over 2,200 offices. It offers the safest and cheapest transportation facilities to and from all points in the East, Northeast, North, Northwest, Canada and Europe. Order and ship merchandise, jewelry, valuables and money by the Pacific Express.

**1893-94** Simms, John, front clerk, Pacific Express Company, r. 400 E. 1<sup>st</sup>

**1895-96** Simms, John, front clerk, Pacific Express Company, r. 400 E. 1<sup>st</sup>  
Pacific Express Company, 114 E. 6<sup>th</sup>

**1897-98** Simms, John, front clerk, Pacific Express Company, r. 400 E. 1<sup>st</sup>

**1898-99** Simms, John, front clerk, Pacific Express Company, r. 400 E. 1<sup>st</sup>  
Pacific Express Company, Driskill Hotel bldg, J.P. Lochridge, agent

**1900-01** Simms, Walter E.; clerk; res. 400 E. 1<sup>st</sup> St.

Simms, John, clerk, Pacific Express Company, h. 400 E. 1<sup>st</sup>  
Pacific Express Company, 506 Congress

**1903-04** Simms, Walter E.; Clerk, Fulton Market; res. 400 E. 1<sup>st</sup> St.

Simms, John, bill clerk, Pacific Express Company, res. 400 E. 1<sup>st</sup>  
Fulton Market, 213 E. 6<sup>th</sup>, John Sheehan, proprietor; John W. Sullivan, mgr., beef, veal, pork, etc.

**1905** Simms, Walter E.; Delivery Clerk-Pacific Express Company; res. 400 E. 1<sup>st</sup>

Simms, Lionel, wks Austin Candy Factory, h. 400 E. 1<sup>st</sup>



Simms, John; clerk. Pacific Express Company, r. 400 E. 1<sup>st</sup>  
Pacific Express Company, J.P. Lochridge, agent, 109 W. 6<sup>th</sup>

- 1909-10** Simms, Walter E.; Brakeman, H & TC Railroad; res. 812 E. 1<sup>st</sup> (2 people in res.)  
Simms, John; r. 400 E. 1<sup>st</sup> St.; 4 people in household (1 wife, 2 sons)  
Simms, Paul O.; h. 400 E. 1<sup>st</sup> St.  
Simms, Leon L [Lionel].; candy maker; h. 400 E. 1<sup>st</sup> St.
- 1912-13** Simms, Walter E.; brakeman-H & TC Railroad; res. 1007 Willow  
Simms, Earl E.; collector, Austin National Bank, bds. 400 E. 1<sup>st</sup>  
Simms, John; collector, res. 400 E. 1<sup>st</sup>  
Simms, Lionel J.; brakeman H&TC, bds. 400 E. 1<sup>st</sup>  
Simms, Paul O.; clk Stacy-Robbins Co., also notary, res 105 Fraternity
- 1916** Simms, Walter E., Meat Market 1201 E. 1<sup>st</sup> Street; res 1007 Willow  
(Note: Texas Fish Company 1004 Congress Ave.; not the same as Simms Fish Market but located near eventual site of same)  
Simms, John; Collector; res. 400 E. 1<sup>st</sup> St.  
Simms, Paul O.; clk Stacy-Robbins Co.; also notary; res. 105 Fraternity  
Small, Roger Q. UT student res 1807 Colorado St.  
Simms, Lionel J.; brakeman H&TC, bds. 400 E. 1<sup>st</sup>
- 1918** Simms, Walter E. (Mae M.; Simm's [sic] Market); res. 1007 Willow  
Simm's [sic] Market: meats, ice (1200 E. 1<sup>st</sup> St.); meats (1116 E. 12<sup>th</sup> St.)  
Newspaper Ad: Simms Meat Market moved from 1200 E. 1<sup>st</sup> to 315 E. 6<sup>th</sup>, 1/17/1918, Statesman
- 1920** Simms, Walter E. (May [sic]); Manager City Fish Market ([res] 909 E. 1<sup>st</sup> St.)  
City Fish Market (423 E. 6<sup>th</sup> St.)
- Census (1920)** Simms, Walter E.; 37 years old; Merchant-Fish & Oyster
- 1922** Simms, Walter E. (May [sic] M.; Simms Fish Market); r. 909 E. 1<sup>st</sup> St.  
Simms Fish Market (701 E. 6<sup>th</sup> St.)  
City Meat and Fish Market (423 E. 6<sup>th</sup> St.)
- 1924** Simms, Walter E. (Mae; Simms Fish Market); r. 909 E. 1<sup>st</sup> St.; Simms Fish Market (206 W. 6<sup>th</sup> St.)
- 1927** Simms Market 206 W. 6<sup>th</sup> St.  
Simms, Walter E.; r. 909 E. 1<sup>st</sup> (phone directory)  
Simms, Paul O., r. 308 W. 6<sup>th</sup>, real estate, 121 W. 7<sup>th</sup>  
Simms, John, r. 400 E. 1<sup>st</sup>  
Simms, Earl E. r. 100 W. 33<sup>rd</sup>  
City Meat and Fish Market (423 E. 6<sup>th</sup> St)  
Starr, J. F., Contr. 1005 Congress Ave.
- 1929** Simms Market, fish, 206 W. 6<sup>th</sup>
- 1930-31** Simms' [sic] Market (1005 Congress Ave.)  
Simms, W. E.; r. 909 E. 1<sup>st</sup> St.
- 1932-33** Simms Market (W. E. Simms) fish, 1005 Congress Ave.  
Simms Walter E. (Mae M.) (Simms Market); h. 909 E. 1<sup>st</sup> St.
- 1935** Simms Seafood Market (1007 Congress Ave.)  
Simms, Walter E. (Mae M.) (Simms Seafood Market); h. 906 Mariposa Dr.  
Simms, Walter E., Jr.; student U of T; r. 906 Mariposa Dr.

Small, Roger Q. (Clara B.); h. 705 Highland Drive  
Schmidt, Richard W. (Eliza); contr; h. 59 East Ave.

**1939** Quality Fish Market & J.A. Starr Fruits 1005 Congress Ave. [Note: first listing for Quality Fish Market]  
Simms Seafood Market, 1007 Congress Ave.

**1940** Simms, Walter E. (Mae M.) (Simms Seafood Market) h 906 Mariposa Drive  
Simms, Walter E., Jr.; slsman Paul O. Simms Co.; r. 906 Mariposa Dr.  
Simms Seafood Market (Walter E. Simms) 1007 Congress Ave.  
Quality Seafood Market (Garnette W. Lenz) 1005 Congress Ave.  
Small, Roger Q. (Clara B.; 1); archt 705 Highland Ave., h do

**1941** Simms Seafood Market (405 E. 7<sup>th</sup> St.)

**1942** Simms Seafood Market (405 E. 7<sup>th</sup> St.)

**1944** Simms Seafood Market (Walter E. Simms), Seafoods & Produce 405 E. 7<sup>th</sup> St.  
Small, Roger Q. (Clara B.; 1) draftsman h 705 Highland Drive

**1945** Simms Seafood Market (405 E. 7<sup>th</sup> St.)

**1947** Simms, Walter E. (Mae M.); 906 Mariposa  
Simms Seafood Market-Seafoods and Produce (405 E. 7<sup>th</sup> St.)

**1949** Simms Seafood Market, Inc.—Seafoods and Produce [sic] (405 E. 7<sup>th</sup> St.)  
Simms Seafood Market Inc., Mrs. Mae M. Simms Pres.,  
Henry G. Moreno V-Pres., Seafoods & Produce 405 E. 7<sup>th</sup> St.

**1952** Simms, Mae M. (wid Walter E.) h 906 Mariposa Dr.  
Simms Seafood Market, Inc. (1013 East Ave.)  
Henry G. Moreno; President of Simms Seafood Market, Inc.; Res. 1921 Redwood Ave.  
Mrs. L. G. Moreno Sec-Treas., Seafoods & Produce, 1013 East Ave  
Small, Roger Q. (Clara B.) archit. H 705 Highland Ave.  
Small, Roger Q., Jr. (Jo Ann) h W. 12<sup>th</sup> St.

**1953** Simms Seafood Market Inc. (1011-13 East Ave.)

**1954** Simms Sea Food & Grocery (1013 East Ave.)  
No listing for Simms Fish Market  
Henry G. Moreno listed as employed—clerk, Safeway Stores; Res. 1921 Redwood Ave.

**1965** Simms, Walter E., Jr.; r. 906 Mariposa Dr.

1935-1999 Simms Family (Source for this section: Walter Simms, Jr. and his daughters)  
1935-1949 Walter E. Simms, Sr. (until his death in 1949)  
1935-1966 Mae M. Simms, wife of Walter E. Simms, Sr. (until her death in 1966)  
1935-1942 and 1948-1949 Walter E. Simms, Jr.  
1956-1977 Walter E. Simms, Jr. with two daughters (and his mother until 1966)  
1956-1975 Roxan Simms (Staff) and Donna Simms (Flippin), daughters of Walter E. Simms Jr.  
1977-1979 Donna Simms Hardin and (first) husband John Wesley Hardin, Jr.  
1979-1982 Rental Property  
1983-1999 Walter E Sims Jr. & wife #3, Aileen Marschner Shufflebarger

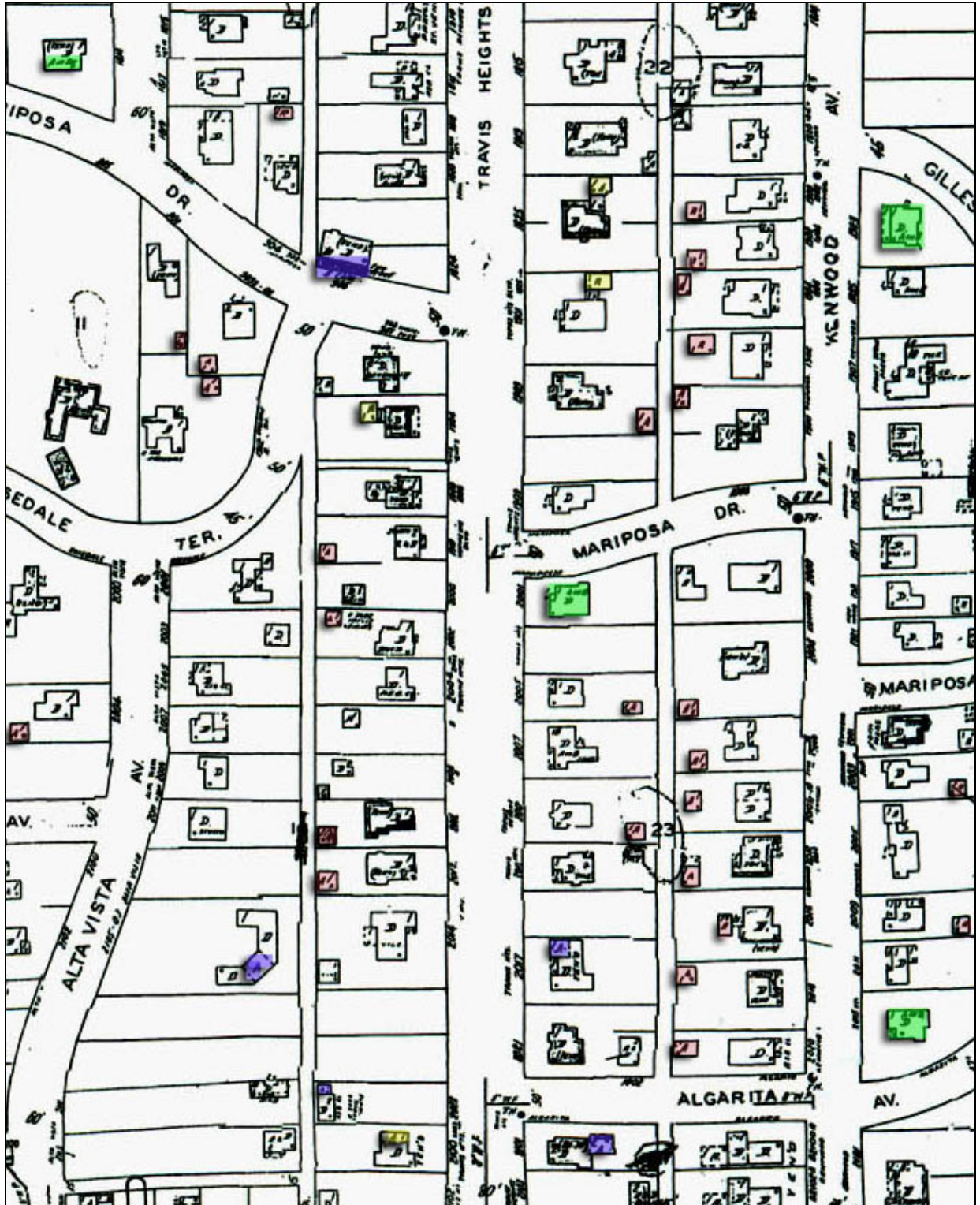
**1999-1/04** Jerry and Jennifer K. Patterson

**3/04-present** Elana Einhorn, Will Andrews and daughter

## Site Plan, 906 Mariposa

QuickTime™ and a  
TIFF (LZW) decompressor  
are needed to see this picture.

Sanborn Map of Travis Heights (1938; Sheet #229)



## Floor Plans

QuickTime™ and a  
TIFF (LZW) decompressor  
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