Lot 6 of Block 37 of the Lon C. Hill Town and Improvement Company plat that would one day contain the structure at 213 N. 1st Street was still unsold as of February 1912.

The building at 213 was constructed of oversized bricks, likely considered quite modern for the late 1920s. Originally it had two stories. After the Labor Day Hurricane of 1933 badly damaged the second story, it was removed.

Wayne Cole, the son of the Rev. Charles L. and Lillian Cole, was reported to have been born in the second story which must at the time have been rented as a residence. His widow Bessie says this was not the case. The family had come to Harlingen in 1924. Wayne would go on to become a prominent insurance man in the community. For reasons unclear they are not listed in the 1930 US Census.

The very first Harlingen telephone directory, that of 1930, has a listing for 213 N. 1st Street. It is for Graham Howell, signs. He has no telephone at his place of business nor is any resident phone noted. By the issuance of the 1931-32 directory Graham has moved to 224 W. Monroe Avenue.

In 1932-31 the site is being used as a residence for Frank T. Thomas, his wife Ruth and two children under age 18. He is a barber at the Modern Barber Shop, 105 E Jackson.

In 1935 there is no listing for the address. The Thomases have moved to 311 E. Jackson.

By 1937-38 The site is once again occupied. It has Reed's Fruit Stand in it. This is managed and apparently owned by C. W. Reed. He and his wife Luella reside at 1 ½ mile New Combes Highway. Reed's business will occupy 213 into 1944.

In 1946 the business will be named Lambert's Fruit Stand. Its principals are Mae Lambert and Louise Eldridge. The former is a widow living at 1102 E. Monroe while the latter is married to Edward, who is a T/Sgt. at the HAAF. They reside at the Simpson Apartments.

In 1948 213 becomes the business site for Al-Kirk Floor Coverings. This is a partnership between William L. (Bill) Allison and Tom Kirkland. Bill and his wife Faire reside at 1002 W. Harrison. Thomas W. and his wife Maxine live at 1121 E. Taylor. He is also an employee of Montgomery Ward.

By 1950 Allison is own his own. The store becomes Allison's Floor Covering and remains in business at least into 1954.

In 1956 is found yet another tenant at 213. This is Jeanne's Planter Box, Joe E. Newlin, owner. No residence is noted in Harlingen for Mr. Newlin.

By 1958 Blevin's General Tire Service is at 213. It is a branch of a McAllen firm. The next year it becomes Ronnie Round's Round Tire Service. By the 1961 directory however the Round Tire Service lists M. D. Round as owner and M.C. Fleming as manager.
1962 finds 213 vacant, and it apparently remains so until the 1965 directory has Tom Bounds Trucking Service at the site. Bounds also has an office and likely parking site at 207 W. Lincoln Avenue. His wife Onita is noted to be a salesperson at Sears. By 1966 Bounds is sharing the store with Frank D. Williams Jr. Williams is a representative for Royal Typewriter and also conducts repairs. He and his wife Anne reside at 1218 citrus Terrace. In 1969 Williams also advertises office equipment and repair. By 1971 he has dropped the Royal Typewriter connection and becomes simply the F.D. Williams Company.

In 1974 213 has as its occupant the Television Den and Federal Alarm System. The Alarm company is gone by the next year, but the Television Den stays put into 1988-89. In 1980 its partners were listed as Bill E. Whitaker and R. D. Tichenor.

The building has no occupant with a telephone for the years 1990-91 into 1999-2000. It was in fact being used for storage of oil drums and other items by its owner, the Hicks Oil Company. The building's north-side portico was utilized by the Eagle Glass Company.

In the 2000-01 directory Larry Hart and the All Valley Key and Lock Service occupy 213.

In 2002 a co-occupant is Guerra's Auto Sales. 2003 finds Lesley Hart and O. Hart as All Valley Key and Lock principals listed. Guerra stays on into 2007 by which time he not only sells autos but used parts too.

In 2008 C & H Security System Corp also doing business as All Valley Key and Lock continues at 213 as it does into 2011. This firm is only the second Hispanic-owned company of this type in the state of Texas.

Hi Norman,

Thanks so much for working on this! I had never realized that building was two-story. Curtis mentioned it to Bob Tichenor (stepson of Bill E. "Red" Whittaker), and he told him that the late Wayne Cole (who was in insurance) was born in the second floor of the building, prior to the 1933 hurricane. Cole's widow maintains an office in Curtis' building at Jackson & 3rd, so he's going to ask her if she can confirm that (including what year he was born) and also any other info she might have … Will let you know what we find out, if anything!

Cheryl Laberge