

1-17-94

Princeton Avenue

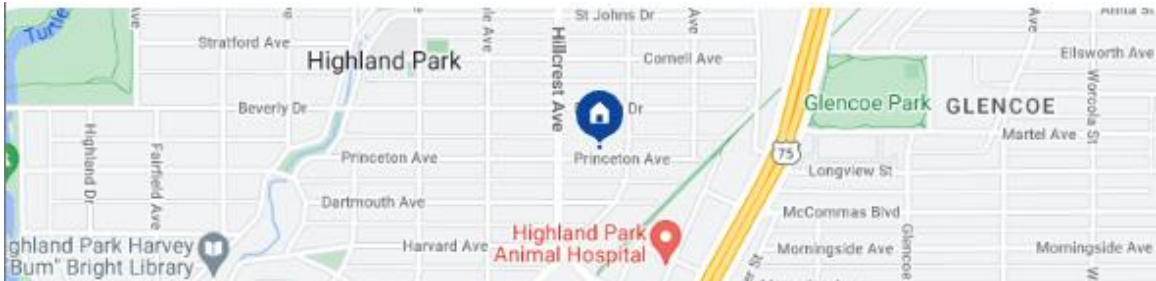
3308 Princeton Avenue in Dallas is an address I remember because I heard it repeated so many times in family stories as I was growing up. I do not remember much about living there, I must have been between two and four since we moved there shortly after my sister Martha was born and moved away shortly before my brother Willett was born. I tend to distrust memories from that age because they probably belong to the "talked-about" category rather than being genuine memories.

From pictures and from driving by in later years, I know that the house was a single-story red brick cottage with a covered porch extending across the front. When we moved to 5726 Morningside Drive when I was six, I learned that the Princeton living room extended across the front of the house, for the three Wilton rugs purchased for the Princeton house were divided on Morningside into two for the living room and one for the dining room. I think I vaguely remember those three rugs placed across the room with about a foot between them. Their fringe at each end may well be a memory reinforced later on when my frequent chore was to vacuum the fringe so that it lay smooth and straight, not a favorite task. But I have at least one memory about that living room on Princeton that can only be my own. I'm sure that no one ever talked about this occasion.

There was a fireplace with a brick hearth and generous buff-brick mantel in the center of one of the end walls. That memory is reinforced by family stories about my Texas Ranger Uncle Tom showing his gun to Mother, who pulled the trigger firing an overlooked bullet, which narrowly missed Uncle Tom and buried itself in the mantel. My own private recollection concerns a time when a crystal radio set with headphones was located on the mantel. The adults were discussing in a lively fashion about the program on the radio. My red-headed cousin Ruth, always my favorite cousin, was especially intrigued by the novelty of the radio. She must have been in her teens. At any rate, she was wearing the headphones and listening to the radio when she moved suddenly toward the center of the room, dragging the radio with her. The resulting crash is probably what caused me to remember the occasion, together with Ruth's anguished apologies to Daddy for having broken his radio. That's all I remember. But the accident couldn't have been too serious, for Ruth was obviously still Daddy's favorite niece years later.

All the other "memories" I have of that house I can trace to family discussions later: my unhappy attendance at a neighborhood birthday party where I won a live rabbit which terrified me; the time when I played with Mother's engagement ring, the diamond fell out, Daddy sifted the whole sand pile to try to find it, and my grandmother later found it when she turned out the pockets of my apron in order to wash it; the time I lifted my infant cousin from the bed because she was crying and took her to her mother, my Aunt Oma, who promptly fainted; Daddy's carrying me back and forth the length of the sidewalk in the summertime to try to get me to sleep, while I counted the stars, one, two, three, four, one two, three, four ad infinitum.

Those I don't really remember, but the radio incident I do; it is my very own.



3308 Princeton Avenue in 2023, listed at \$2.9 million.
It has a second floor now; original first floor or completely new?