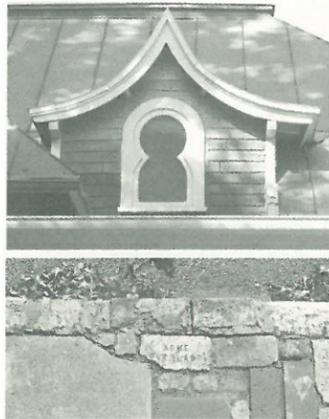




**South Alamo Street •  
South Saint Mary's Street**  
National Register Historic District



**Along the Acequia Madre**  
*part one*

**Leo M. J. Dielmann**

(1881 – 1969)

Leo Maria Joseph Dielmann was a prominent and prolific architect in Texas. Several of his buildings are now listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Dielmann was born in San Antonio on August 14, 1881. His father, John C. Dielmann, a German immigrant, was a stonemason who joined a construction and supply business.

Following graduation from St. Mary's College in San Antonio in 1898, Dielmann studied architecture and engineering in Germany between 1899 and 1901. He returned to spend three years in his father's business before setting up his own practice.

Dielmann was a San Antonio City Councilman (1913 - 1914) and a long-time member of the San Antonio Public Library Board of Trustees. He was also a member of the Knights of Columbus, the San Antonio Liederkrantz, the Beethoven Männerchor (422 Pereida), and he served as president of the Harmonia Lodge of the Sons of Hermann.

Dielmann's work includes more than 100 churches from here to Amarillo, as well as hundreds of commercial buildings, hotels, schools, and houses throughout Texas.

Dielmann married Ella Marie Wagner, a daughter of German émigrés, in 1911, and they had three children. He died at the age of eighty-eight in 1969.

Among the houses Dielmann designed which are featured in this publication are the **Rennert House** (709 East Guenther) and **Dielmann's personal home** (801 East Guenther).



Dielmann photo courtesy of the Daughters of the Republic of Texas Library

**Albert Felix Beckmann**

(1855 – 1900)

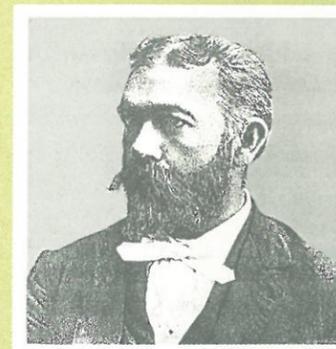
Albert Felix Beckmann was born in San Antonio, Texas on September 16, 1855. After receiving his early education in San Antonio, he traveled to Germany, where he studied architecture. He returned to San Antonio around 1880 and formed a partnership with James Wahrenberger, another German-trained architect, in 1883. Among their notable works in San Antonio were the White Elephant Saloon on Alamo Plaza, the City-County Hospital on San Fernando Hill, and the original Joske's Store (1887, now demolished).

With Wahrenberger, Beckmann designed houses for many of the city's well-to-do residents, including Carl Hummel (1884), Edward Steves, Jr. (Steves Homestead, 509 King William, built in 1884) and Mrs. A. Elmendorf. In addition, they collaborated on a courthouse in Eagle Pass, a customs and warehouse building and a federal office building in Piedras Negras, Mexico (1891).

Beckmann married Marie Guenther on October 18, 1886. He was a member of the San Antonio Opera Club and the Turn-Verein and served as a San Antonio City Councilman from 1891 to 1896. Around 1891 Beckmann ended his partnership with Wahrenberger. He opened his own office but subsequently joined with Wahrenberger as the local architects for the construction of the Lone Star Brewery after 1895. He continued his practice until his death in 1900.

Among the houses Beckmann designed which are featured in this publication:

- 1) **Engelke House** (107 Crofton)
- 2) **Voechting House** (133 Crofton)
- 3) **Lassner House** (303 Adams)
- 4) **Haarmann House** (331 Adams)
- 5) **Olsen House** (412 Pereida)



Beckmann's family home is located at 222 East Guenther.

**Credits**

**About Us:**

The **King William Association** is a nonprofit organization of residents and citizens dedicated to the preservation of the architectural character and the residential heritage of the neighborhood which is located south of downtown San Antonio. This area is protected by national and city historic designations. Your financial support of our efforts to preserve this distinctive inventory of San Antonio's historical architecture is greatly appreciated.

For more information please contact us at:

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1032 S. Alamo Street, San Antonio, Texas 78210  
(210) 227-8786  
[www.kingwilliamassociation.org](http://www.kingwilliamassociation.org)

**Credits:**

This publication is part of our continuing mission to educate the public on the history and unique architecture of the King William Area. The project was funded by the Texas Commission on the Arts and is the result of a concerted effort to research and publicize noteworthy properties.

Cherise Bell, Executive Director, King William Association

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## ● The Acequias

The Spanish Colonial irrigation systems known as acequias are integral parts of the cultural landscape of the City of San Antonio and influenced the landscape of the King William area. Acequias were canals that channeled water from the San Antonio River and San Pedro Springs into fields for farming.

Construction of the acequias began in 1719. Eventually some 50 miles of canals were dug, leading to a network of fields on both sides of the San Antonio River. The acequias served all of the Spanish mission settlements and early San Antonio farmers for over 150 years. They were used in the downtown area as well as the South Alamo Street – South St. Mary’s Street historic district until a few years after 1870.

The shape of the South Alamo Street – South St. Mary’s Street National Register Historic District was fixed early by the courses of the acequias.

The Acequia Madre, now South Alamo Street, is the northern boundary of the district. The Acequia Concepción, now South St. Mary’s Street, is the eastern boundary of the district, and the San Antonio River is the western boundary. In addition to the Acequia Madre and the Acequia Concepción, there is a desagüe (drainage ditch), now covered by Wickes Street, which originally drained into the San Antonio River.

This map shows the original locations of the acequias that ran through what is now the King William neighborhood. Those lines correspond to the current South Saint Mary’s, South Alamo and Wickes Streets.

## Pereida Street



### 412 Pereida ♦ Olsen House

In 1893, Norwegian sea captain Jens Jacob Olsen and his wife, Albertine, entered a contract with Ed Steves & Sons (lumber company) for a two-story brick residence to be built “in accordance and compliance with plans and specifications by A.F. Beckmann, architect” for \$7,000. Members of the Olsen family continued to live in the house until 1946. Today it is owned by Beethoven Männerchor, one of the oldest German Singing Societies in Texas.

### 430 Pereida ♦ Engelke House

Home of Benno and Mary Engelke, the two lots were purchased in 1883. The house was probably completed by the time Benno married Mary Elmendorf in 1884. The address has also been given as 104 Adams Street. The house was owned and occupied by an Engelke family member until 1974.

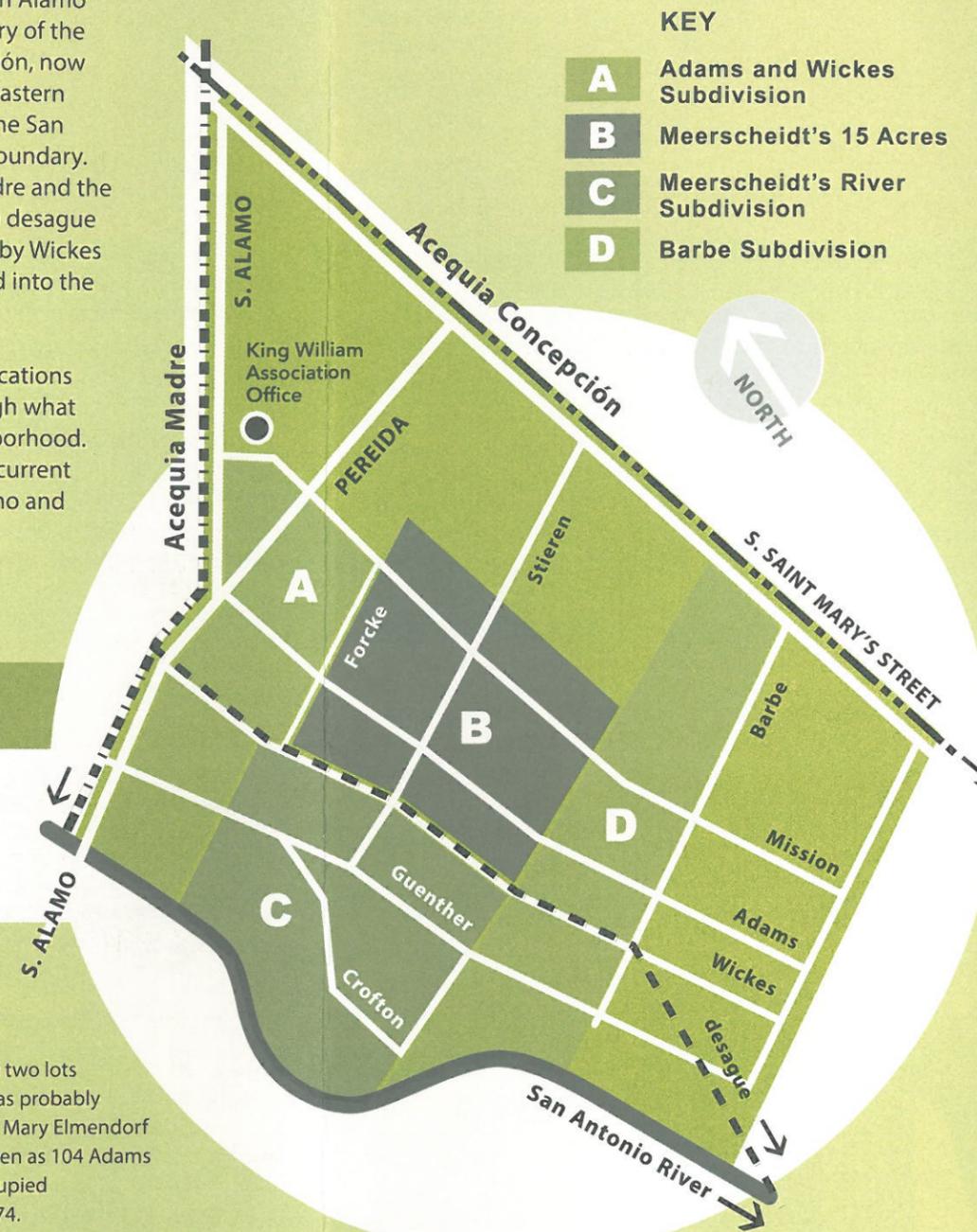
## ● Development History of the Area

South Alamo Street - South St. Mary’s Street was designated a National Register Historic District in 1984. The boundaries of the district were shaped by the acequias (irrigation system) established by the Spanish settlers. The first recorded use was as farm land to support people living at the Alamo. The land was secularized in 1793. Ernst Wehrhahn purchased land in the northeastern part of today’s district in 1858 and 1860. He farmed the property and constructed his house at 129 Cedar.

Real estate partners Hardin Adams and E. Wickes were the next significant developing force in the district when they purchased a tract of land in 1871 and sold only the lots, leaving the actual construction of the house to the buyer.

Brothers Axel and Paul Meerscheidt purchased two separate tracts known as Meerscheidt’s Fifteen Acre Subdivision, 1888, and Meerscheidt River Subdivision, 1890. Axel studied architecture at the University of Heidelberg (Germany). According to his daughter, Erna, he did not practice as an architect, but would build a “house or two to encourage others to buy property” in his subdivision. Within a few years the Meerscheidts entered into business with lumberman Carl A. Stieren, (503 E. Guenther) and started offering buyers the option of purchasing a completed dwelling on the property.

C. Harvey Barbe purchased approximately twenty-one acres in 1888, and he was the last to attempt substantial independent development. Barbe, however, was an absentee speculator, operating from his home in Louisiana and selling only the lot. Barbe was followed in the first quarter of the twentieth century by a succession of developers, builders, and lumber companies who completed the majority of construction of the neighborhood by 1937.



## East Guenther



409



421



427



503



516



709



735



801

### 409 East Guenther ♦ Huberich / Gething House

Built in 1891 for Conrad von Huberich, realtor, and his wife Emma. Von Huberich was in partnership with George Toullerton, and they bought the two lots where this house stands and the two adjoining lots to the south from H.B. Adams and E.D.L. Wickes. In 1944, Mrs. John S. Gething purchased the house as a home for her daughter Margaret and herself. Miss Margaret Gething continued to live here until her death in 1975. She thought so highly of her home with its furnishings that she left it in a trust. It is now a house museum open once a year.

### 421 East Guenther ♦ Faltin House

In 1886, developers Hardin Adams and E. Wickes extended their subdivision to the San Antonio River, which included property acquired from Thomas Pereida along what is now E. Guenther St. Clara Faltin bought this property in 1893. About 1904 she commissioned 421 and 427 Guenther Street and used the houses as rentals.

### 427 East Guenther ♦ Faltin House

Clara Faltin built this house and rented it to Z.H. Zanderson, a local wool merchant. She sold it in 1907 to F.C. Hunnam, a real estate broker, who lived in it until 1909. Subsequent owners included Bonn Avon, a private girls school, which operated here from 1946 to 1948.

### 503 East Guenther ♦ Stieren House

Realtor C.A. Stieren built this house in 1891, and lived here with his wife Hedwig until 1902. O.E. and Marie Lochausen then made it their home for the next five years. The octagonal tower shows it is a true Queen Anne style.

### 516 East Guenther ♦ Zilker House

In 1891, Charles Zilker paid developer Axel Meerscheidt \$1,800 for the two and a half lots, on which he built this house. The property was part of the 30 acre Axel and Paul Meerscheidt development along the San Antonio River.

### 709 East Guenther ♦ Rennert House

Frank and Clara Groos Rennert had this house built in 1906 on two lots they bought from Claudia Barbe. It was designed by San Antonio architect Leo M.J. Dielmann. Note the two-story fluted columns with Corinthian capitals.

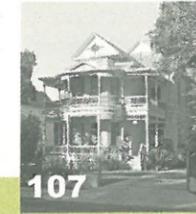
### 735 East Guenther ♦ Wehrhahn House

When Adolphine Wehrhahn sold the property at South Alamo and Garden (now South St. Mary's) Streets to Erhard Guenther in 1913, this house was on one of the lots. The address was listed as 607 Garden Street. According to the City Directory, it was built around 1903 as rental property. Before erecting the building that is now at that corner, Guenther moved this house to its present location.

### 801 East Guenther ♦ Dielmann House

Local architect Leo M. J. Dielmann built this house for his family around 1916. Dielmann was born in San Antonio in 1881 and graduated from St. Mary's College. He served as the City Building Inspector and as a City Councilman. Dielmann is especially known for his church architecture throughout Texas.

## Crofton



107



133



147



155

### 107 Crofton ♦ Engelke / Reifel House

Designed by Albert Beckmann in 1892, this house was built in the Queen Anne Victorian style for the Engelke family. Beckmann departed from the common practice of using limestone or woodframe construction by using yellow brick. During the 1940s, this property had a working coffee mill abutting the river.

### 133 Crofton ♦ Voechting / Tewes House

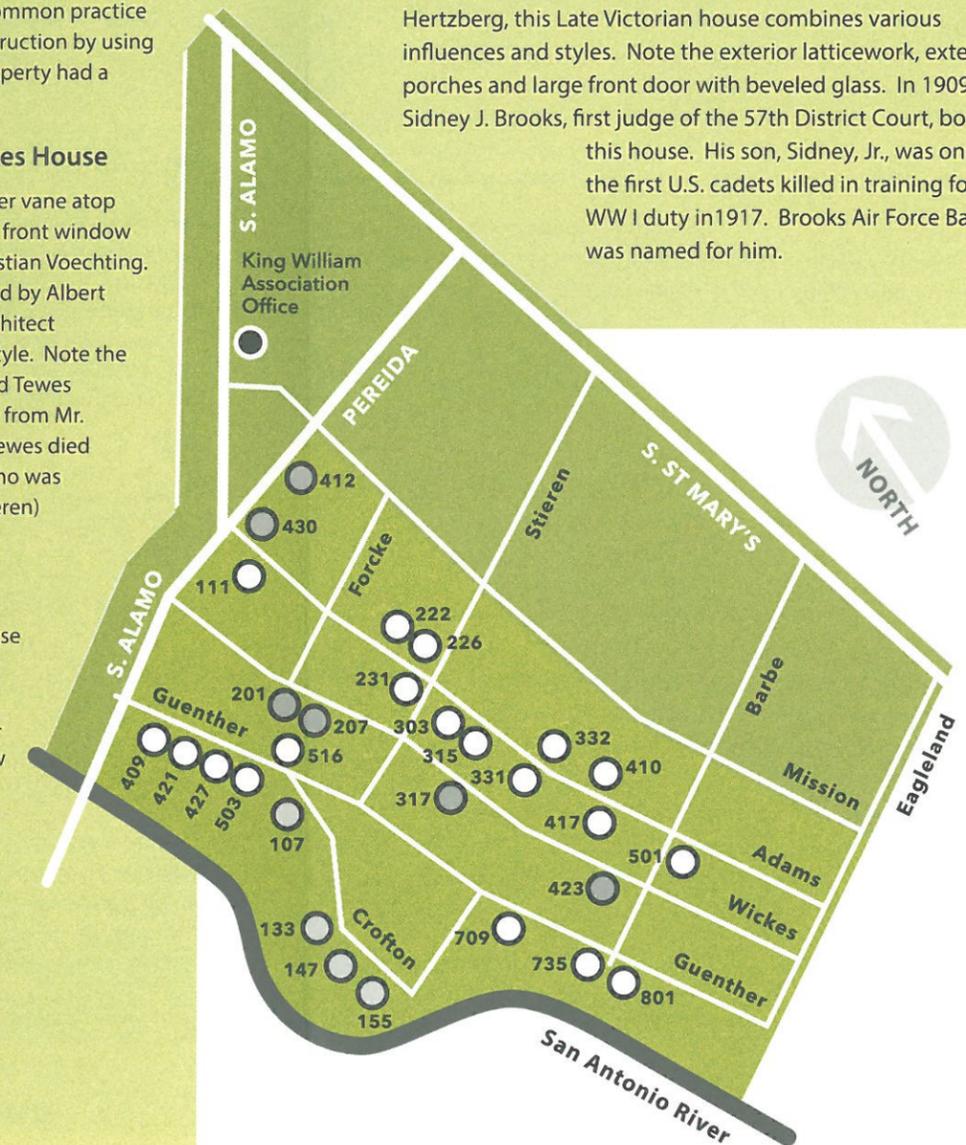
Built in 1882, as indicated by the weather vane atop the house, the letter "V" carved above a front window confirms that it was owned first by Christian Voechting. Its close resemblance to others designed by Albert Beckmann suggests that he was the architect for this fine example of Late Victorian Style. Note the decorative bargeboard. In 1894, Edward Tewes and his wife Anna purchased the house from Mr. Voechting for \$13,000. When Edward Tewes died in 1936, his daughter, Mary Augusta (who was married to Louis Stieren, son of C.A. Stieren) inherited the property.

### 147 Crofton ♦ Barner House

B.G. Barner built this Victorian Style house in 1900 and lived here until 1906, when Jere and Helena Maher bought it. Note the dentilated entablature on the wrap-around porch and the Palladian window in the gable.

### 155 Crofton ♦ Hertzberg / Brooks House Texas Historic Landmark

Designed by architect M.T. Eckles and built ca. 1890 by T.R. Hertzberg, this Late Victorian house combines various influences and styles. Note the exterior latticework, exterior porches and large front door with beveled glass. In 1909, Sidney J. Brooks, first judge of the 57th District Court, bought this house. His son, Sidney, Jr., was one of the first U.S. cadets killed in training for WW I duty in 1917. Brooks Air Force Base was named for him.



## Adams



### 111 Adams ♦ Schmitt House

In 1908 Louis H. and Annie Schmitt paid Joseph Courand, Jr. \$1,375 for this lot. After they built the house, it was rented to Mrs. Louis Barbour, who ran a boarding house until 1918. Its double-height columns show a stylistic transition from Classical Revival to Victorian.

### 222 Adams ♦ Engelke Home

This was the second house built in the neighborhood by Sophie Engelke, who bought the lot in 1899. Although as of 2014 this building was in dire need of repairs, it still has high architectural integrity, with its original elements remaining in place for over a century, and contributes to the context of the neighborhood.

### 226 Adams ♦ Vinke House

Paul Meerscheidt sold this house to Theodore Vinke, a city clerk, in 1898 for \$2,900. The unusual style of its roof suggests a Colonial Revival influence.

### 231 Adams ♦ Schulze / Schilo House

German craftsman Carl Schulze came to San Antonio in the late 1880s and, with his brother Otto, became one of the town's leading home-builders. This house, built ca. 1891, served as a residence for Carl and his wife, Agathe, until 1896. Later owners included Fritz and Laura Schilo, who in 1917 opened Schilo's Delicatessen, which remains on E. Commerce St. and is still popular for its split pea soup and Reuben sandwiches.

### 303 Adams ♦ Lassner House

Mrs. Adolphine Lassner, widow of Edward Lassner, bought these two lots in 1893. She had this house, designed by San Antonio architect Albert Beckman, built as a home for herself and her

children. Her husband, an accomplished pianist, had come to this country in 1865 from Stuttgart, Germany.

### 315 Adams ♦ Lacroix / Goldschmidt House

Richard and Lena LaCroix bought this property from Axel Meerscheidt in 1888, and built this house about 1889. LaCroix worked for his brother-in-law, Paul Wagner, as a merchant. Herman Goldschmidt purchased the house in 1904 for \$5,150. Born a German subject in Monterrey, Mexico in 1868, he was the owner of Goldschmidt & Co., merchandise brokers. His wife Gretchen was a public school teacher, and an active member of the King William Area Conservation Society, forerunner to the King William Association. She lived in the house until about 1960.

### 331 Adams ♦ Haarmann House

The grounds for this house include two 50-foot lots plus an 8-foot wide strip on the south side, left over when the Meerscheidt Addition was platted, and mark the termination of the subdivision. In 1893, Charles Haarmann bought the property for \$1,000 and hired San Antonio architect Albert Beckman to design the house. By 1898, his wife Emilie (Minnie) was a widow, and her sister Carolina and her husband, Conrad Goeth, came to live with her. Note the polychromatic arch over the front entry, made of voussoir stones.

### 332 Adams ♦ Meerscheidt Home

Listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Built ca. 1903, this is one of the most impressive monumental Classical Revival residences in the city. While the structure embodies most of the characteristic elements of this style, noteworthy features, such as the hipped dormers and the central projecting bay of the west facade, enhance

its stately appearance. It reflects the city's early expansion, promoted by the owner, Otto Meerscheidt, a major figure in San Antonio's banking industry, its early commercial growth, and the development of the King William area.

### 410 Adams ♦ Bainbridge House

According to the best evidence this small house was built in 1890 by F.F. Bainbridge after Axel Meerscheidt sold him the north part of the property where the present house at 332 is located. In 1900 he sold the house to Otto Meerscheidt. When Axel Meerscheidt married, he and his wife lived in this house before building the larger one. Note the keyhole window and flared dormer roof.

### 417 Adams ♦ Barbe / Luby House

In 1907, Constance Barbe Ford and her second husband, E.A. Ford, sold these four lots and the newly built house to Clarence Barbe for \$35,000. The place was called Sans Souci. Note the curvilinear porch denoting the Neoclassical style. The next year Barbe sold the property to Mary J. Luby, and it stayed in her family for the next 60 years. Judge James Luby, Mary's husband, was a native of London, born in 1846 to Irish parents.

### 501 Adams ♦ Richter House

Developer Leonard Peck owned nine consecutive lots on Adams Street. Developer C.A. Goeth owned the last two lots on Adams plus all eleven lots on the west side of Adams Street. Together, in 1916, they decided to have building restrictions "... for the purpose of making said property mutually more valuable and attractive as residence." Their restrictions included setbacks for buildings and fences. Peck sold this house with the restrictions to Gustave Richter August 1921 for \$2,150.

## Wickes



### 201 and 207 Wickes ♦ Coburn Houses

These twin houses were built in 1891 by R.B. Coburn as rental properties. The ell-shaped, Folk Victorians were typical of small rental properties of the day. Note their beautiful bay windows.

### 317 Wickes ♦ Garcia House

After an older house here burned down, Porfirio Garcia had this one built for his residence about 1901. Note its historical plaque. Silvestre Revueltas, a prolific composer and violinist from Mexico, lived here from 1926-1928. During that time, he was concertmaster at the Aztec Theatre and also performed and taught at the San Antonio College of Music.

### 423 Wickes ♦ Weininger House

William and Nettie Weininger purchased this property in 1911 for \$1,100 and built this house, which was their home until 1947. Note the beautiful proportions and massive box columns of this Classical Revival house.