



Ferguson House

518 N 7th St.

This house, a Recorded Texas Historic Landmark, was home to James E. Ferguson (1871-1944) and his wife, Miriam Ferguson (1875-1961), two colorful and progressive Texas governors. When they built the house in 1907, it was considered a mansion. They occupied it until Jim became governor in 1915, and returned after he was impeached in 1917, remaining until Miriam was inaugurated as governor in 1925.

In this brief term as governor, Jim Ferguson brought progress, including creation of the Texas Highway Department and improvements in public school funding, but scandal ended his career. Trying for a comeback in 1924, he failed to get his name on the ballot, so Miriam Ferguson ran. Her campaign on an anti-Ku Klux Klan platform provoked retaliation from Klan members who rode their horses at full gallop along North 7th Street and threw bricks through the home's front picture window. She was elected, becoming the first woman governor of any state. Despite their wealth and advanced education, "Ma" and "Pa" Ferguson cultivated "down home" images. When Miriam was elected, she was pictured in a sunbonnet, peeling peaches and feeding her chickens. Longtime north side neighbors chuckled that the woman governor had never peeled a peach in her life. The Fergusons left the house in 1932.