

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE:	Texas
COUNTY:	Travis
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY DATE	JUN 18 1973

1. NAME

COMMON: G. Henry Museum

AND/OR HISTORIC: William Sidney Porter House *(O Henry)* *use this*

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER: 409 East 5th Street

CITY OR TOWN: Austin CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT: 10 -- J. J. Pickle

STATE: Texas CODE: 048 COUNTY: Travis CODE: 453

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Object <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Structure	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	Yes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Park <input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____ _____ _____

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME: City of Austin, Parks and Recreation Department

STREET AND NUMBER: P. O. Box 1088

CITY OR TOWN: Austin STATE: Texas CODE: 048

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.: Travis County Courthouse

STREET AND NUMBER: \_\_\_\_\_

CITY OR TOWN: Austin STATE: Texas CODE: 048

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

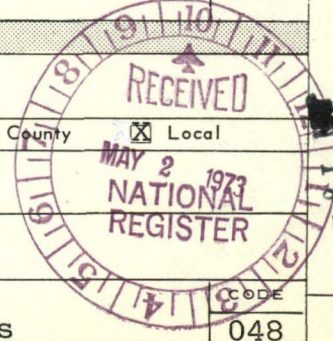
TITLE OF SURVEY: R. K. Williamson Survey

DATE OF SURVEY: May 19, 1972  Federal  State  County  Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS: Heritage Society of Austin, Inc.

STREET AND NUMBER: Old Driskill Hotel Building

CITY OR TOWN: Austin STATE: Texas CODE: 048



SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE: \_\_\_\_\_ COUNTY: \_\_\_\_\_ ENTRY NUMBER: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_ FOR NPS USE ONLY

7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unaltered		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input type="checkbox"/> Original Site	

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The small frame cottage known as the O. Henry Museum was constructed in 1886 at 308 E. Fourth Street in Austin, The house, in a simplified version of the Eastlake style, originally consisted of a parlor, front hall, dining room, kitchen and one bedroom. This typical L-shaped Victorian cottage plan had a veranda across the front and rear elevations.

The frame structure is sheathed in clapboarding. The projecting bay on the main or north elevation has wooden decorative elements projecting from the barge board. These elements include drop finials on the ends of the barge boards, a horizontal cross member, a vertical king-post which projects beyond the roof, cross bracing and a circular fan-like decorative element unifying the composition. The windows have shallow pedimented lintels with applied wooden rosettes. All windows are shuttered. The porches have scroll saw balustrades, turned posts and scroll saw brackets and spandrels.

In 1893, a back bedroom, an unplumbed bath and lavatory were added. This enclosed the east side of the rear veranda. The end wall was sheathed in clapboarding and, with the inset doorway this space became a back hall. The narrow oak flooring in the addition was in contrast to the wide board Bastrop pine used in the 1886 portion of the house. The interior of the residence contains has a handsome dark woodwork.

The house has remained basically unchanged to the present. The City of Austin accepted the house in January 1934, and moved it to Brush Square in March 1934, to save it from demolition. The City installed electricity and plumbing in the same year and opened the structure as a museum in June 1934. Some interior restoration work has been done in 1969 and 1972. For the most part, however, the house has remained unchanged since the time of the Porter family occupation. The first Mrs. William S. Porter lived in Austin until her death. The museum has subsequently acquired furniture, china, photographs, letters and other memorabilia which belonged to the family.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS



8. SIGNIFICANCE

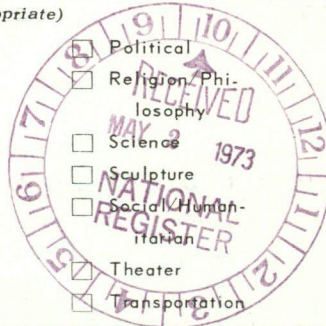
PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- Pre-Columbian |  16th Century |  18th Century |  20th Century  
 15th Century |  17th Century |  19th Century

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) 1886

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- |  |   |  |  |
|--|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal              | <input type="checkbox"/> Education              | <input type="checkbox"/> Political                       | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric             | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Religion, Philosophy | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic                | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry               | <input type="checkbox"/> Science                         | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture             | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention              | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture                       | _____                                    |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Social, Anthropology            | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art                     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Literature  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Theater              | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce                | <input type="checkbox"/> Military               | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Transportation       | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications          | <input type="checkbox"/> Music                  |  | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation            |   |  | _____                                    |



STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The small, frame cottage in the Eastlake style, at 409 East 5th Street, is the only extant residence in Austin in which William Sidney Porter (1862-1910) lived.

Porter was born in Greensboro, North Carolina on September 11, 1862, and came to Texas in 1882. In 1884, at the age of twenty-two, he settled in Austin. During this period he held various jobs including working in a drug store and becoming a real estate agent. From 1887 to 1891, he worked as a draftsman in the General Land Office, located on the Capitol grounds. From 1891 until 1894, he worked as a bank teller in the First National Bank (then located at 6th and Congress streets, in Austin.)

On July 5, 1887, Porter married Athol Estes. After living in various houses, the Porter family moved in 1893 to the residence which is now called the O. Henry Museum. At this time, the structure was located at 308 E. Fourth Street, a few blocks from its present location. The Porter family lived in the house for two years. It was during this period (1894) that Porter resigned his position in the bank to give all his time to editing a humorous weekly, The Rolling Stone. When the venture failed in 1895, Porter moved to Houston, where he wrote for the Houston Daily Post.

In 1896 Porter was summoned to Austin to stand trial for the alleged embezzlement of funds from the First National Bank, where he had been employed as a teller. Rather than obeying the summons, Porter fled to New Orleans and then to Honduras. Returning to Austin in 1897 to visit his sick wife, Porter was arrested and in March, 1898, was sentenced to the federal penitentiary at Columbus, Ohio.

While in prison, Porter wrote under various pseudonyms. Eventually, the name, "O. Henry", displaced all the others. In 1902, after his release from prison, he went to New York to continue his writing. Among Porter's most famous stories are "The Gift of the Magi" and "The Ransom of Red Chief."

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Information on file at O. Henry Museum. Austin, Texas.  
 Texas State Historical Survey Committee marker files.

14/621320  
 3348700  
 NF

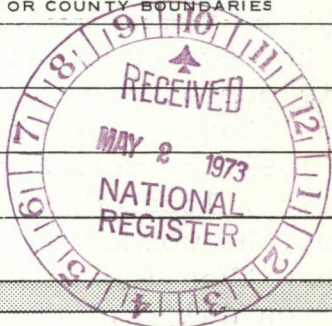
10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	0 ' "	0 ' "		30 ° 15 ' 55 "	97 ° 44 ' 19 "	
NE	0 ' "	0 ' "				
SE	0 ' "	0 ' "				
SW	0 ' "	0 ' "				

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: .5

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE



SEE INSTRUCTIONS

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE: Gary L. Hume, Project Director  
 Maree Larson, Curator, O. Henry Museum

ORGANIZATION: Texas State Historical Survey Committee DATE: 4-26-73

STREET AND NUMBER: P. O. Box 12276

CITY OR TOWN: Austin STATE: Texas CODE: 048

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National  State  Local

Name: Truett Latimer  
 Title: State Liaison Officer

Date: 4-26-73

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

Robert M. Utley  
 Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date: 6/18/73

ATTEST: Wm. D. Smith  
 Keeper of The National Register

Date: 6 6 73

Porter, William Sidney ~~House~~ (O. Henry) House

PROPERTY O. Henry Museum STATE Texas

WORKING NUMBER 5.2.73.2888

TECH REVIEW  
Photos 3  
Maps 1

7/25/73  
Travis  
Ref. # 73001879

CONTROL REVIEW

CM  
5-17-73

HISTORIAN this property is moved ~~and~~ a Museum, and O'Henry only lived here 2 yrs. before he began productive writing (not known as O'Henry while here) - suggest reject but maybe should only return AML 5/17/73

OK

ARCHITECTURAL HISTORIAN Since Austin is my home & I've been to the house I'm prejudiced but I can say that it does have imp. historical significance to Texans & we've accepted

ARCHEOLOGIST houses with no assoc with famous people that were moved & justified Accept it because they were typical examples of a particular

5-22-73

REVIEW UNIT CHIEF architectural style. Witness Shull - all these houses in San Francisco. I plead for acceptance. I

BRANCH CHIEF would say good. Seems justifiable. Because of the Reason of Red Chief, and form accept KH 5/22/73

I believe it qualifies under criteria Exception. 5/31/73

KEEPER

WJ  
C/C

National Register write-up \_\_\_\_\_

Send-back \_\_\_\_\_

Federal Register entry 8-7-73

Re-submit \_\_\_\_\_

Entered 18 1973



O. HENRY HOUSE IN ITS ORIGINAL POSITION 308 E. 4TH ST.  
PHOTO MADE AND PRESENTED BY SAMEL E. GIDEON

NPS Number 6.18.73

Title: Porter, William

Sidney, House

Loc. Travis Co., Texas

North facade of house  
at original location

①

PROPERTY OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
PROPERTY PHOTOGRAPH FORM

(Type all entries - attach to or enclose with photograph)

STATE	
Texas	
COUNTY	
Travis	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
JUN 18 1973	

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

1. NAME

COMMON: O. Henry Museum  
AND/OR HISTORIC: William Sidney Porter House

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:  
409 East 5th Street

CITY OR TOWN:  
Austin

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
Texas	048	Travis	453

3. PHOTO REFERENCE

PHOTO CREDIT: O. Henry Museum

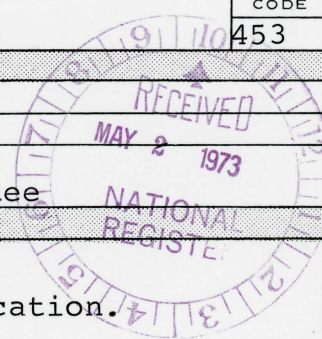
DATE OF PHOTO: 1934

NEGATIVE FILED AT:  
Texas State Historical Survey Committee

4. IDENTIFICATION

DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC.

North facade of house at original location.







NPS Numoer 6.18.73

Title: Porter, William

Sidney, House

Loc. Travis Co., Texas (2)

North and west facades  
of house after it was  
moved to its present  
location

**PROPERTY OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER**

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
PROPERTY PHOTOGRAPH FORM

(Type all entries - attach to or enclose with photograph)

STATE	
Texas	
COUNTY	
Travis	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
	JUN 18 1973

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

1. NAME

COMMON: O. Henry Museum  
AND/OR HISTORIC: William Sidney Porter House

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:  
409 East 5th Street

CITY OR TOWN:  
Austin

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
Texas	048	Travis	453

3. PHOTO REFERENCE

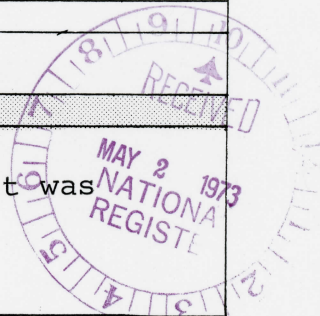
PHOTO CREDIT: O. Henry Museum

DATE OF PHOTO: 1948

NEGATIVE FILED AT:  
Texas State Historical Survey Committee

4. IDENTIFICATION

DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC.  
  
North and west facades of house after it was moved to its present location.





409

OPEN  
DAILY 1:30 - 4:30 P.M.  
TUESDAY 9:30 - 11:30 A.M.

TRINITY  
COMMUNITY  
BIBLE CHURCH  
AGENCY

NPS Number

6.18.73

Title:

Porter, William

Sidney, House

Loc.

Travis Co., Texas

(3)

North facade of house

at its present location

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
PROPERTY PHOTOGRAPH FORM

(Type all entries - attach to or enclose with photograph)

STATE	Texas	
COUNTY	Travis	
FOR NPS USE ONLY		
ENTRY NUMBER		DATE
		JAN 18 1973

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

1. NAME

COMMON: O. Henry Museum  
AND/OR HISTORICAL: William Sidney Porter House

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:  
409 East 5th Street

CITY OR TOWN:  
Austin

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
Texas	048	Travis	453

3. PHOTO REFERENCE

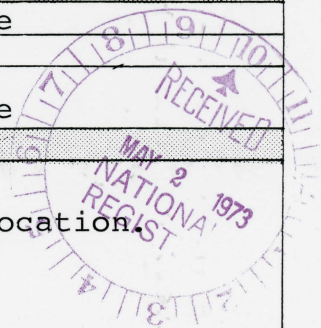
PHOTO CREDIT: Texas State Historical Survey Committee

DATE OF PHOTO: Summer, 1970

NEGATIVE FILED AT:  
Texas State Historical Survey Committee

4. IDENTIFICATION

DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC.  
North facade of house at its present location.



NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
PROPERTY MAP FORM

(Type all entries - attach to or enclose with map)

STATE	
Texas	
COUNTY	
Travis	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
	JUN 18 1973

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

1. NAME

COMMON: O. Henry Museum  
AND/OR HISTORIC: William Sidney Porter House

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:  
409 East 5th Street

CITY OR TOWN:  
Austin

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
Texas	048	Travis	453

3. MAP REFERENCE

SOURCE:  
U. S. Geological Survey

SCALE: 1:24000

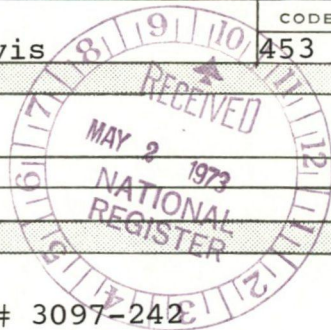
DATE: 1966

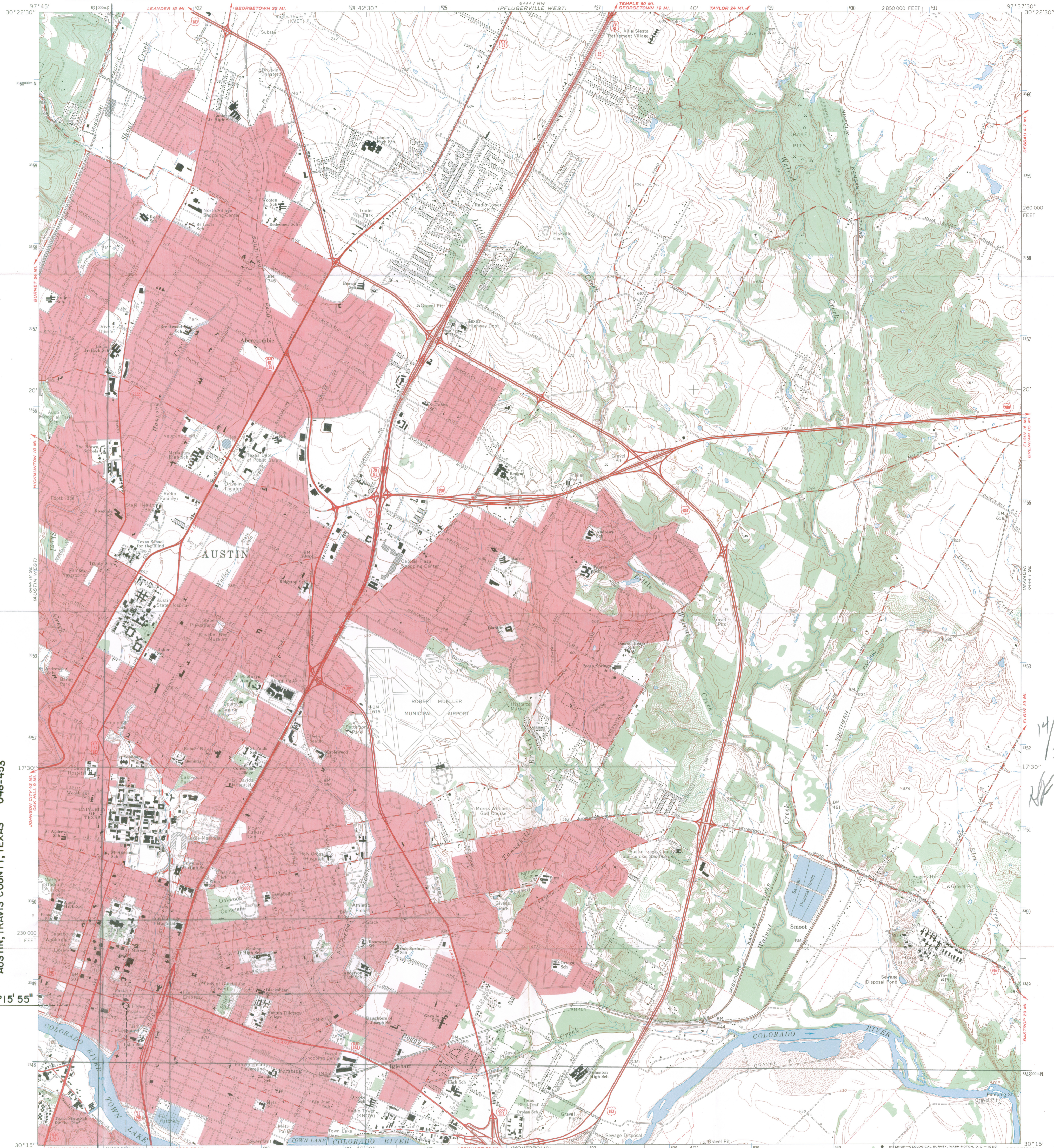
4. REQUIREMENTS

TO BE INCLUDED ON ALL MAPS

1. Property boundaries where required.
2. North arrow.
3. Latitude and longitude reference.

Texas map reference # 3097-242





O. HENRY MUSEUM  
409 E. 5TH STREET  
AUSTIN, TRAVIS COUNTY, TEXAS 048-453

14/621320  
3348700  
RF

Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey

Control by USGS and USC&GS

Topography by photogrammetric methods from aerial photographs taken 1952. Field checked 1954. Revised from aerial photographs taken 1966. Field checked 1966

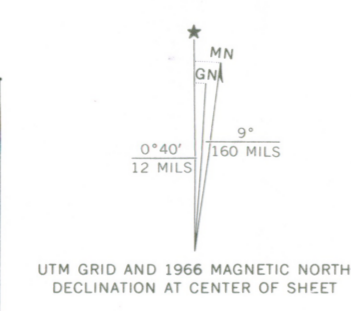
Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum 10,000-foot grid based on Texas coordinate system, central zone

1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks, zone 14, shown in blue

Red tint indicates areas in which only landmark buildings are shown

Fine red dashed lines indicate selected fence lines

97°44'19"



SCALE 1:24,000

CONTOUR INTERVAL 10 FEET  
DATUM IS MEAN SEA LEVEL



ROAD CLASSIFICATION	
Heavy-duty	Light-duty
Medium-duty	Unimproved dirt
Interstate Route	U. S. Route
	State Route

AUSTIN EAST, TEX.  
SW/4 AUSTIN 15' QUADRANGLE  
N3015—W9737.5/7.5

3097-242

1966  
AMS 6444 1 SW—SERIES V882



ENTRIES IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

STATE      TEXAS

Date Entered      JUN 18 1973

<u>Name</u>	<u>Location</u>
Fort Leaton	Presidio vicinity Presidio County
Mayfield Dugout (41 BI 52)	Bean vicinity Briscoe County
Porter, William Sidney (O. Henry) House	Austin Travis County

Also Notified

Hon. John G. Tower  
 Hon. Lloyd M. Bentsen, Jr.  
 Hon. Richard C. White  
 Hon. Barbara Jordan  
 Hon. J. J. (Jake) Pickle

State Historic Preservation Officer  
 Mr. Truett Latimer, Executive Director  
 Texas State Historical Survey Committee  
 Post Office Box 12276  
 Capitol Station  
 Austin, Texas 78711

Director, Southwest Region

PHR MMOTT: pcl 6/22/73

A SHORT BIOGRAPHY OF O. HENRY

- 1862\_\_ September 11, born at the "Worth Place" Guilford County, a plantation near Greensboro, North Carolina.
- 1865\_\_ September 26, death of his mother, Mrs. Algernon Sidney Porter (Mary Virginia Swaim) from consumption while living on the plantation.
- 1865\_\_ His father, Dr. Algernon Sidney Porter brought the two boys, Shirley Worth and William Sidney to live with his mother, Mrs. Sidney Porter (Ruth Worth) in her home in Greensboro, North Carolina.
- 1867\_\_ Enrollment in the private elementary school of his maiden aunt, Evelina Porter, who established the first school in Greensboro and was affectionately known as "Miss Lina."
- 1876\_\_ His graduation from Miss Lina's school with highest honors.
- 1876\_\_ His enrollment in the Linsey Street High School of Greensboro, North Carolina.
- 1879\_\_ He went to work as bookkeeper for his Uncle Clark in the W. C. Porter and Company Drug Store.
- 1881\_\_ August 20, date on which he became a licensed pharmacist in North Carolina. He was nineteen years old at the time.
- 1882\_\_ He came to Texas on a visit but stayed on to work as sheep herder and ranch hand on the Lee and Richard Hall ranch in LaSalle County.
- 1884\_\_ He departed the rugged "wide open spaces" for the "busy marts of commerce and trade" which was Austin, Texas. He was twenty-two years old at the time.
- 1884\_\_ He applied and was accepted as pharmacist at the Morley Brothers Drug Store on East 6th Street and worked there a short time.
- 1885\_\_ March 2, he was designated to escort to the "german" Athol Estes, the high school girl who had participated in the "laying of the corner stone" ceremonies. At this time he was Lieutenant William Porter, a member of the Austin Grays.
- 1886\_\_ He organized the "Hill City Quartette" composed of R. H. Edmonson, H. H. Long, C. E. Hillyer and W. S. Porter.
- 1886\_\_ His employment by the Maddox Brothers and Anderson, a real estate firm in Austin.
- 1887\_\_ He obtained the position as draftsman at the Texas Land Office.
- 1887\_\_ July 1, he married Athol Estes, step-daughter of Mr. P. G. Roach, merchant of Austin and member of the Board of Trade.
- 1889\_\_ September 30, birth of his daughter, Margaret Worth Porter.
- 1890\_\_ August 7, death of his Grandmother, Ruth Worth Porter.
- 1890\_\_ His first visit to the home folks in Greensboro and to show off the new wife and baby.

- 1891\_\_ His change from the Texas Land Office (a political appointment) to employment by the First National Bank of Austin.
- 1894\_\_ May 15 to 18, during the celebration held for the completion of the dam and lake, the Austin Musicians Union put on a play, H.M.S. Pinafore by Gilbert and Sullivan. It was staged on the deck of the steamer, Ben Hur, pulled into dock. Both Athol and Will Porter sang in the chorus and attended the "German" given afterward.
- 1884\_\_ The beginning of the publication, "The Rolling Stone."
- 1894\_\_ His resignation as teller at the First National Bank.
- 1895\_\_ The end of "The Rolling Stone" which backed a losing political candidate.
- 1895\_\_ Acceptance of a position with the Houston Post where he developed the "Some Postscripts" column.
- 1896\_\_ Re-examination of 1894 bank shortages on circumstantial evidence. His arrest on charges of embezzlement.
- 1896\_\_ Arrangement made for bond. Trial set for July 7 in the United States District Court of Austin, Texas.
- 1896\_\_ July 6, his departure from Houston to appear in court in Austin. A victim of suffering and humiliation, he caught the train at Hempstead and fled to New Orleans, then on to Honduras.
- 1897\_\_ February 5, returned to Austin on learning that his wife was very ill. He surrendered to the Court but no action was taken while his appeal was pending in the U. S. Court of Civil Appeals in New Orleans.
- 1897\_\_ July 25, death of Athol (Estes) Porter. Buried in Oakwood Cemetery. For years the Porters made their home with Mr. and Mrs. P. G. Roach at 307 East 4th Street where Athol passed away.
- 1898\_\_ During this waiting period Will Porter spent much of his time around the Roach-Hofer Grocery Store at 211 East 6th Street. In the rear of the store a stairway led up to a mezzanine floor where Will had a desk and a few chairs. Here he wrote for various newspapers and sent in articles to magazines.
- 1897\_\_ December, sale of the short story, "The Miracle of Lava Canyon" to S. S. McClure Company, which published it in September 1898. His first short story accepted by a national publisher. The social and business life of Austin made a great impact on William Sidney Porter, and from it he drew the material for many of his greatest stories.

----Edited by Ehtel and Harry Hofer





## O. HENRY MEMORIAL MUSEUM

409 East 5th, Austin, Texas

Home of famous short story writer and editor of Rolling Stone during his stay in Austin (1884-1895). William Sydney Porter (O. Henry) lived here with wife and daughter from 1893 until 1895 when he became columnist on the Houston Post.

Photographed and Published by Gough Photo Service,  
1740 Marshall, Houston, Texas

PLACE  
STAMP  
HERE

*Post Card*