

## THOMAS D. WOOTEN BUILDING (1876), 107-109 East 10th Street

Owners: Dr. and Mrs. Greenwood S. Wooten, Jr.

Built in the same year as the Lundberg Bakery, the Thomas D. Wooten Building is significant for two reasons: it was created for the man who has been called the "Father of the University of Texas"—and it tells the history of early Austin architecture in all the progressive nooks and crannies and ornamentation of its eclectic construction. The building remains in the possession of the great-grandson of its first owner.

Thomas D. Wooten was of Scottish descent and grew up on a Kentucky plantation. Educated in the University of Louisville medical department, he served as a district surgeon in the Civil War (Texas Hood Brigade) and moved to Austin in 1876. He and his wife, Henrietta (Goodall) Wooten, had 10 children. It is possible that Wooten gave the first smallpox shots in Austin during the 1881-1882 epidemic.

In addition to conducting an extensive medical practice, Wooten was, for two decades, a giant influence at the University of Texas. Appointed to the Board of Regents by Governor Oran M. Roberts in 1881, he became President of the Board in 1886 and served the group til 1900. It was during this period that the University at Austin and the Medical Branch were actually being organized; the Regents, particularly the resident member and president, were tremendously powerful.

The building Wooten commissioned as his office on East 10th Street the year he came to Austin was in the heart of downtown activity, but the structure was of far simpler architecture than it appears today. A rectangle, it had a first story of rusticated limestone and a second story of brick. There were two wood galleries front and back, and an entrance stair parallel to the building in front. Windows had a Romanesque quality; the original building has been described by architects as Carpenter (Gothic plus Roman).

There was a central hall, and ceilings were 12-feet high.

With succeeding generations of Wootens, the building changed also. When Dr. Wooten's two sons, Dr. Joe Sils Wooten and Dr. Goodall Wooten, were ready to start medical practice, their father remodeled and enlarged the building to include a hospital unit and also gave it the then-New Look: a whimsical Queen Anne bay window with a dome, new main entrance, and skylights over stairway and operating room. Shortly before World War I, something described as "Renaissance Revival" was added: two fluted wooden Corinthian columns, cornices, entablature, and balustrades.

The Wooten family name has continued to be important in Austin. Dr. Joe Wooten, a doctor for 53 years, was also a UT Regent. Dr. Goodall Wooten was president of the Austin Chamber of Commerce and nationally-recognized as a gun collector; his wife, perhaps Austin's foremost azalea-grower, was the first woman to serve on the Chamber of Commerce board and was a long-time leader in Red Cross activities. Still standing is their mansion at 19th and Rio Grande Streets, a National Register Property. Also standing are Wooten Memorial Dormitory, Wooten Elementary School, and Camp Tom Wooten, associated with them.

Son of Joe Wooten was Greenwood S. Wooten, Sr., realtor and businessman who owned the Greenwood Drug Company at 10th and Congress for 30 years. It is his physician-son, Greenwood S. Wooten, Jr., who owns and practices medicine in the Wooten Building today. The Wootens are active in local cultural and civic affairs, particularly those relating to KLRN-TV. Mary Ann Wooten was named one of Austin's "Outstanding Women" by the *Austin American-Statesman* in 1974.

