

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service
National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

1. Name of Property

Historic Name: Borden's Creamery
Other name/site number: Mistletoe Creamery
Name of related multiple property listing: NA

2. Location

Street & number: 875 East Ashby Place
City or town: San Antonio State: Texas County: Bexar
Not for publication: [ ] Vicinity: [ ]

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this
[ ] nomination [ ] request for determination of eligibility) meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the
National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my
opinion, the property [ ] meets [ ] does not meet) the National Register criteria.

I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following levels of significance:
[ ] national [ ] statewide [ ] local

Applicable National Register Criteria: [ ] A [ ] B [ ] C [ ] D

Signature of certifying official / Title: Mark Wolfe, State Historic Preservation Officer
Date: 11/19/21
Texas Historical Commission
State or Federal agency / bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property [ ] meets [ ] does not meet the National Register criteria.
Signature of commenting or other official
Date
State or Federal agency / bureau or Tribal Government

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:
[ ] entered in the National Register
[ ] determined eligible for the National Register
[ ] determined not eligible for the National Register.
[ ] removed from the National Register
[ ] other, explain: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

Borden's Creamery, San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Private
<input type="checkbox"/>	Public - Local
<input type="checkbox"/>	Public - State
<input type="checkbox"/>	Public - Federal

**Category of Property**

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	building(s)
<input type="checkbox"/>	district
<input type="checkbox"/>	site
<input type="checkbox"/>	structure
<input type="checkbox"/>	object

**Number of Resources within Property**

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	0	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
1	0	total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: NA

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions:** INDUSTRY/PROCESSING/EXTRACTION: Manufacturing Facility

**Current Functions:** WORK IN PROGRESS

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification:** MODERN MOVEMENT: Moderne

**Principal Exterior Materials:** CONCRETE, GLASS

**Narrative Description** (see continuation sheets 6-11)

Borden's Creamery, San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas

## 8. Statement of Significance

**Applicable National Register Criteria:** A, C

**Criteria Considerations:** NA

**Areas of Significance:** Industry (*local*); Architecture (*local*)

**Period of Significance:** 1933-1971

**Significant Dates:** 1933, 1946, 1952, 1963

**Significant Person** (only if criterion b is marked): NA

**Cultural Affiliation** (only if criterion d is marked): NA

**Architect/Builder:** Ayres and Ayres, Architects (architects, original 1933 building and 1946-1963 additions); Key, King B. (contractor, 1933); Emmett T. Jackson and Son (contractor, 1952)

**Narrative Statement of Significance** (see continuation sheets 12-25)

## 9. Major Bibliographic References

**Bibliography** (see continuation sheet 26)

**Previous documentation on file (NPS):**

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested. *Part 1 Approved 4/16/2020.*
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey #
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record #

**Primary location of additional data:**

- State historic preservation office (*Texas Historical Commission, Austin*)
- Other state agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other -- Specify Repository:

**Historic Resources Survey Number** (if assigned): NA

Borden's Creamery, San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas

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## 10. Geographical Data

**Acreage of Property:** less than one acre (approximately 0.9810 acres)

**Coordinates** (latitude/longitude coordinates)

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: NA

1. Latitude: 29.446941°N Longitude: -98.481631°W

**Verbal Boundary Description:** The nominated boundary includes approximately 0.9810 acres of the larger legal parcel identified as NCB 3053 (BORDEN PARK TIF), LOT 22 (Property ID 1343864) in the Bexar Appraisal District (accessed November 16, 2021) (Maps 2 & 6).

**Boundary Justification:** The boundary includes an approximately 0.9810 acre portion of the historic property acreage and excludes the northern part of the current legal parcel, which is occupied by a non-historic storage building and a surface parking lot, as well as an abandoned segment of River Road to the east that separated the creamery from the San Antonio River purchased and incorporated in the site in 2013.

## 11. Form Prepared By

Name/title: Maria Watson Pfeiffer; Ann Benson McGlone and Charlotte Adams  
Organization: ReSearch (Pfeiffer)/ Post Oak Preservation Solutions (McGlone, Adams)  
Street & number: 213 Washington Street (Pfeiffer)  
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Date: August 7, 2020

## Additional Documentation

**Maps** (see continuation sheets 27-31)

**Additional items** (see continuation sheets 32-57)

**Photographs** (see continuation sheets 5, 58-67)

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

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### Photograph Log

Name of Property: Borden's Creamery  
City or Vicinity: San Antonio  
County, State: Bexar, TX  
Photographer: Ann McGlone and Gomez Vasquez International  
Date Photographed: August 31, 2021

*All photographs accurately depict property conditions. No changes nor significant deterioration has occurred since the photos were taken in August 2021.*

Photo 1  
Primary (Southwest) Elevation, View Northwest.

Photo 13  
First Floor Central Space

Photo 2  
Southeast Elevation, View West.

Photo 14  
First Floor Northwest Space

Photo 3  
Rear (Northeast) Elevation, View West.

Photo 15  
Second Floor Northwest Space

Photo 4  
Rear (Northeast) Elevation, View South.

Photo 16  
Second Floor Central Space

Photo 5  
Northwest Elevation, View East.

Photo 17  
Second Floor Mosaic Tile Detail

Photo 6  
Primary (Southwest) Elevation Showing Second Floor  
Exterior from Roof, View East.

Photo 18  
Second Floor Corridor

Photo 7  
Tower from Roof, View Southwest.

Photo 19  
Second Floor Office

Photo 8  
First Floor Interior Window Detail

Photo 20  
Tower Interior

Photo 9  
Second Floor Skylight Detail

Photo 10  
First Floor Entrance Vestibule

Photo 11  
First Floor Lobby

Photo 12  
First Floor Southeast Space

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## **Narrative Description**

Borden's Creamery, located at 875 East Ashby Place in San Antonio, Texas, is a two-story reinforced and cast-in-place concrete Moderne industrial building. It was built for the Borden's Associated Companies to house the Mistletoe Creamery in 1933, and shortly before completion it was purchased by Borden's and operated as Borden's Creamery. Notable San Antonio architecture firm Atlee B. and Robert M. Ayres designed the building as well as later historic additions between 1946 and 1963 that now read as one cohesive building. The building features a streamlined stucco exterior, fluted spandrels, original multi-light steel frame windows, vertical concrete pilasters, reeded banding at the parapet, a strong horizontal emphasis, mosaic tile, flat roof over the main building, and a central tower with a hipped glazed tile roof, topped with a metal and glass light beacon. The Moderne characteristics are concentrated along the primary (southwest) elevation and the other elevations are sparsely treated. The building has experienced exterior alterations over the years including several historic additions and two non-historic additions added in the 1990s. Selective demolition in 2020 removed the non-historic additions and some infill, exposing some historic exterior details that were previously obscured. Selective demolition also exposed historic finishes, but little interior historic fabric remains, and only a portion of the original floor plan is intact. The ongoing rehabilitation work was approved by Texas Historical Commission and National Park Service staff and is being carried out in accordance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation. Borden's Creamery retains sufficient historic integrity. The property has been used for industrial and light-industrial purposes since the building's completion in 1933.

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## **Setting & Site:**

Borden's Creamery is located northeast of downtown San Antonio. It is situated at the eastern terminus of East Ashby Place, a residential street characterized by one-story bungalows (Maps 2-4). The two-story creamery building nearly spans the width of the site and its primary elevation faces southwest toward East Ashby Place. The site is bounded on the north by U.S. 281 (McAllister Freeway), south by East Ashby Place, east by the San Antonio River and west by land that is being developed for apartment use. A driveway west of the Borden's building separates it from the adjoining apartment property. Surface parking is located to the west, east, and north of the building while sidewalks line the primary (southwest) elevation.

The site has been reconfigured twice since 1933. A parcel along Borden's northeastern perimeter was purchased in 1968 by the Texas Highway Department for the U.S. 281 right-of-way. The second modification was made in 2013 when an abandoned segment of River Road that separated the creamery from the San Antonio River to the east was purchased and incorporated in the site (Maps 2-3, Figures 24-26).

U.S. 281 separates the creamery from Brackenridge Park (NRHP 2011) to the north. The park contains eighty-two contributing resources. The closest of these to Borden's are the Brackenridge Park golf course and clubhouse (1916 & 1923) and the lower pump station (1885) which is also individually listed on the National Register (NRHP 1981). East of Borden's, the inlet for the city's flood control tunnel dominates the small park along either side of the river. To the southwest, Nathaniel Hawthorne Academy (City of San Antonio Landmark) faces Josephine Street, a predominately commercial and light industrial thoroughfare.

The creamery site and surrounding property was used as farmland from the 1700s until the early 1900s when it was sold by long-time owners and subdivided for residential development. The large tract at the eastern end of the property near the river was sold to Mistletoe Creamery in 1932. The catalyst for the surrounding area's recent revitalization is The Pearl (historically Pearl Brewing Company) (City of San Antonio Landmark), an immensely successful mixed-use redevelopment of the massive, once-shuttered brewery complex. Since the 22-acre Pearl development first opened in 2006, the brewery and surrounding areas have become a popular apartment, culinary, and boutique district.

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**Exterior: (Updated August 2021)**

As of August 2021, rehabilitation tax credit work approved by Texas Historical Commission and National Park Service staff is underway and being carried out in accordance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation. The ongoing rehabilitation work impacts both the interior and exterior. Some selective demolition occurred in 2020 exposing some historic exterior details, such as original multi-light steel frame windows and reeded banding at the parapet. The interior and exterior has been renovated over the years and added on to. Changes are noted in more detail in the description below.

The Moderne building is of reinforced and cast-in-place concrete construction on a concrete pier and beam foundation. The exterior walls are stucco. The creamery was built in stages from 1933 to 1963 and now reads as one cohesive building (Map 5). The streamlined primary (southwest) elevation of the original 1933 creamery was a nine-bay two-story rectangular volume with one-story wings on each side (Figures 9-10, 12-14). A projecting central square tower over the entrance featured a hipped, glazed tile roof and a metal and glass light beacon. The tower also featured a concrete grill covering the central windows. The original entrance had a concrete awning. The primary elevation also featured original multi-light steel framed windows with splayed sills, fluted spandrels, and the parapet had concrete reeded bands. The side elevations were almost identical to the primary (southwest) elevation. The original rear (northeast) elevation was utilitarian and devoid of detailing. It featured several pedestrian doors and loading bays at the first floor and multi-pane windows at the second floor.

*Historic Additions*

The historic additions were completed by Atlee B. and Robert M. Ayres, who designed the original 1933 building. A major 2-story addition to the rear (northeast) and a second story addition to the northwest side occurred in 1946 obscuring the original elevations (Map 5; Figures 20-22). Between 1946 and 1952 (specific date unknown) an addition was made to the southeast elevation. This two-story addition abutted the original one-story wing and the design matched the primary elevation of the original 1933 building (Figure 23, 30). This allowed the open area on the first-floor roof to be used for exterior mechanical equipment. In 1952 another major one-story addition was made to the front of the building (southwest elevation). This addition completely covered the original first floor and original entrance, and created a new stylized entrance stair leading back directly to the original entrance. On the east, it covered the one bay of the other recent addition. It also added two bays to the west as well as a new 1952-1953 two-story addition to the west. This 1952 addition on the front of the building incorporated many of the original design elements making it nearly identical to the original southwest elevation, with the exception of additional bays (Figure 19). The original 1933 second-story remains visible. The final major historic addition occurred in 1963 when a new two-story addition and loading platform was added to the northwest corner of the building spanning along the rear elevation. This final addition obscured all but a very small portion of the 1946 rear addition.

*Primary (Southwest) Elevation*

The two-story primary (southwest) elevation faces East Ashby Place (Photos 1, 6; Figure 30). The design features modern massing and a strong horizontal emphasis. The site is sloped so the solid concrete base is almost exposed a full story on the east side. The symmetrical primary elevation is organized around the original central tower, which is now recessed from the first floor. The primary entrance is roughly centered, flanked by five structural bays to the east and six structural bays to the west. Vertical concrete pilasters demarcate the structural bays, rising from just below the window to the parapet. The parapet is flat with a course of reeded banding. The primary entrance is recessed, accessible by tile-clad stairs that lead back to an additional set of concrete stairs in the vestibule. Simple, stucco-clad concrete ornament frames the recessed entry with mosaic tile inlay. Added in 1952, this now historic entrance has a more restrained design but is compatible to that of the original 1933 building (Map 5, Figures 9-10, 12-14 30, Photo 1). The original 1933

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building and the original wood-frame storefront system with paired, fully-glazed doors with transoms and sidelights is still visible through the recessed entrance. The entrance is temporarily closed off during ongoing rehabilitation.

Windows on the projecting first floor addition of the primary (southwest) elevation contained non-historic square glass block which was removed as part of the selective demolition in 2020; these window openings are currently empty (Photo 1, Figure 30). The 1952 architectural drawings call for the 1933 windows to be re-used in the 1952 façade. Remnants of the steel sash window attachments can be seen in window jambs.

The second floor of the primary (southwest) elevation is recessed from the first floor and represents the original primary elevation of the 1933 building. Detailing on the second-floor mirrors that of the first floor with vertical pilasters designating structural bays organized around the central tower (Photos 1, 6). The historic fenestration pattern is largely intact as is the reeded banding at the parapet. The window in the central tower and the two windows directly to east of the tower are original multi-light, steel-frame, industrial-style windows with fluted spandrel panels beneath (Photo 6). Except for the four closed bays west of the tower, the other window openings also currently empty. A shallow hipped roof tops the central tower clad in yellow, glazed tile with a central, cylindrical metal and glass light beacon (Photo 7, Figure 30). The materials on the tower appear to be original.

#### *Secondary Elevations*

The remaining elevations are more utilitarian in character and feature stucco walls and a combination of multi-light steel-frame and aluminum windows—many without the glazing, as well as empty window openings that contained non-historic glass block or were infilled prior to the 2020 selective demolition. The northwest elevation features a one-story portion to the south (1952 addition) and a two-story portion to the north (1952-1963 additions) (Map 5, Photo 5). The reeded stucco parapet continues around the top of both the one and two-story portions of the building. Other than that, there is no ornamentation on the elevation. A non-historic aluminum single light storefront door, an aluminum plate glass window, and an empty rectangular window opening which contained non-historic glass block are the only openings on the one-story portion. An aluminum canopy is suspended over the door and window. The two-story portion features three evenly-spaced hollow metal doors at the first floor. A small square aluminum window is located to the north of the northern door, and two original multi-light steel frame windows (without glazing) that were covered with stucco infill prior to 2020 are located between the north and central door. There is a large infilled opening between the central and south doors. On the second floor, there are multiple original empty openings where previously there was stucco infill. One opening has visible clay block exposed under the stucco.

The rear (northeast) elevation of the two-story 1963 addition contained a non-historic concrete loading platform that occupied approximately three-quarters of the elevation; this was removed during the 2020 alterations (Map 5, Photo 4). There is a combination of empty and concrete-infilled window openings, as well as a centered opening across this elevation. A large canopy is suspended by metal hangers over the first floor. A non-historic metal fire escape from a second-floor door was located in the westernmost bay, but was removed in 2020. The second floor has irregularly spaced window openings with one larger opening in the center; these openings are currently empty. Moving east to the east elevation of the 1963 addition, there is currently an empty door and window opening at the second floor, likely a combination of original fenestration and later alterations.

A non-historic addition was added to the northeast of the 1933 building in the 1990s (Maps 4-5). This addition obscured much of the eastern half of the northeastern façade of the building, and was removed in 2020, exposing the remainder of the elevation (Photo 3). A second-story addition, also dating to the 1990s, topped the 1933 building and 1946 addition, obscuring a historic rooftop terrace. This addition was also removed in 2020, revealing the rooftop terrace, reeded banding at the parapet, as well as remaining historic multi-light steel frame windows on the second floor.



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The eastern half of the northeast elevation is utilitarian. This portion is characterized by a concrete and metal staircase that leads to a second-floor entrance. The entrance replaced an original window. Two original multi-pane windows are visible as well as a metal platform accessing the entrance. A few other empty openings are seen further to the west but it's unclear if they are original (Photo 3). Several of the original historic openings at the first floor are infilled and not visible (Figure 22).

The southeast elevation of the 1946-1952 additions has both a one-story portion to the south and a two-story portion to the north and is largely utilitarian (Map 5, Figure 21, Photo 2). A garage door and original multi-pane window are visible at the southernmost end of this elevation. Remnants of a steel lift remain outside the loading bay. Metal stairs lead to one metal pedestrian door. The reeded banding at the parapet continues along this elevation at the first floor and the first bay of the two-story section, which is defined by two vertical concrete decorative pilasters. There are two large openings between these pilasters, with one at each floor. The first-floor opening contains an original multi-light steel frame window that was uncovered in the 2020 selective demolition, and the original second story opening contains a non-historic metal covering. On the two-story portion there are also currently 3 additional original openings on the second floor, with two containing historic multi-light windows without glazing, and one infilled with stucco. A raised concrete loading platform is positioned at the first floor, which also contains mechanical equipment. On the first floor of the two-story portion, two truck loading bays are centered on the elevation and open onto the platform. The southern door is level with the platform and within a larger infilled opening. The other door is located approximately three feet above the platform; both contain non-historic metal coverings. There is an infilled opening north of the loading bays.

**Interior: (Updated August 2021)**

*Historic Interior*

According to the 1933 historic drawings, the first-floor plan consisted of a small central lobby with stair and elevator access to the second floor under the tower (Figure 11). The lobby also provided access into a room for pasteurizing and another room for ice cream freezing. The northwestern side of the building contained a receiving room with an exterior platform and a large room for dirty case storage with a freight elevator. The chill room, cheese room, print room, shipping office, jacket storage, ice bunker, hardening room, and ice packing tank all lined the rear (northeast) exterior wall. A platform lined the rear elevation. A mezzanine was centrally located and a boiler and engine room was located in the southeast corner of the building. The floor plan was altered slightly in 1946 when the addition was added on to the rear of the building. The rooms along the rear (northeast) wall were extended and made larger, a new rear loading platform was built, and a few new partitions were added to the more central rooms to create subsequent storage and office spaces. Two new staircases were added providing access to the second floor (Figure 20).

Historic drawings for the original 1933 second floor plan were not found. The 1946 plans for alterations and additions seem to show what is thought to be the original 1933 plan (Figure 21). The main stairway and elevator opened into a large room with an unknown use. The central floor plan was also divided into a room for cold storage, offices, a drivers room, and a stationary room. The northwest side of the second floor (added in 1946) had a room for milk pasteurizing and the southeast side of the building had a room labeled "existing room." The 1946 rear addition included an ice cream pasteurizing room, a shaved ice room, check-in, men's restroom, and a cashier.

*Current Interior*

Ongoing interior rehabilitation approved by Texas Historical Commission and National Park Service staff is underway and being carried out in accordance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation. Selective demolition exposed historic finishes, but little interior historic fabric remains, and only a portion

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of the original floor plan is intact. The majority of historic fabric that was extant has been retained as part of the rehabilitation.

The interior was reconfigured over the years, and plans for the 1952-1963 additions were not available. The current interior configuration is open and irregular. Aside from the entrance vestibule, lobby, and what was historically the boiler and engine room, little of the original configuration remains on the first floor (Figure 27, Photos 10-14). Non-historic corridors and self-storage units were removed in 2020. The first floor currently consists of a series of large, open, interconnected spaces with mechanical spaces to the east. Historic finishes on the first floor include terrazzo and tile floors, a tile wainscot, and terrazzo stairs all concentrated in the vestibule and lobby (Photos 10-11). A non-historic galvanized metal strip was added to the wainscot in the lobby. The rest of the first-floor interior has utilitarian finishes including sloped concrete floors, exposed ceilings, and exposed block walls (Photos 12-14). A few non-historic staircases were added at an unknown date. Non-historic sheetrock that clad some perimeter walls was removed in the 2020 selective demolition to reveal original window openings (Photos 13, 15). Selective demolition also revealed original exterior vertical concrete pilasters with original glazed tile at the base (Photo 10).

The current second floor plan is also irregular and most historic interior partitions have been removed to create a series of large, open, interconnected spaces. (Figure 28, Photos 15-16). Non-historic corridors and storage units were removed in 2020. The historic configuration remains intact around the central stair beneath the tower, as well as in the corridor and a series of offices to the southeast of the central stair (Photos 18-19). Historic finishes including terrazzo and mosaic tile floors are visible in these areas and in patches elsewhere on the second floor (Photo 17). The office corridor has wood-paneled walls with empty window openings, and the offices have wood-frame, fully-glazed doors, and terrazzo floors. The remainder of the second-floor interior is utilitarian in character with exposed concrete floors, ceilings, and block walls. Selective demolition revealed some of the original exterior walls, including the vertical concrete pilasters and reeded banding at the ceiling, and industrial multi-light steel frame windows from the 1933 building and the 1946 addition that were obscured by non-historic walls (Photos 15-16, 20).

In the intact second floor offices, the walls are plaster. Some of these offices have doors to access the roof on the southwest. Original multi-light steel frame windows in the central tower and two bays to the east also open onto the roof. Directly north of these offices is another row of non-historic offices that look east on to the exposed second-floor terrace. Original multi-light steel frame windows also open onto the roof on this elevation (Photo 3). The 1946 drawings show this area as one large office. It is unclear when the individual offices were created. The only other historic features that remain on the second floor are a skylight just north of the tower and a narrow concrete stair to the tower which provides access to the roof (Photo 9). The tower interior contains one room with concrete walls and a hipped roof structure, all painted white and a light well at the top where the metal and glass light beacon is (Photo 20).

**Alterations:**

Numerous additions and alterations were made to the original 1933 building. In 1946 a significant addition was made to the rear (northeast) elevation and a second story was added the each side elevation. Sometime between 1946 and 1952 a two-story addition was added to the southeast elevation. In 1952 a nearly identical one-story addition was made to the front of the building and a two-story addition was added to the northwest elevation. In 1963 an addition and loading dock was added to the northwest and rear (northeast) elevations. A non-historic, one-story rectangular freezer addition was added to the northeast elevation of the building in the 1990s. The second-story metal roof addition built in the 1990s was added over the southeastern wing of the building. Over the years, these various historic additions and the non-historic additions concealed almost the entire original 1933 creamery. Other updates occurred with these various additions. Some original multi-light steel frame windows were replaced with non-historic square glass block along the primary (southwest) elevation. The concrete screen that was over the central tower window was removed at an unknown

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date. Some historic openings were infilled and new openings were added along the secondary elevations, including non-historic doors and windows. A non-historic fire escape was added to the rear elevation at an unknown date. In 1999, the building was repurposed for storage units and the interior floor plan was reconfigured and most of the historic interior fabric removed. The intact second floor offices had doors to access the roof likely installed around the same time.

Finally, in 2020, as part of the historic rehabilitation project, the 1990s non-historic addition on the rear (northeast) elevation and the non-historic second floor addition were removed exposing some historic exterior elements such as historic multi-light windows. Removal of non-historic windows resulted in some empty window openings. The concrete loading platform along the rear elevation was removed, as was the non-historic metal fire escape. Additionally, the interior storage units and non-historic corridors were demolished, and all non-historic finishes and window infill removed, revealing historic features and finishes that were previously obscured. The steel smoke stack was also removed.

**Integrity:**

Despite these alterations and additions, the property retains sufficient historic integrity and serves as a good example of a cast-in-place concrete Moderne industrial building. The building remains in its original location and the historic setting is largely intact except for the new apartment under construction directly to the west. Integrity of design, materials, and workmanship are visible in the intact streamlined stucco exterior with the original 1933 design and seamless 1952 addition visible along the primary (southwest) elevation. The primary elevation retains some original multi-light steel frame windows at the second floor, fluted spandrels, vertical concrete pilasters, and reeded banding at the parapet. Added in 1952, the more restrained Moderne primary entrance is intact and the original 1933 (recessed) entrance is still accessible via tile-clad and concrete stairs. The entrance has intact mosaic tile. In addition, the historic fenestration pattern along the primary elevation, horizontal emphasis, flat roof over the main portion of the building with historic skylight, and hipped glazed tile roof over the central tower topped with a metal and glass light beacon are also intact. Stucco cladding is intact along the secondary elevations as is some of the reeded banding at the parapet. Due to the recent demolition of the 1990s additions in 2020, the eastern half of the northeast elevation, and the rooftop terrace are now visible revealing the historic form and design including multi-light steel frame windows, and reeded banding at the parapet.

The interior has been altered over time and is currently largely organized into large open interconnected spaces with mostly industrial finishes and little historic fabric remains. While the floor plans were almost entirely reconfigured, the entrance vestibule, lobby, main stairway, boiler and engine room space at the first floor, and historic offices and a hallway to the southeast of the main stairway at the second floor remain intact. Intact historic materials include terrazzo and tile floors, tile wainscot, and terrazzo stairs in the vestibule and lobby. Wood-paneled walls in the office corridor and wood frame, fully glazed doors in the historic offices, some mosaic tile flooring, as well as exterior elements discovered on the interior during selective demolition like vertical concrete pilasters with glazed tile at the base, and reeded banding are also extant. Combined, these intact design elements convey the feeling of a pre-war and early post-war creamery. While the building was used for industrial and light-industrial purposes since 1933, it is no longer associated with milk production and distribution in San Antonio.

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### Statement of Significance

Borden's Creamery, located at 875 East Ashby Place in San Antonio, Texas, was constructed in 1933 for Mistletoe Creamery by Borden's Associated Companies, at the time the largest distributor of fluid milk in the United States. The plant was acquired by Borden's in October 1933 just prior to completion, and began operating as Borden's Creamery. The reinforced and cast-in-place concrete industrial building and subsequent additions built between 1946 and 1963 were designed by the San Antonio firm of Atlee B. and Robert M. Ayres and built by contractor King B. Key (1933) and Emmett T. Jackson (1952). The plant represents the evolutionary production process that transformed the American dairy industry between the early to mid-20th century. Borden's prospered during the 1940s, 1950s and 1960s, leading to the plant's expansion and modernization. When acquisitions and mergers redefined the dairy industry throughout the late twentieth century, many regional creameries, including Borden's, closed. Borden's remains the only historic building associated with the 20<sup>th</sup> century dairy industry in San Antonio. Borden's Creamery is nominated to the National Register under Criterion A in the area of Industry at the local level of significance for its association with modern milk production and distribution in San Antonio and the surrounding area during the early to mid-20<sup>th</sup> century. It is also nominated under Criterion C in the area of Architecture at the local level of significance as an intact example of Moderne industrial architecture by the firm of Ayres and Ayres. The period of significance extends from 1933 until 1971. During this time, the building continuously housed Borden's Creamery until it was sold in 1995.

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#### *The Borden's Company*

The modern milk processing industry dates to 1856 when Gail Borden (1801-1874) founded the Borden Dairy Company in Connecticut (Figure 1). Borden was born in New York in 1801, moved to Indiana with his family, and in the early 1820s, settled in Mississippi where he became a surveyor. He arrived in Texas in late 1829 and became the surveyor for Austin's Colony the following year. He also farmed and raised cattle in Fort Bend County, and in 1835 founded the *Telegraph and Texas Register* newspaper. Borden settled in Galveston where, in 1837, he became the port's first collector, and later, the secretary of the Galveston City Company. He also became an inventor and moved to New York in 1851 to market his dehydrated meat biscuits.<sup>1</sup>

It was in New York that Gail Borden patented a process to produce condensed milk using a vacuum tray to extract water from milk before heating and canning it. The product did not need refrigeration and had a long shelf life. Borden patented the process in 1856 and opened unsuccessful milk factories before establishing the New York Condensed Milk Company in 1861 (Figure 2). The company prospered, producing condensed milk for Union troops during the Civil War. Borden went on to patent other processes for condensing beef extract, coffee, and fruit juices. He returned to Texas in the early 1870s, and died in 1874 in Borden, the Colorado County town named for him.<sup>2</sup>

The New York Condensed Milk Company, renamed the Borden Company in Gail Borden's honor in 1919, expanded to produce ice cream and cheese, and purchased over 200 companies throughout the United States in the late 1920s. Borden's became the largest milk distributor in the United States. Acquisitions continued throughout the 1900s and Borden's was the largest dairy producer in the world by the late 1980s. The decrease in milk consumption and other market pressures resulted in the company's reorganization and divestiture of various units in 1995. Dallas-based Borden Dairy Company declared bankruptcy in early 2020 and in June 2020, was acquired at auction by New Dairy Opco LLC.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Joe B. Frantz, "Gail Borden, Jr.," *Handbook of Texas Online*, accessed June 24, 2020, <http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/fbo24>.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.bordendairy.com/press-room/history/>, accessed on June 24, 2020; "Team led by former Dean Foods CEO wins bankruptcy auction

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*The Early Dairy Industry in San Antonio*

Before the establishment of commercial dairies and creameries in the late 1800s and early 1900s, San Antonio residents kept livestock on their property or relied on family-owned dairies for milk products. These independent producers maintained small herds in and near the city and delivered milk to homes by horse or mule-drawn wagons.

San Antonio's first city directory, issued in 1877, carried only seven listings for individuals calling themselves "dairyman." Commensurate with population growth in the late 1800s, the number listing their occupations as "dairy" or "dairyman" varied, but generally increased beginning in the middle 1880s. The year 1887 is the anomaly; an explanation for this disproportionate increase has not been determined. While these city directory listings do not present a full picture of the local dairy industry, they offer a generalized summary (Figure 29).<sup>4</sup>

It was not until the 1880s that a significant number of cattle used specifically for dairy production was introduced to Texas. Prior to that time, though various cattle breeds were brought to Texas by those migrating from southern states, most Texas cattle were descended from native stock that did not produce large quantities of milk. The first pure-bred Jerseys were introduced to the state in the 1880s, and the first Holstein calves were born in Texas in 1884.<sup>5</sup> As one agricultural extension expert remarked, "A good quality of milk cannot be obtained by taking a poor article and boiling or pasteurizing it."<sup>6</sup>

*J. Frank Kline and the Creamery Dairy Company*

The history of the Borden's Creamery can be traced directly to a dairy established in San Antonio in 1885 by J. Frank Kline. Kline arrived in San Antonio from Ohio in 1884 at age 15 with his father and brother just as the number of dairy workers and owners in the city was trending upward. After working briefly as a bell boy at the Menger Hotel, he and his father began a dairy business and he was listed in the 1887 city directory as a dairyman. By 1891, Kline had a dairy on Flores Street south of downtown, and in 1899 he opened the OK Dairy on Monterey Street in the West End district. It was renamed the Creamery Dairy Company by 1901. The 1901 city directory also listed the Creamery Dairy Company on San Juan Road south of Riverside Park on the southern edge of the city. This double listing likely pinpointed Kline's move from the west to the south side of town. The subsequent 1903 directory listed only the south side site.<sup>7</sup>

The new name and location of Kline's dairy reflected a major expansion of his business. In the early 1900s, he purchased property, livestock, and the rights to milk produced by other area dairies. He consolidated a number of land parcels for his dairy farm on San Juan Road where he maintained a herd of some 400 cows. In one transaction, he purchased the milk route and thirty-five milk cows (thirty-one Jerseys and four Holstein) from another dairyman.<sup>8</sup>

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of Borden Dairy," *Dallas Business Journal*, June 16, 2020 <https://www.bizjournals.com/dallas/news/2020/06/16/borden-dairy-peak-capital-partners-gregg-engles.html>, accessed on June 25, 2020.

<sup>4</sup> San Antonio city directories, various years; Edward W. Heusinger. *A Chronology of Events in San Antonio* (Standard Printing Company, San Antonio:1951) 34, 41.

<sup>5</sup> E. Dale Odom, "Dairy Cattle," *Handbook of Texas Online*, accessed May 15, 2020.

<sup>6</sup> "To the Public," *San Antonio Daily Light*, June 5, 1906, 3.

<sup>7</sup> "San Antonio Business Men," *San Antonio Light*, February 9, 1908, 11; "J. Frank Kline Dies Unexpected While on Visit in the North," *San Antonio Light*, February 26, 1922, 7; San Antonio city directories, various years. J. Frank Kline's John P. Kline, was enumerated on the 1880 Ohio Federal census as a physician. It is not known if the family had any ties to the dairy industry in Ohio. San Juan Road was later known as Concepcion Road.

<sup>8</sup> Bexar County Bill of Sale, 1:47-48 (Neal to Kline, June 16, 1903); "Manufacturing of Dairy Products," *San Antonio Light*, June 17, 1906, 11.

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When the demand for milk in San Antonio exceeded J. Frank Kline's available supply, he looked to other sources. He acquired cream to manufacture butter from nearby towns including Floresville, Seguin, Devine and Lockhart, as well as other areas known for their dairy products. Most importantly, in 1906, he contracted to purchase three-fourths of the production of J.O. Terrell's St. Cloud Farm on the northwestern edge of town. The farm was noted for its Jersey cattle herd and was considered "among the most valuable dairy properties in the state."<sup>9</sup> Because of the milk quality, Kline paid twenty-five percent higher than for lower quality milk. The St. Cloud supply alone was estimated at three-fourths of a ton of milk per day. Kline also procured milk from the Vance family's herd. The Terrell and Vance herds were both described in the local press as "celebrated."<sup>10</sup> To serve his customers, Kline maintained a delivery fleet that included sixty horses, eight milk wagons and eight ice cream wagons (Figure 3).<sup>11</sup>

It is assumed that Kline initially processed milk in a facility at his dairy farm. With the expansion of his herd and supply of milk and cream, in 1905-1906 he acquired a building at Austin and Eighth Streets northeast of downtown that he expanded and adapted for a creamery. Milk delivered to the plant was weighed, pasteurized and bottled and "never touched by hand until delivered by the driver to the consumer."<sup>12</sup> Ice cream was made daily and delivered to over three hundred families with standing orders. The creamery's daily output was estimated to be 1,500 gallons of milk, 400 gallons of ice cream (in season) and 100 pounds of butter (Figures 4-5).<sup>13</sup>

In 1908, a newspaper profile of Kline stated that "for 10 years he owned and operated the largest dairy in Texas owned by one individual." The article described Kline's Creamery Dairy as "the biggest sanitary dairy in Texas."<sup>14</sup> While it is difficult to substantiate this claim, Kline inarguably had a large and thriving business. His was the only San Antonio creamery included in Texas Department of Agriculture's listing of eighty-nine Texas creameries in 1912.<sup>15</sup>

J. Frank Kline discussed the history of the local dairy industry in an interview in 1910. He recalled that, when he arrived in San Antonio in 1885, the city's total milk supply was produced from fewer than 400 cows, most of native stock. The small herds of Jersey cows first introduced totaled only about 150 head. Delivery men carried one can of milk on the seat of their two-wheeled cart drawn by a single horse. By 1910, it took over 4,000 cows to meet the city's demand. The development of Kline's creamery mirrored the evolution of the dairy industry as a whole. Milk dealers no longer owned herds, but contracted with farmers who furnished a guaranteed number of gallons per day.<sup>16</sup> Kline declared that, "The best cow state in the Union is Texas."<sup>17</sup>

### *Milk Safety and Dairy Regulation*

Local journalist, Fred Mosebach, in his 1934 account of San Antonio's dairy industry, remarked about milk safety in the days before mechanization and pasteurization. "Cleanliness then as now was paramount with the milkman. He kept the milk cans scrupulously clean and airtight so that no contaminating agency could come in contact with the

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<sup>9</sup> "Real Estate Deals Closed for Cash," *San Antonio Light*, September 10, 1916, 25. Edward C. Lasater, a prominent cattle rancher from Falfurrias, Texas, who reportedly owned the largest Jersey herd in the world, purchased one-half interest in St. Cloud Farm in 1929 ("Lasater Buys Home in City for \$40,000," *San Antonio Evening News*, March 25, 1929, 12).

<sup>10</sup> *San Antonio Light*, June 17, 1906, 11.

<sup>11</sup> *ibid*; "To the Public," *San Antonio Daily Light*, June 5, 1906, 3.

<sup>12</sup> *ibid*.

<sup>13</sup> *ibid*; "San Antonio Business Men," *San Antonio Light*, February 9, 1908, 11

<sup>14</sup> *San Antonio Light*, February 9, 1908, 11.

<sup>15</sup> Texas Department of Agriculture Bulletin, November-December 1913, 68-70. Austin, Texas. Creamery Dairy Company facilities were also listed in Beeville and Yoakum.

<sup>16</sup> "Four Thousand Cows Give Milk to Local Consumers," *San Antonio Light and Gazette*, February 6, 1910, 31.

<sup>17</sup> *ibid*.

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contents.”<sup>18</sup> The milk was said to still be warm from the cow when the milkman drew it out of cans into pint or quart measures and then poured it into pails provided by the purchaser. Because there was no refrigeration, milk was boiled to preserve it for a day. The milkman cleaned his cans every day and refilled them the next morning.<sup>19</sup>

Though pasteurization was not required by ordinance for several more years, J. Frank Kline's Creamery Dairy Company adopted this practice, as well as sanitizing procedures, when he opened his new plant at Austin and Eighth streets in 1906. The plant included machinery that filtered and pasteurized the milk before it was cooled and bottled. Empty bottles were washed, steamed and sterilized before being refilled and sealed. Wooden cases to hold the bottles were also sanitized.<sup>20</sup>

Ordinances requiring pasteurization of milk were adopted at various times by Texas cities but most were in place by 1927. Though the City of San Antonio employed a city physician as early as 1854 and established a board of health in 1858, comprehensive health regulations were not adopted until the early 1900s. In May 1914, city commissioners created the Health Division including a Board of Health, City Health Officer, and various other offices. By September 1915, the City Health Officer's monthly milk inspection report was presented to commissioners. These reports included bacterial count and fat content. San Antonio's health ordinance was amended in 1922 to include the Board of Health and thirteen positions and offices. One of these was the City Chemist and Bacteriologist who also served as the ex-officio milk inspector.<sup>21</sup>

The Milk Producers Association of San Antonio petitioned the city commissioners in March 1919 to require all milk dealers to pasteurize their milk to protect consumers. It was not until January 1927 that San Antonio City Commissioners passed a lengthy ordinance governing the handling and grading of milk and milk products and cleanliness of dairies and creameries. By 1942, the Health Department estimated that 92.5 per cent of the milk sold in San Antonio was pasteurized.<sup>22</sup>

### *The Nissley Creamery Company*

J. Frank Kline's plant produced a variety of products that dominated the local market during the 1910s. In addition to milk, these included Golden Rod butter and Velvet ice cream. The success of Creamery Dairy Company made it an attractive target for acquisition by a large regional company. In 1920, Kline sold his plant to Nissley Creamery and retired at the age of 50. The Nissley Creamery of Texas was founded in Fort Worth in 1918 and operated under the trade name of Mistletoe Creamery. In a series of transactions filed April 7, 1920, Nissley purchased all of the Creamery Dairy Company's real estate and equipment. The transactions, valued at \$500,000, included thirty-four horses and mules and twenty-five trucks and other vehicles.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> "Dairy Industry Shows Rapid Progress in Past 330 Years," *San Antonio Express*, June 17, 1934.

<sup>19</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>20</sup> "Manufacturing of Dairy Products," *San Antonio Light*, June 17, 1906, 11.

<sup>21</sup> E. Dale Odom, "Dairy Industry," *Handbook of Texas Online*, accessed November 12, 2019; City Commission Minutes, September 2, 1915; October 4, 1915; City Council Ordinance, OF-284, March 13, 1922.

<sup>22</sup> "Milk Producers Ask Better Enforcement of City Ordinances," *San Antonio Light*, March 11, 1919:3; San Antonio Ordinance OG-142, January 24, 1927; "Buttermilk Scarcity Brings S.A. Rationing," *San Antonio Light*, August 14, 1943, 12. The city's health officer, Dr. W.A. King, noted that creameries and ice cream manufacturers were not under municipal inspectors, but rather the United States Public Health Service.

<sup>23</sup> "Mistletoe is New Creamery Concern Here," *San Antonio Light*, April 8, 1920, 7; Bexar County Bill of Sale 3:532-533; 3:533-535; Bexar County Deed Records (BCDR); 597:232-233; 569:260-262; 569:262-263; 569:263-264 (Creamery Dairy Company to Nissley Creamery Company).

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Nissley's San Antonio acquisition added to its portfolio of plants "in half a dozen parts of Texas."<sup>24</sup> The announcement of the sale indicated that the 15,000 square foot plant at Austin and Eighth streets was currently processing 3,000 to 4,000 gallons of milk a day but had a capacity of twice that amount.<sup>25</sup> Nissley planned to offer the San Antonio market only "the highest possible quality of dairy products including sweet milk and cream, butter, ice cream and buttermilk."<sup>26</sup>

J. Frank Kline's retirement was short-lived. He died unexpectedly in 1922 while on a trip to Chicago. In his obituary, he was described as "one of the oldest creamery and dairy men in the city and it is said that he was the first to engage in the manufacture of ice cream in San Antonio." His plant was "said to be among the most modern and best equipped creameries in the South."<sup>27</sup>

Nisseley Creamery Company was reorganized under the name Mistletoe Creameries in 1922. Five years later, the company's assets were conveyed to a Delaware-based corporation, Mistletoe Creameries, Inc. At that time, Mistletoe owned properties in at least fourteen far-flung Texas towns and cities including Robstown, Wichita Falls, Amarillo and Lubbock. The 1927 transaction contained a detailed inventory of assets at each location and 544 cream buying stations in Texas, Oklahoma, New Mexico, and Louisiana. One cream buying station was located in each of three other states— Colorado, Tennessee and Delaware.<sup>28</sup> Assets in San Antonio included fifteen work horses "used in milk routes adjacent to and running into San Antonio with all wagons, harness and other equipment."<sup>29</sup>

#### *Cooperatives, Competition, and Consolidation in the 1920s*

Mistletoe Creamery was not alone in competing for customers when it entered the San Antonio market in 1920. In order to achieve some advantage over larger companies and earn higher profits, some smaller producers and creameries joined the San Antonio Dairy Farmers Co-operative Marketing Society formed in 1920. The society was formed in accordance with Senate Bill 183, Chapter 193, "Providing for Incorporation of Farmers' Co-Operative Societies," approved in 1917 by the 35<sup>th</sup> Texas Legislature. The San Antonio Cooperative was chartered by 21 local dairy farmers who contributed a total of \$60,000. The organization acted as an agent for these dairymen in the purchase and sale of agricultural products including machinery and supplies as well as the purchase of insurance. The cooperative could also own and operate machinery needed in the production, harvesting, and preparation of farm and ranch products for market. The Marketing Society, which sold ice cream and other dairy products through its Blue Bonnet Co-operative Creamery, was short-lived. The organization acquired the old Riegler Creamery building in downtown San Antonio in 1921, but was bankrupt by November 1922.<sup>30</sup>

In 1927, Mistletoe was one of ten creameries operating in San Antonio. Seven other companies advertised themselves as manufacturers of ice cream. While two of the larger creameries—Alford and Alta Vista—maintained their own dairies, the 1927 city directory listed another forty-five smaller dairies that supplied milk to creameries, ice cream

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<sup>24</sup> "Mistletoe is New Creamery Concern Here," *San Antonio Light*, April 8, 1920, 7.

<sup>25</sup> *ibid*, "Mistletoe is New Creamery Concern Here."

<sup>26</sup> "Mistletoe Comes to San Antonio," *San Antonio Evening News*, April 8, 1920, 3.

<sup>27</sup> "J. Frank Kline Dies Unexpected While on Visit in North," *San Antonio Light*, February 16, 1922, 7.

<sup>28</sup> BCDR 668:629-632 (Nissley Creamery Company change of name, February 14, 1922); BCDR 947:414-432 (Mistletoe Creameries et al to Mistletoe Creameries (May 19, 1927).

<sup>29</sup> BCDR 947:412-423 (Mistletoe to Mistletoe, May 19, 1927). The president and major shareholder of Mistletoe Creameries was S.S. Lard.

<sup>30</sup> Legislative Reference Library of Texas, [https://lrl.texas.gov/LASDOCS/35R/SB183/SB183\\_35R.pdf#page=7](https://lrl.texas.gov/LASDOCS/35R/SB183/SB183_35R.pdf#page=7), accessed October 7, 2020; BCDR 941:284-286 (Charter, San Antonio Dairy Farmers' Co-Operative Marketing Society, March 4, 1927; "Milk Facts, Co-operative Marketing," *San Antonio Light*, August 14, 1920, 5; BCDR 637:144-146 (Byrne et al to San Antonio Dairy Farmers' Co-operative Marketing Society, April 6, 1921); "U.S. District Court Filings," *San Antonio Express*, November 23, 1922, 12.



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manufacturers, homes, and commercial outlets. Perhaps the largest operation, the Southwest Dairy Products Company, operated a plant supplied by fifty-one dairies in Bexar and Wilson counties (Figure 6).<sup>31</sup>

In early 1929 before the beginning of the Great Depression, Southwest Dairy Products Company purchased five San Antonio creameries including Blue Bonnet Creamery, Alta Vista Creamery, Alford Pure Milk and Ice Company, Dixie Ice Company and Home Ice Company. The local press remarked, "This merger will mean a great deal to San Antonio and its trade territory."<sup>32</sup> Southwest Dairy Products operated forty-two other plants throughout Texas, Arkansas, and Louisiana as well as one in Mississippi. The company marketed its products under the trade name, "Dairyland Products."<sup>33</sup>

Southwest Dairy Products invested heavily in its new San Antonio facility in order to serve the city's rapidly growing population that had increased from 53,321 in 1900 to 231,542 in 1930. The company constructed its \$200,000 Dairyland creamery on the Josephine Street site of Home Ice Company. In spite of the social and economic upheaval of the deepening Depression, the new Dairyland Creamery was completed and the plant opened on June 8, 1931 (Figure 7).<sup>34</sup>

In 1932, less than a year after Dairyland Creamery opened its new facility, the Knowlton Creamery opened northwest of downtown on Fredericksburg Road. S.E. "Ed" Knowlton had gone to work for J. Frank Kline's Creamery Dairy Company in 1904. He then established his own milk delivery business before deciding to build a modern processing and distribution center to serve his growing retail business.<sup>35</sup>

*Mistletoe Creamery: 1932-1933*

The new Dairyland and Knowlton's creameries were built during a period of rapid consolidation and modernization that reshaped the dairy industry. Substantial capital, a scarce commodity during the Depression, was needed to meet these challenges. Large regional and national companies were better equipped than small local dairies and creameries to finance substantial improvements.<sup>36</sup>

Like Dairyland and Knowlton's, Mistletoe was forced to address these same challenges. Mistletoe was still one of the major dairy producers in Southwest Texas in the early 1930s. "The name Mistletoe has become closely identified with every phase of commercial production of dairy products in the San Antonio territory."<sup>37</sup> The availability of abundant pastures for grazing during much of the year also encouraged production. A key component of the company's supply chain was Mistletoe Farms located in Wilson County about five miles southeast of Stockdale where 710 cows, primarily Jerseys, provided milk for the creamery. The local press reported "...it may well be said that every cow in San Antonio's trade area is now within convenient reach of a buying creamery."<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> "New Building Record Made During April," *San Antonio Light*, May 1, 1921:52; "U.S. District Court Filings," *San Antonio Express*, November 23, 1922.

<sup>32</sup> "Nine Million Invested in Dairies: Southwest Dairy Products Company Operating in San Antonio," *San Antonio Light*, May 17, 1929, 13-B.

<sup>33</sup> "\$9 million Invested in Dairies," *San Antonio Light*, May 17, 1929, 13-B.

<sup>34</sup> "Peak of Quality," *San Antonio Light*, May 24, 1929:10; Heusinger, 54, 69; "New Dairy Products Plant is Opened," *San Antonio Express*, June 9, 1931, 16.

<sup>35</sup> "\$40,000 Creamery Project Rushed to Aid Employment," *San Antonio Express*, March 20, 1932, 29.

<sup>36</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>37</sup> "High Grade Jersey and Holstein Herds Make Southwest Texas Outstanding," *San Antonio Express*, April 30, 1933, 7.

<sup>38</sup> *ibid.*

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To address the expanding market for milk and milk products and maintain its competitive edge, the owners of Mistletoe Creamery announced in February 1932 that they would build a new, modern facility on Jones Avenue near Broadway close to their existing plant. However, when final plans were announced eight months later, it was revealed that land had been purchased immediately north of Josephine Street on East Ashby Place.<sup>39</sup> The planned facility promised to be “one of the finest and most up-to-date plants in Texas.”<sup>40</sup> The new site was just one block north of, and within clear view of, the Dairyland Creamery.

The new Mistletoe site on East Ashby Place was immediately south and west of Brackenridge Park (NRHP 2011) at the corner of Ashby and Memorial Drive (also called River Road) which separated it from the San Antonio River. Located in the Labor de Arriba (the upper farm of Mission San Antonio de Valero), the property had been owned by the Roxo and Chaves families in the early 1800s. Fourteen acres of that land was acquired by Jacob Schoomann whose family farmed and operated a nursery there beginning in 1867. Schoomann's daughter, Elizabeth, sold the property in 1925 and a subsequent owner conveyed a portion of it to Mistletoe Creamery in 1932.<sup>41</sup>

Mistletoe had apparently already developed plans for its new creamery with the Jones Avenue site in mind. Though no primary source material has been found, it is likely that the site was chosen for the opportunity to drill artesian wells to access pure water in the Edwards Aquifer. San Antonio Water System records indicate that artesian wells were located at both the Mistletoe Creamery site and the Dairyland Creamery site across the street to the south. Both facilities were located between Brackenridge Park and Pearl Brewery where there were also artesian wells.<sup>42</sup> After acquiring the East Ashby Place property, plans were revised to “conform to the new site.”<sup>43</sup> While finalizing the creamery plans, the company also made \$15,000 in improvements to its Mistletoe Farm. Two large milking barns, each with thirty stalls, were constructed. These included sterilizers, a boiler room, and bottling plant.<sup>44</sup>

### *Building Mistletoe Creamery*

The new Mistletoe Creamery was designed by the firm of Atlee B. and Robert M. Ayres and constructed in 1933 for Mistletoe by the Borden's Associated Companies. The general contractor for the project was King B. Key. The creamery was designed as a Moderne two-story, 14,000 square foot reinforced and cast-in-place concrete building with a basement estimated to cost \$137,000 (Figures 8-11). Ground was broken on April 8, 1933 in a ceremony attended by the mayor and other dignitaries.<sup>45</sup> The ceremony, carried live on WOAI radio, was the city's first broadcast of local “news in the making.”<sup>46</sup> The Chamber of Commerce president extolled the company which he said employed 144 people and, through raw milk and cream purchases, provided income to “over 600 milk and cream producers in San Antonio and its trade territory.”<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> “Mistletoe Buys Site for Plant,” *San Antonio Light*, October 16, 1932, 33; BCDR 813:480-482 (Willmann to Mistletoe, May 5, 1925); Bexar County Deed Records (BCDR) 1323:149-150 (Weber to Mistletoe, December 3, 1932).

<sup>40</sup> “Mistletoe Buys Site for Plant,” *San Antonio Light*, October 16, 1932, 33.

<sup>41</sup> Jacob Schoomann purchased the property in 1867. Following his death in 1904, the land was distributed to his heirs who platted and sold lots. The creamery site was owned by one of his daughters until it was purchased by investors in 1925 (BCDR 822:361-363, Schoomann to Kieffer, May 21, 1925; BCDR 1097:322-324, Kieffer to Weber, March 23, 1929; BCDR 1323:149-150, Weber to Mistletoe, December 3, 1932).

<sup>42</sup> Gregg Eckhardt to Maria Watson Pfeiffer, email correspondence, November 27, 2019.

<sup>43</sup> “Revised Creameries Drawing Underway,” *San Antonio Express*, December 11, 1932, 31.

<sup>44</sup> “Creamery Floor Plans Revised,” *San Antonio Express*, December 25, 1932, 1-C.

<sup>45</sup> “Mistletoe to Build Plant,” *San Antonio Light*, March 11, 1933, 12-A; “Mistletoe Creameries to Begin Erection of Modern Plant Costing \$100,000,” *San Antonio Express*, February 12, 1933, 1-C; “Ground Broken for New Mistletoe Creameries Plant,” *San Antonio Express*, April 9, 1933, first real estate page.

<sup>46</sup> *ibid.*, *San Antonio Express*, April 9, 1933, first real estate page.

<sup>47</sup> *ibid.*

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The Moderne industrial building featured a stucco exterior, symmetrical nine-bay primary (southwest) elevation divided by vertical concrete pilasters with a prominent central entrance, rectangular plan, fluted spandrels, multi-light steel frame windows, reeded banding at the parapet, horizontal emphasis, flat roof over the main building, and a central tower with a hipped, glazed tile roof topped with a metal and glass light beacon. *The San Antonio Light*, described the construction indicating "the exterior walls will be finished in cast concrete, which will be the first building of this type built in San Antonio."<sup>48</sup> *The San Antonio Express* elaborated on the process. "The cast-ornaments on the exterior of the building will be set in the forms and become a part of the concrete. This is the first application of this method of construction in San Antonio, although it is extensively used in California."<sup>49</sup> The accuracy of this claim is not certain. As will be discussed, Ayres and Ayres incorporated cast stone ornamentation in other projects, one in 1929 that predated this project. Others examples date to the 1940s.

The new plant included a receiving room, pasteurizing room, ice cream freezing room, dirty case storage, chill room, print room, cheese room, hardening room, ice bunker, boiler and engine room, bottling room, cold storage vault, ice freezing tanks, and office. Interior rooms had glazed tile walls and floors and the cream white exterior featured some colored tile highlights around the entrance tower (Figures 10-14).<sup>50</sup>

As construction was underway, changes were made to the design "to eliminate lost motion in certain phases of milk processing and manufacturing of products such as cream, cottage cheese and ice cream," as well as to meet the U.S. Department of Health's sanitation requirements.<sup>51</sup> The architects remarked that these changes would enhance the beauty of the building."<sup>52</sup>

During the course of construction, the Mistletoe Creamery project reportedly provided badly needed employment to some 600 people who were previously unemployed due to the Great Depression. Despite water seepage as the foundation was being prepared, work proceeded to meet a construction schedule of 180 days.<sup>53</sup> The local press reported "a veritable beehive of activity marks the only major construction project underway in San Antonio."<sup>54</sup>

Mistletoe's east side creamery remained in operation while the new plant was under construction, and in September 1933, it was leased to Channel Ice Company. The old facility, together with the property where the new plant was nearing completion, was sold by Mistletoe Creameries, Inc. to Borden's Produce Company, Inc. in October 1933.<sup>55</sup>

Beyond the deed transaction, primary source material has not been located to explain the business arrangement that resulted in the Mistletoe plant's transfer to Borden's. It is likely there was a financing agreement between the two corporations that stipulated Borden's acquisition of the completed facility. Whatever the case, by November 1, 1933, plans were announced for an open house to celebrate completion of "the new Borden's dairy products plant."<sup>56</sup> The plant was "declared to be one of the most beautiful and efficient milk plants in the South" (Figures 12-18).<sup>57</sup>

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<sup>48</sup> "Mistletoe to Build Plant," *San Antonio Light*, March 11, 1933.

<sup>49</sup> "Mistletoe Creameries to Begin Erection of Modern Plant Costing \$100,000," *San Antonio Express*, February 12, 1933, 27.

<sup>50</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>51</sup> "Mistletoe Creameries New Plant Undergoes Alterations," *San Antonio Express*, May 7, 1933, 1-C.

<sup>52</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>53</sup> This seepage was likely due to the building's proximity to the San Antonio River.

<sup>54</sup> "Mistletoe Foods Acme of Quality," *San Antonio Express*, May 1, 1933, 9.

<sup>55</sup> BCDR 1367:302-306 (Mistletoe to Channel Ice, September 12, 1933); BCDR 1377:27-29 (Mistletoe to Borden's, October 17, 1933). The lease to Channel Ice allowed only for ice production and prohibited the manufacture of butter, milk and ice cream. At the time of Mistletoe's sale to Borden's, Mistletoe was headquartered in Houston and Borden's in Omaha, Nebraska.

<sup>56</sup> "Borden Plant Plans Open House," *San Antonio Light*, November 1, 1933, 11-A.

<sup>57</sup> "Ground Broken for new Mistletoe Creameries Plant," *San Antonio Express*, April 9, 1933, first real estate page; "Mistletoe Creameries New Plant Undergoes Alterations," *San Antonio Express*, May 7, 1933, 1-C; "Borden Plant Plans Open House," *San Antonio Light*, November 1,

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*Borden's Creamery 1933-1968*

The population of San Antonio and Bexar County at large grew exponentially between 1930 and 1970, further increasing the demand for milk and milk products. In 1930, San Antonio reported a population of 231,542 residents which rose to 587,718 in 1960 and 654,153 by 1970.

In 1938, Borden's won national recognition from the publication *Dairy World* for its dairy farm improvement program. The program awarded points to the creamery's fifty-six milk producers for the health of dairy herds, sanitation of facilities, and low bacteria counts. Borden's provided veterinarians to inspect herds and offer professional advice to its suppliers that resulted in a fifteen per cent increase in milk supply.<sup>58</sup>

As a result of the expanding market, the Borden's plant was enlarged several times in the 1940s, 1950s, and 1960s. In 1945 it was announced that Ayres and Ayres were drawing plans to increase the creamery's capacity by fifty per cent. A second-floor addition estimated to cost \$75,000 was announced in 1946. Though post-war material shortages delayed local construction projects, these projects were completed by the early 1950s (Map 5, Figures 19-23).<sup>59</sup>

Over the years, the creamery's southeast and northwest wings were each extended, and the building height was fully raised to two stories. Most notably, a 31 X 236-foot, one-story and basement addition was constructed across the primary (southwest) elevation of the original building in 1952. Press accounts stated that Ayres and Ayres "have designed a well-balanced and symmetrical addition to be built across the front and along the west side of the present plant."<sup>60</sup> These expansions accommodated various functions, notably the plant's ice cream factory.<sup>61</sup> Additional work was completed in 1956 and 1963. Atlee B. and Robert M. Ayres served as architects for all of these additions. Emmett T. Jackson was the contractor for the 1952 addition.

Primary source material documenting changes to the creamery and the extent of its production between 1963 and 1968 has not been located. At this time, attempts to locate sources related to the plant's functioning and production have been unsuccessful due to the closure of libraries and archives because of COVID-19. Available newspaper sources confirm that the plant continued to produce a wide range of products during the 1960s and 1970s. This information is drawn solely from advertisements. Though more substantive material has not been located, it is assumed that the plant continued to produce these products during the 1980s.

*Other Borden's Facilities*

The Borden's Company built various refrigeration and processing plants throughout Texas as early as the 1920s. Because company archives have not been located at the time of this nomination, information about, and images of, these facilities is fragmentary. One known standing facility is located in Tyler (805 W. Front Street; 1925, 1940). This plant was listed as a high priority resource in Hardy, Heck and Moore's 1999 historic resources survey. The building, which has a flat tan brick primary elevation, stepped parapet and multiple steel sash windows bears no architectural relationship to the San Antonio facility.

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1933, 11-A;

<sup>58</sup> "Local Borden Program is Praised," *San Antonio Light*, October 28, 1938, 29.

<sup>59</sup> "Commercial Construction Here to Top \$1,000,000," *San Antonio Express*, October 19, 1945, 1-2. "San Antonio Builds Despite Shortage of Essential Materials," *San Antonio Light*, October 4, 1946, C-1

<sup>60</sup> "Borden Co. to Enlarge," *San Antonio Light*, November 25, 1951, E-1

<sup>61</sup> *ibid*; "Borden Awards Annex Contract," *San Antonio Express*, February 3, 1952, 3-A; Ayres and Ayres Collection, University of Texas at Austin, Alexander Architectural Archives.

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Two Borden's facilities are documented in undated photographs included in Abilene Library Consortium collection. The earlier facility has Spanish Colonial features such as arches and tile trim, while the later facility opened in 1957, exhibits Colonial Revival detailing including a pedimented entry portico, rooftop balustrades and shutters. Again, these bear no resemblance to the San Antonio facility.

The only known Streamline example of Borden's architecture in Texas is referenced by Jay C. Henry in his book, *Architecture in Texas: 1895-1945*. Though no photograph appears, Henry states, "The Borden plant in Dallas, a premier example of Streamlining, was demolished to make way for the Arts District."<sup>62</sup>

Various press accounts reference other facilities in Waco, Amarillo, Mexia and Corpus Christi. Refrigeration plants to receive and cool milk prior to shipping to main plants were built in small towns including Marlin and West. These were likely utilitarian storage buildings. While other creameries and refrigeration plants are thought to have been built by Borden's throughout Texas, a complete listing was not compiled for the purpose of this nomination.<sup>63</sup>

#### *Creamery Competition in the Post-War Years*

During the 1940s, 1950s, and 1960s, San Antonio creameries continued to thrive, but by the 1970s, the old business model shifted as local and regionally based companies, including Borden's, were acquired by large national and multinational corporations.

Dairyland Creamery was purchased in 1946 by Florida-based Foremost Dairies which, by the 1950s, was reportedly the world's third largest dairy company. Foremost continued to operate Dairyland's Josephine Street facility, but after merging with Knudsen Foods of California in 1985, the plant closed in September 1986. The facility's machinery, equipment and real estate were sold at auction in November 1987. The historic Spanish Colonial Revival building was damaged by fire in February 1989 while it was for sale, and was demolished over the objection of preservationists in February 1990. It was replaced with an electrical storage warehouse.<sup>64</sup>

Knowlton's continued to prosper and added an ice cream processing plant in 1951. After the company's founder Ed Knowlton died in 1971, his family continued to operate the creamery. In 1975, a \$500,000 expansion and automation project was completed. The demolition date of the original Knowlton's building has not been determined. The Knowlton family continued the business until 1979 when it was acquired by Southland Corporation of Dallas, and subsequently, Oak Farms, Inc., a subsidiary of Dean Foods. Dean Foods filed for bankruptcy protection in 2019 and was sold to Dairy Farmers of America in May 2020. The plant continues to operate, making it San Antonio's only operational creamery in 2020.<sup>65</sup>

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<sup>62</sup> Jay C. Henry. *Architecture in Texas: 1895-1945*, (University of Texas Press, Austin:1995) 315:59. Henry also cites Diane Hospodka Collier's thesis, "Art Deco Architecture: Dallas, Texas," 70-73.

<sup>63</sup> "Borden Milk Plant Assured Waco," *Waco News-Tribune*, November 20, 1928: 1-2; "Marlin and West C.-C.'s Contract for Borden Units," *Waco News Tribune*, December 21, 1928:1; "Borden Plant Here Reaches 10,000 Pounds Milk Daily," *Mexia Weekly Herald*, July 17, 1936:14; "Borden Proving Big Payroll for Tyler Producers," *Tyler Courier-Times*, July 16, 1950, 160; "Bids to be taken on Borden Plant," *Corpus Christi Times*, July 18, 1951, 27; "Borden Company Holds Plant Dedication here," *Dallas Morning News*, November 3, 1953.

<sup>64</sup> "Ice Cream Manufacturing Pioneer Dies," September 2, 1987; "3-alarm blaze at old Foremost Dairy may have been caused by transients," *San Antonio Light*, February 19, 1989, 38; "Outlook sour for old dairy," *San Antonio Light*, January 23, 1990; <https://apnews.com/92d7239f208ef7dc193b03a84a9976d3>, accessed on June 18, 2020. At the time of the Foremost plant closed, it was owned by Dallas-based Schepps-Foremost Inc., a Delaware corporation. Schepps also owned a plant in Dallas and an ice cream plant in Fort Worth which were also auctioned. electrical distribution warehouse.

<sup>65</sup> "Knowlton's Buys New Building," *San Antonio Express*, October 21, 1951, 10-B; "Founded Creamery: Ed Knowlton Dies at 82," *San Antonio Light*, June 1, 1971; <http://www.deanfoods.com/newsroom/news/dean-foods-completes-sale-of-assets-to-dairy-farmers-of-america/>; <https://www.easttexasmatters.com/news/local-news/the-nations-largest-milk-company-located-in-dallas-declares-bankruptcy-amid-a-drop-in->

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*Borden's Creamery: 1968-2020*

In 1968, Borden's sold 0.6321 acres off the northeast side of its site to the Texas Highway Department for completion of the "North Expressway" (U.S. 281), a controversial project that was finally completed in 1978. This parcel, now a part of the U.S. 281 right-of-way, is excluded from the nominated property. The plant continued to operate in spite of the alteration to its site boundaries and access points. The freezer addition was built at the northeast corner of the property in the 1990s.<sup>66</sup>

Liquid milk consumption in the United States dropped dramatically beginning in the 1980s and in 1995. USDA data indicates that milk consumption has fallen in the last four decades due to several factors. The availability of fluid milk and cream decreased steadily after 1945. Americans also began consuming milk less frequently. Instead, they chose to eat more cheese, drink milk alternatives, and eat fewer frozen desserts. These trends resulted in significant changes in the U.S. dairy industry.<sup>67</sup>

The Borden Company was purchased in a leveraged buyout by the global investment firm, KKR in 1995 and the dairy and other divisions were sold off. As a result of these sales, the name was changed first to Borden, Inc. and later, Borden/Meadow Gold Dairies. The Ashby Place property was sold by Borden/Meadow Gold Dairies to Milk Products LLC in 1997. By the late 1990s, the building was no longer used for distribution and the site was used to store company trucks. A local developer put the property under contract with the intention of developing it as an office center. When that plan did not come to fruition, Milk Products, Inc. sold the building to Borden Park LP in 1999. Milk Products, Inc. vacated the site and moved to a leased space on IH 10 East and Ackerman Road.<sup>68</sup>

Borden Park LP converted the East Ashby Place building to a storage facility and constructed mini-storage units on property adjoining to the west. In 2013, the company purchased the River Road right-of-way encompassing 0.3304 acre between the old creamery and the river from the City of San Antonio. The site, which then included 4.635 acres, was transferred by Borden Park LP to SSGT Borden Park LLC in 2016.<sup>69</sup>

The Star Storage facility, as it was generally known, was sold to Borden River Road LC in late 2019. The property was vacated and the related free-standing units were demolished. The Borden Creamery building is being repurposed as mixed-use development using Federal and State of Texas historic tax credits. In late 2020, as part of the historic rehabilitation project, the non-historic addition on the rear (northeast) elevation and the non-historic second floor addition were removed. Additionally, the interior storage units and non-historic corridors were demolished and all non-historic finishes and window infill removed, revealing historic features and finishes that were previously not visible. Apartments are being built on the site to the west.<sup>70</sup>

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demand/, accessed on June 24, 2020.

<sup>66</sup> BCDR 5913:212-215, February 21, 1968.

<sup>67</sup> "Trends in U.S. Per Capita Consumption of Dairy Products, 1970-2012," Excerpted from *Food Availability (Per Capita) Data System* (Linda Kantor and Andrzej Blazeljczyk, USDA Economic Research Service, September 2020), <https://www.ers.usda.gov/amber-waves/2014/june/trends-in-us-per-capita-consumption-of-dairy-products-1970-2012/>

<sup>68</sup> BCDR 6722:602-606 (Borden to Borden/Meadow Gold, April 10, 1996); BCDR 7196:190-194 (Borden/Meadow Gold to Milk Products, September 8, 1997); BCDR 7801:1677- 1681 (Milk Products to Borden Park, January 14, 1999); "Borden plant will become office center," *San Antonio Business Journal*, September 6, 1998.

<sup>69</sup> BCDR 16401:2402-2407 (City of San Antonio to Borden Park LP, October 24, 2013); BCDR 17637-17646 (Borden Park to SSGT Borden Park, January 6, 2016).

<sup>70</sup> BCDR 20190210291 (SSGT Borden to Borden River Road, LP, October 18, 2019); "Storage site to become apartments," *San Antonio Express*, November 5, 2019, B-1.

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*The Architects, Contractors, and Design of Borden's Creamery*

Atlee B. Ayres (1874-1969) completed his architectural training at the Metropolitan School of Art, a subsidiary of Columbia University, in 1894. He first practiced in Mexico and in 1900, partnered with C.A. Coughlin in San Antonio. After Coughlin's death in 1905, Ayres practiced alone until he was joined by his son, Robert (1898-1977), in 1921. The younger Ayres joined his father's practice after studying Beaux Arts architecture under Paul Cret at the University of Pennsylvania's architecture program. The father and son practiced together for three years and then formalized their partnership in 1924.<sup>71</sup>

Ayres and Ayres developed a well-regarded reputation for residential, commercial, institutional and religious design that spanned decades. By the time they designed Mistletoe Creamery, the father and son were among Texas's most prominent architects. Throughout their remarkably lengthy career (1901-1977) the Ayreses' work evolved from one style to the next as construction technology and fashions changed. Their designs ran the gamut from Tudor to Colonial Revival to Spanish Colonial Revival, Mediterranean, and finally, Moderne.

Atlee Ayres traveled the world with his family in the early 1900s to expand his architectural knowledge—experiences that inspired and informed his work. As a result, his designs moved beyond the Colonial Revival palate that defined his years as a young architect. Ayres was strongly influenced by the architecture of Mexico and Spain, and in 1926, he published *Mexican Architecture, Domestic, Civil and Ecclesiastical*. Though it was never published, Ayres planned a similar publication about Spanish architecture and traveled to Spain in 1929 to photograph vernacular buildings. He continued to travel after 1929. By that time however, the desire for eclectic and historical architectural styles and tastes were being replaced with Modern and Art Deco designs suited to more austere budgets and lifestyles.<sup>72</sup>

Examples of Atlee Ayres work prior to 1921 when he was joined by his son include numerous houses in the Monte Vista National Register Historic District (NRHP 1998) in the Classical Revival, Mission Revival, and Craftsman styles. Prior to 1921, he also designed the Cameron County Courthouse (1912; NR 1980) in Brownsville and, as State Architect of Texas, the State Office Building (1918; NR 1998) in Austin.<sup>73</sup>

Ayres and Ayres early 1920s work came during a period of explosive growth in San Antonio. During this building boom, the firm was part of the consortium that designed San Antonio's Municipal Auditorium (1925; NRHP 1981) and its iconic Smith-Young Tower which still dominates San Antonio's skyline in 2020 (NRHP 1929; 1991).<sup>74</sup>

While the residential work of Ayres and Ayres remained decidedly traditional during the 1920s in keeping with the taste of their conservative monied clientele, the firm ventured beyond classically influenced styles for some of its commercial commissions. In 1929, the same year the Gothic Revival Smith-Young Tower was completed, they designed the automobile showroom and garage for Gene Meador's Packard Company just north of downtown San Antonio (1929; standing). The building was designed with a modern horizontal form, symmetrical primary elevation with a prominent central entrance featuring abstracted classically inspired detailing including cast in situ stone fluting at the pilasters, spandrels, and other low relief ornament. The effect was a blending of traditional and modern influences. The following year, they again merged traditional and modern elements, incorporating cast concrete in the

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<sup>71</sup> "Ayres and Ayres, Architects Records," Texas Archival Resources Online, [legacy.lib.utexas.edu/taro/utaaa/00041/aaa-00041.html](https://legacy.lib.utexas.edu/taro/utaaa/00041/aaa-00041.html), accessed October 2, 2020.

<sup>72</sup> Robert S. Coote, *The Eclectic Odyssey of Atlee B. Ayres, Architect* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2001) 19-28, 157.

<sup>73</sup> Monte Vista National Register listing, <https://atlas.thc.texas.gov/NR/pdfs/98001421/98001421.pdf>, accessed on October 5, 2020.

<sup>74</sup> Smith-Young Tower National Register listing, <https://atlas.thc.texas.gov/NR/pdfs/91001682/91001682.pdf>, accessed on October 5, 2020.

Ayres and Ayres also completed other nearby buildings for Smith Brothers Properties.

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design of Randolph Field's Administration Building 100 (Now Randolph Air Force Base) known as the "Taj Mahal" (1931; RTHL 1975) (Figure 31). This building was characterized by a symmetrical primary elevation with a central tower flanked by two wings. It featured modern massing with both a horizontal and abstracted vertical emphasis, prominent arches, multi-light steel casement windows, domed tile tower roof topped with a light beacon, and other prominent Spanish Colonial Revival ornament.<sup>75</sup>

In many ways Gene Meador's Packard Company and the Randolph Field Administration Building served as precursors to the 1933 Borden Creamery. The creamery served as perhaps Ayres an Ayres first truly Moderne industrial design reflecting a hybrid of modern influence and only slight classical influence. The original cast in place concrete building featured modern geometric massing, a streamlined horizontal appearance, and a symmetrical nine-bay primary elevation with a prominent central tower and entrance flanked by wings. Prominent pilasters divided the primary and secondary elevations creating bays occupied by multi-light steel framed windows. The central entrance featured a concrete awning, concrete screening at the second floor, and glazed tile at the base. Ayres and Ayres design also included classical fluted spandrels, reeded banding at the parapet and a flat roof except for the hipped tower roof topped with glazed tile and a metal and glass light beacon, much like the Administration Building.

The subsequent historic additions were seamless covering the original side elevations obscuring much of the original 1933 design, and adding a second story to the wings. The prominent one-story 1952 addition along the primary (southwest) elevation, also by Ayres and Ayres, was nearly identical except for the more modest entrance. From 1952 onward it read as one cohesive building. Some of the original 1933 design, materials, and workmanship are intact and readily visible at the second story.

Following the design of Borden's Creamery, the firm employed similar Moderne design and construction techniques in several notable World War II era and post-war era buildings. These included the H.B. Zachry Company headquarters a one-story symmetrical cast-concrete building with flat roof and prominent central entrance framed in glass block windows (1942; demolished); the modern San Antonio Transit System's maintenance and service buildings (1946-1948; standing) and the Neisner Building (1946-47; NRHP 2018, contributing building, San Antonio Downtown and River Walk Historic District). Another example in downtown San Antonio, the Mortgage Investment Corporation Building (1950) was recently demolished.<sup>76</sup>

Atlee and Robert Ayres continued to design residential, commercial and institutional buildings in a variety of styles, working together until Atlee's death in 1969. One of the last buildings designed by the father and son together was the National Bank of Commerce (1958; NR 2018, contributing building, San Antonio Downtown and River Walk Historic District), a Mid-Century Modern office tower that was the first major building constructed in downtown San Antonio since the Depression. After his father died, Robert Ayres continued to work until his own death in 1977.

The general contractor selected to construct creamery was less well known than Atlee and Robert Ayres. King B. Key (1898-1936) was born in North Texas where he lived until moving to San Antonio in about 1928. He was enumerated on the 1930 Federal census as a building contractor. Because of the robust construction boom in San Antonio in the late 1920s, it is likely he came to the city to work on building projects. In San Antonio, King formed a corporation with contractors E.G. Walsh and Jessie G. Burney in January 1930. The company, Walsh, Burney and Key, won substantial contracts, notably to build San Antonio's Thomas Jefferson High School (NRHP 1983). Other buildings

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<sup>75</sup> "Packard Motor Car Company Building, San Antonio, Texas," *Architectural Record*, June 1930; Texas Historical Commission Atlas, <https://atlas.thc.state.tx.us/Details/5029000567/print>, accessed October 5, 2020; Philip Thomason, "Randolph Field Historic District," National Register of Historic Places Registration Form, 1994..

<sup>76</sup> "Creamery Building Sketches Finished," *San Antonio Express*, May 15, 1932, 10-C; Personal files, Maria Watson Pfeiffer.



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included Highland Park Elementary School in San Antonio, the McKinney Hotel in Beeville, and the Agricultural Engineering Building at Texas Agricultural and Mechanical College.<sup>77</sup>

By June 1933, Key had apparently left the partnership and Walsh and Burney continued to do business together. It is not clear what led to the firm's dissolution. Key bid on and received the contract to construct the Mistletoe Creamery. He was also general contractor for San Antonio's North Side Junior High School, another building designed by Ayres and Ayres (1935; later named Horace Mann Junior High School). No additional buildings constructed by King B. Key have been identified. His career was short-lived. Key died following gastric surgery at the age of thirty-seven on August 1, 1936.<sup>78</sup>

The contractor for the 1952 addition was Emmett T. Jackson (1886-1971), who began his architectural practice in San Antonio in 1912. Jackson's notable works were as an associated architect with Ayres and Ayres and George Willis for San Antonio's Municipal Auditorium (1925; NRHP 1981), the Builders Exchange Building with George Willis (NRHP 1925), as associated architect with Raymond Phelps, Dahl Dewees and George Willis for the 1926 addition to the Bexar County Courthouse, and the Central Fire Station (1938). From 1934 until 1943, Jackson was a construction advisor for the United States Housing Authority and then became a building contractor.<sup>79</sup>

## Conclusion

Borden's Creamery is nominated to the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A in the area of Industry at the local level of significance for its association with modern milk production and distribution in San Antonio and the surrounding area in the early to mid-20<sup>th</sup> century. Constructed in 1933 for Mistletoe Creamery, the building was sold in October of 1933 to Borden's. Borden's prospered during the 1940s, 1950s and 1960s, leading to the plant's expansion and modernization. When acquisitions and mergers redefined the dairy industry throughout the late 20<sup>th</sup> century, many regional creameries, including Borden's, closed. Borden's remains the only historic building associated with the 20<sup>th</sup> century dairy industry in San Antonio. The property is also nominated under Criterion C in the area of Architecture at the local level of significance as an excellent example of Moderne industrial architecture by Atlee B. and Robert M. Ayres as expressed in the original 1933 building and subsequent additions which accommodated business expansion in the post-war era. The period of significance is 1933-1971.

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<sup>77</sup> United States Federal Census, 1900, 1910, 1920, 1930; "New Corporations," *San Antonio Express*, January 21, 1930:12; *San Antonio Light*, April 16, 1930, 62; "Beeville Hotel Bids are opened," *San Antonio Express*, September 14, 1930, 40; "School Contract Let for \$760,910," *San Antonio Express*, September 19, 1930, 8; "Large A&M Job is Awarded Here: Walsh, Burney and Key to Erect Agricultural Engineering Building," *San Antonio Express*, April 11, 1932, 12..

<sup>78</sup> "General Contractors," *San Antonio Express*, June 29, 1933, 11; *Selections from the Work of Atlee B. Ayres, F.A.I.A. and Robert M. Ayres, A.I.A. Architects*, n.d., n.p.

<sup>79</sup> "Prominent Architect Dies at 85," *San Antonio Express*, December 10, 1971; Arthur J. Simpson (ed.) *Southwest Texans* (San Antonio: Southwest Publications, 1952) 246.

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Map 1: Bexar County, Texas



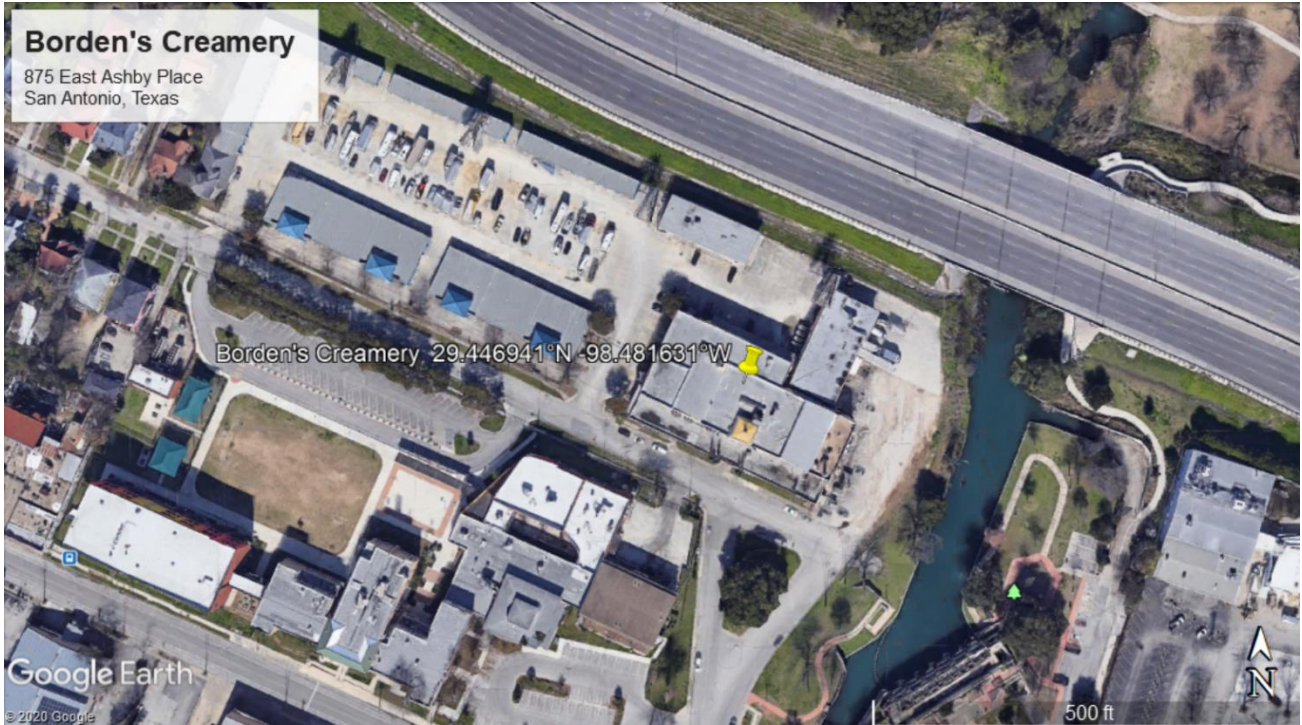
Map 2: Nominated boundary shown in red. The 1990s addition shown extending to the northeast was removed in late 2020 and, thus the boundary closely follows the building's original footprint and historic additions.



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Map 3: Google Earth Map, accessed September 18<sup>th</sup>, 2020. The 1990s addition shown extending to the northeast was removed in late 2020 and, thus is not included.





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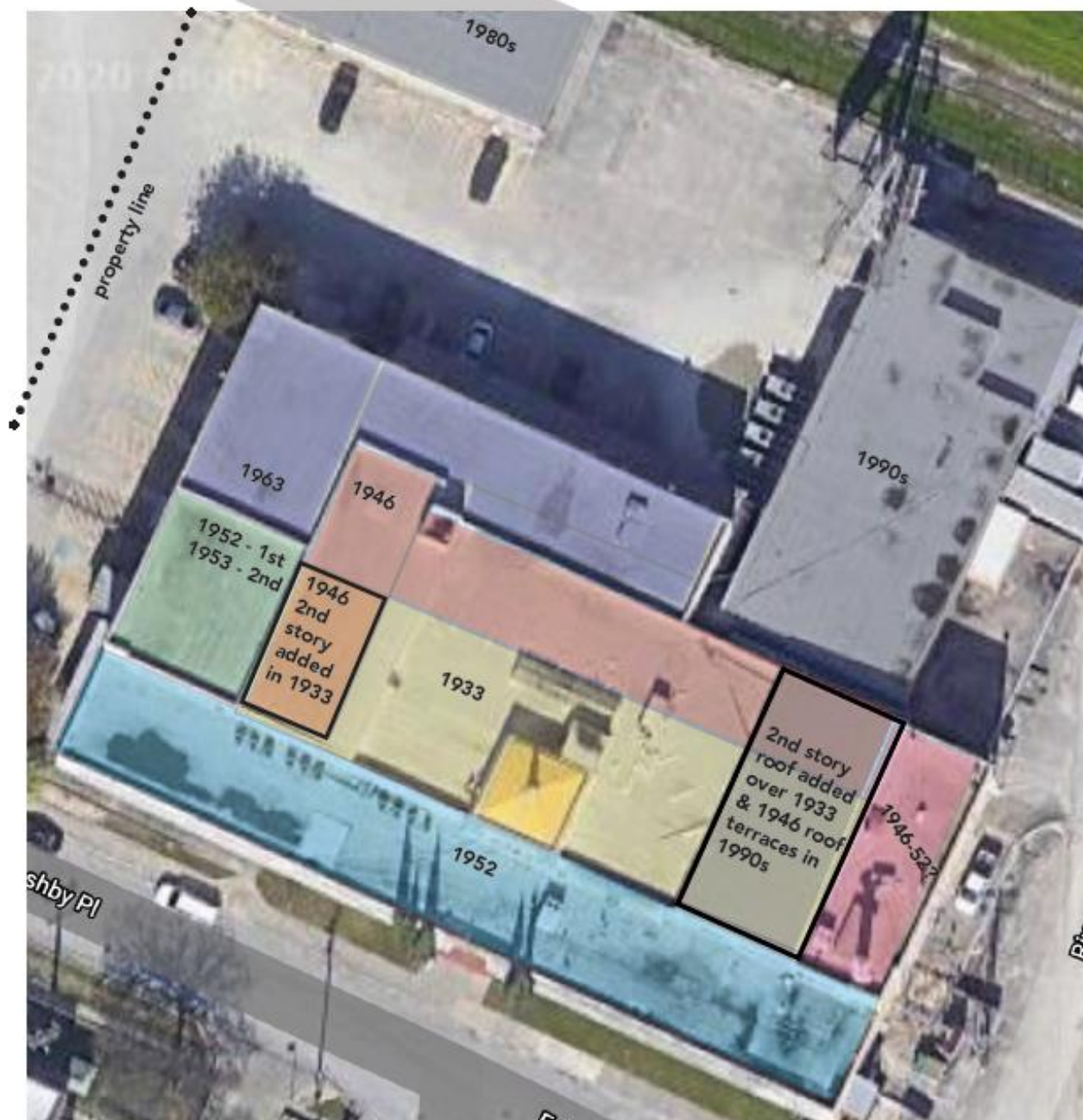
Map 4: Bing Map showing south elevation, accessed September 18, 2020. The 1990s additions noted were removed in 2020.



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Map 5: Aerial map showing various additions. Western property line shown follows the legal parcel, but does not serve as the nominated boundary. The 1990s addition to the northeast and the 1990s 2<sup>nd</sup> story roof addition over the roof terrace were removed in 2020. Google aerial has not been updated.



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Map 6: The nominated boundary includes approximately 0.9810 acres of the larger legal parcel identified as NCB 3053 (BORDEN PARK TIF), LOT 22 (Property ID 1343864) in the Bexar Appraisal District (accessed November 16, 2021). The boundary includes an approximately 0.9810 portion of the historic property acreage and excludes the northern part of the current legal parcel, which is occupied by a non-historic storage building and a surface parking lot, as well as an abandoned segment of River Road to the east that separated the creamery from the San Antonio River purchased and incorporated in the site in 2013. (See Map 2)

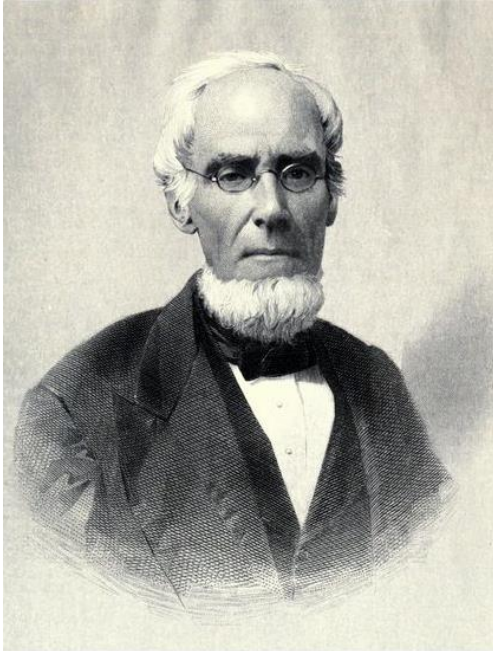




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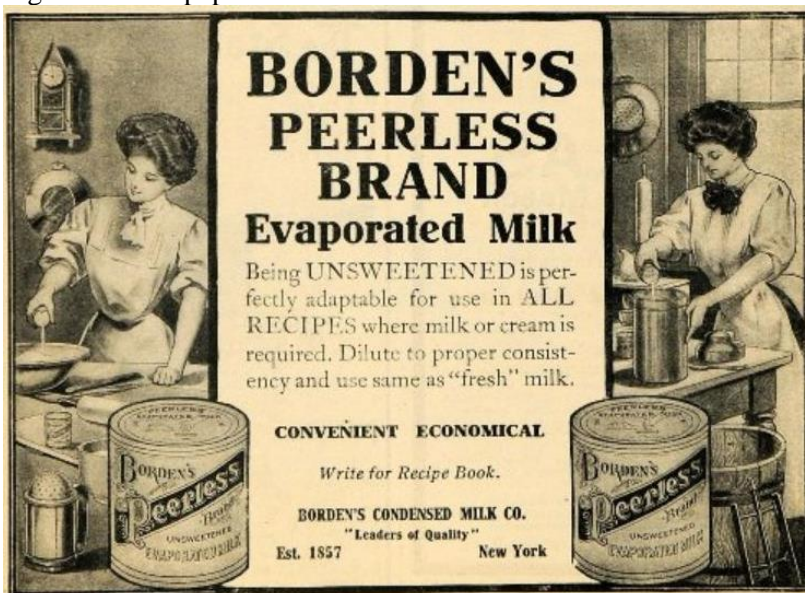
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Figure 1: Portrait of Gail Borden, Jr.



Source: Homans, James Edward (ed.) *The Cyclopaedia of American Biography* Volume VIII, (New York: The Press Association Compilers, Inc., 1918) 8 facing 126.

Figure 2: Newspaper Advertisement



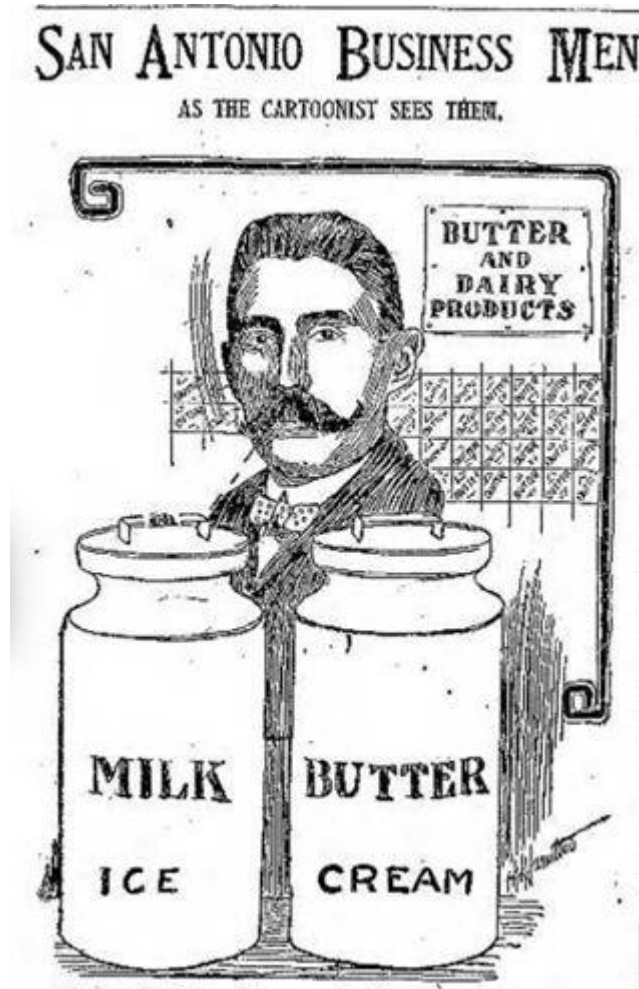
Source: <https://newyorkalmanack.com/2019/12/everyone-knows-elsie-a-short-history-of-the-borden-company>, accessed June 25, 2020



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Figure 3: J. Frank Kline Cartoon

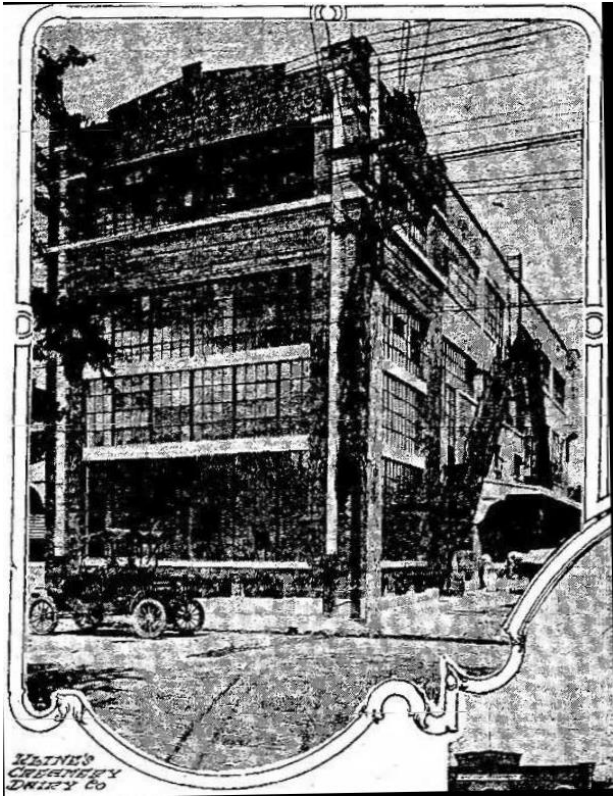


Source: "San Antonio Businessmen,"  
San Antonio Light, February 8, 1908, page 11.

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Figure 4: Newspaper Image



Creamery Dairy Company, Austin and Eighth Streets  
San Antonio *Express-News*,  
January 30, 1920, page 2-D.

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Figure 5: Newspaper Advertisement

J. F. KLINE  
President

SAM C. BELL  
Secretary

**CREAMERY  
DAIRY COMPANY**

SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS

THE LARGEST CREAMERY AND  
ICE CREAM PLANT IN THE STATE

MILK IN BOTTLES FOR CITY TRADE

Manufacturers and Shippers of  
**VELVET ICE CREAM  
AND  
GOLDEN ROD BUTTER**

DAILY CAPACITY  
2,000 Gallons Milk  
2,000 Pounds Butter  
500 Gallons Ice Cream.

Selling Agents for the  
**DeLAVAL SEPARATORS**

San Antonio *Light*, June 9, 1908, 29.



Borden's Creamery, San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas

Figure 7: Newspaper Advertisement



## THE PLANT behind the Products

### Opening June 8-11



**Monday night at 7 p. m.**, we present for your inspection, the most modern milk plant in the South, dedicated to the health and welfare of our community.

We are very anxious to have every man, woman and child in San Antonio see the modern equipment and methods we use to safeguard the milk supply of our customers.

Follow the route the milk takes through the plant from the time it is received, tested, pasteurized, bottled or turned into by-products, back to the shipping department for delivery to your home or to your Dairyland Dealer.



This trip through the plant will be of interest to everyone and particularly instructive to children. Dairyland employees, acting as guides, will explain the different steps of production and the many EXTRA precautions we have taken to keep all of our products safe and pure. So that every one may have the

advantage of seeing our beautiful new building, our opening will last for four nights—Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday (reserved for colored citizens).

**240 Dairyland employees—all San Antonians—** invite you to come. Even if you have seen other milk plants—here you will inspect the finest in the South with the very latest proven equipment for the maintenance of better milk and the manufacture of its different products. . . . After your inspection you will understand why Dairyland Milk is better. Come and see for yourself!



**Boiling Machine**



**Generator in Tank**

**You are cordially invited!**

**Public Inspection**  
7 p. m. to 10 p. m.

Monday—General Public  
 Tuesday—General Public  
 Wednesday—General Public  
 Thursday—Colored Citizens

**School Children's Contest**

1st PRIZE	..... \$25.00
2nd PRIZE	..... 15.00
3rd PRIZE	..... 5.00
4th to 15th PRIZES—Coupons	books good for 20 quarts of Dairyland Milk.

Complete information, rules and registration cards will be given to every elementary and junior school child attending our opening.

**"Taste the Difference" Coupons**

Because we want you to make the comparison—Dairyland "Taste the Difference" Coupons will be given to every child that attends the opening of our new plant.

**Plenty of Parking Space**

**SOUTHWEST DAIRY PRODUCTS COMPANY**  
 102 EAST JOSEPHINE STREET      PHONE CROCKETT 3341  
*Visitors Always Welcome*

San Antonio Express, June 7, 1931, page 11.



Borden's Creamery, San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas

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Figure 8: Newspaper Image



San Antonio *Express*, February 12, 1933.

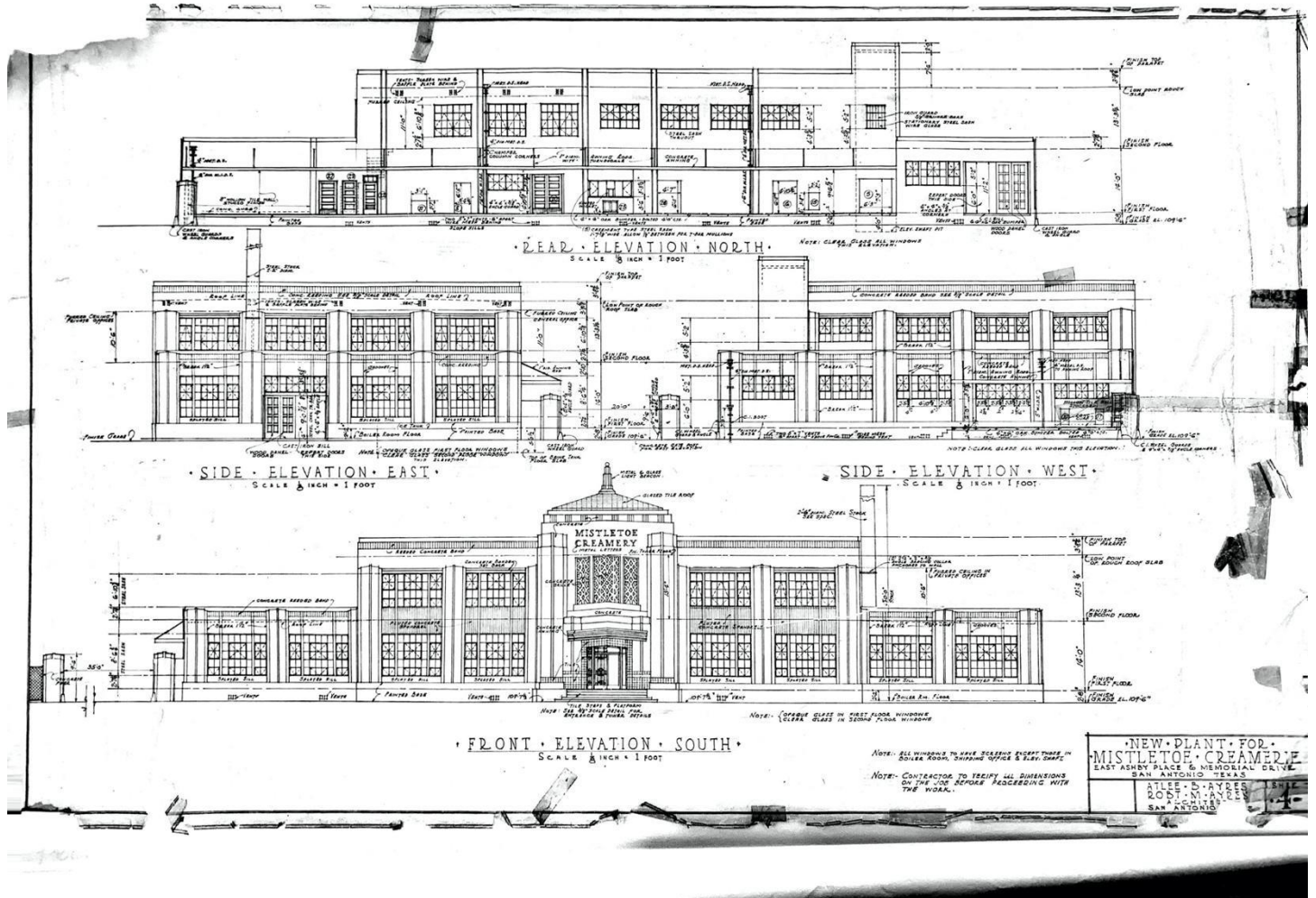
Figure 9: Newspaper Image



San Antonio *Express*, May 7, 1933, page 1.

Borden's Creamery, San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas

Figure 10: Historic Plans for Exterior, c. 1932-1933.

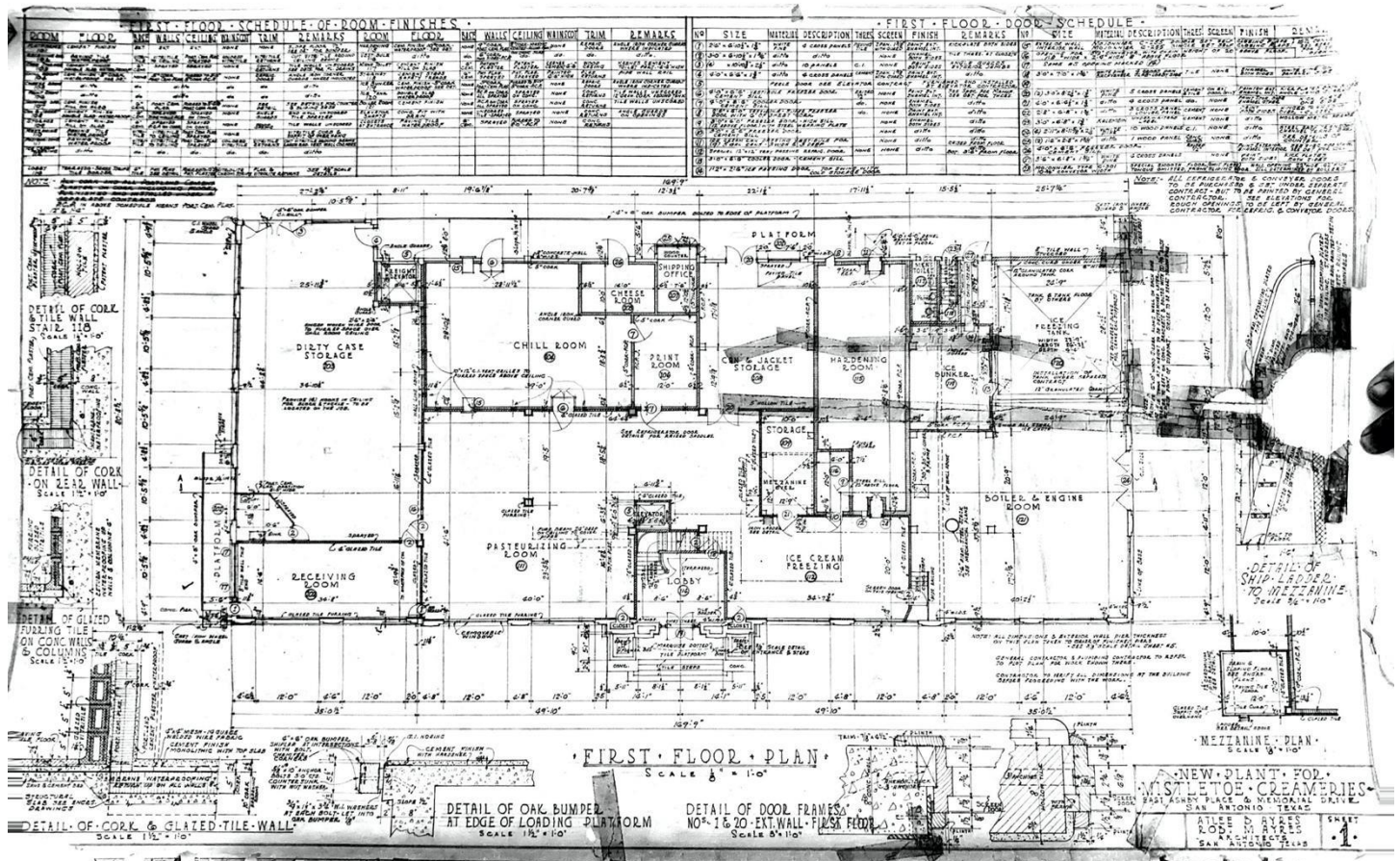


Courtesy: Ayres and Ayres Collection, Alexander Architectural Archives,  
University of Texas at Austin.



Borden's Creamery, San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas

Figure 11: Historic Plans for First Floor, c. 1932-1933.

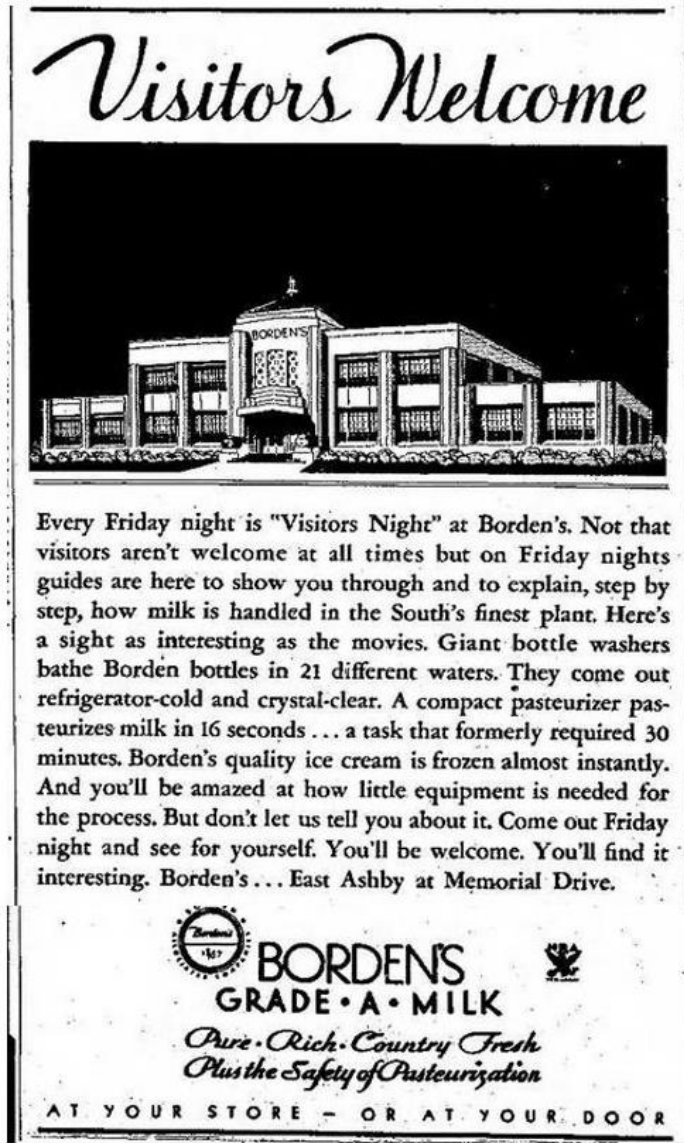


Courtesy: Ayres and Ayres Collection, Alexander Architectural Archives, University of Texas at Austin.





Borden's Creamery, San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas

Figure 12: Newspaper Advertisement



*Visitors Welcome*

Every Friday night is "Visitors Night" at Borden's. Not that visitors aren't welcome at all times but on Friday nights guides are here to show you through and to explain, step by step, how milk is handled in the South's finest plant. Here's a sight as interesting as the movies. Giant bottle washers bathe Borden bottles in 21 different waters. They come out refrigerator-cold and crystal-clear. A compact pasteurizer pasteurizes milk in 16 seconds ... a task that formerly required 30 minutes. Borden's quality ice cream is frozen almost instantly. And you'll be amazed at how little equipment is needed for the process. But don't let us tell you about it. Come out Friday night and see for yourself. You'll be welcome. You'll find it interesting. Borden's ... East Ashby at Memorial Drive.

 **BORDEN'S**   
**GRADE • A • MILK**

*Pure • Rich • Country Fresh  
Plus the Safety of Pasteurization*

AT YOUR STORE - OR AT YOUR DOOR

San Antonio *Express*, December 15, 1933, page 8.

Borden's Creamery, San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas

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Figure 13: Historic Image c.1933



Courtesy: University of Texas at San Antonio Libraries Special Collections

Borden's Creamery, San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas

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Figure 14: Historic Image c.1933

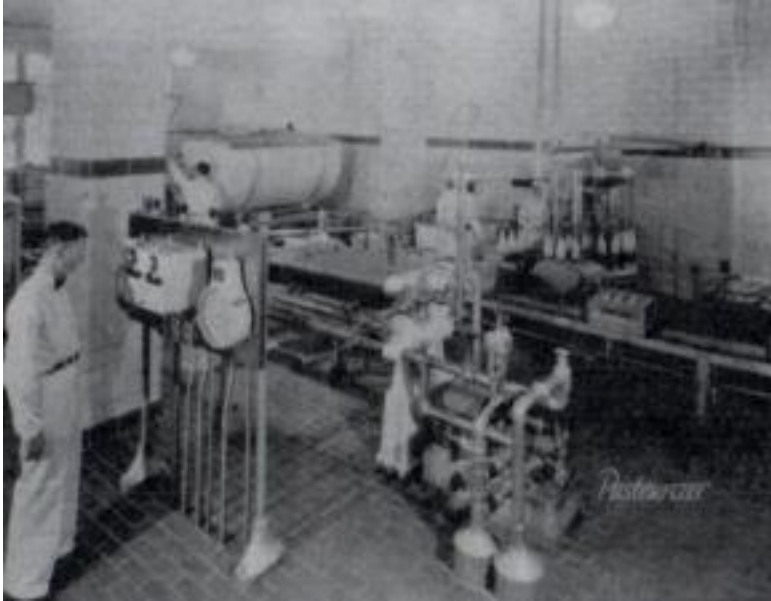


Courtesy: University of Texas at San Antonio Libraries Special Collections

Borden's Creamery, San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas

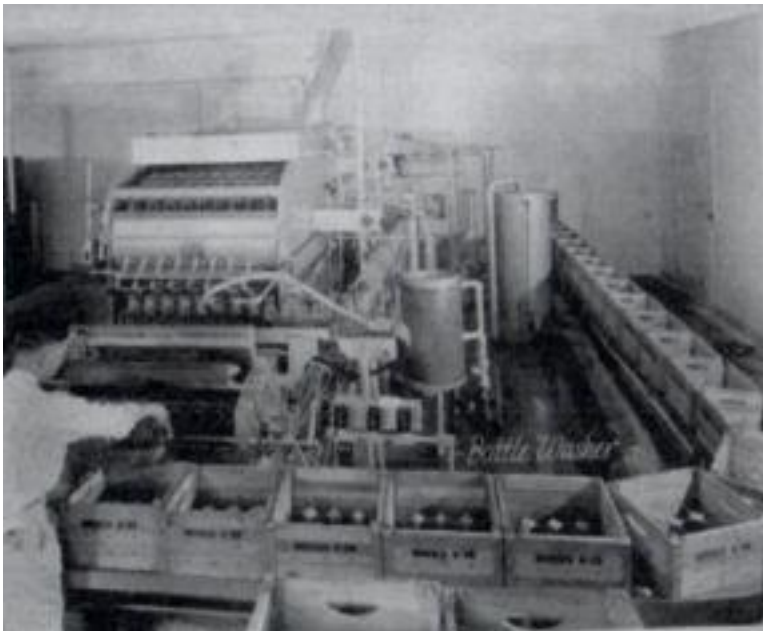
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Figure 15: c.1933



Courtesy: University of Texas at San Antonio Libraries Special Collections

Figure 16: c.1933



Courtesy: University of Texas at San Antonio Libraries Special Collections

Borden's Creamery, San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas

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Figure 17: c.1933



Courtesy: University of Texas at San Antonio Libraries Special Collections

Figure 18: c.1933



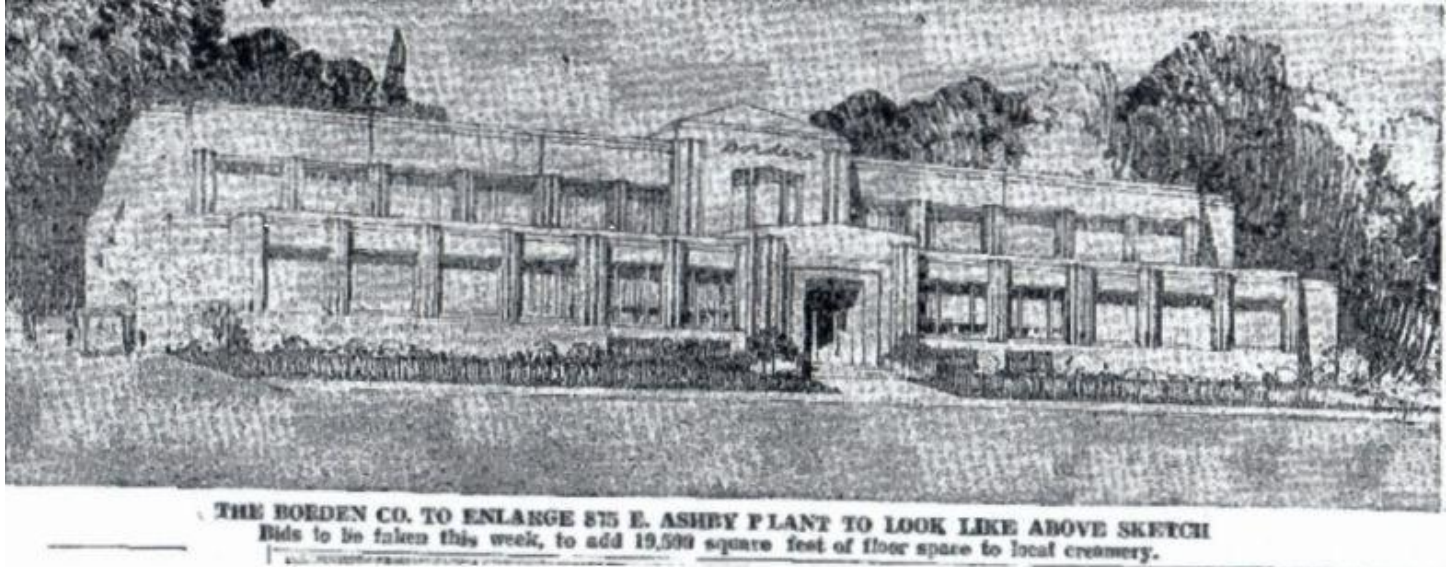
Courtesy: University of Texas at San Antonio Libraries Special Collections



Borden's Creamery, San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas

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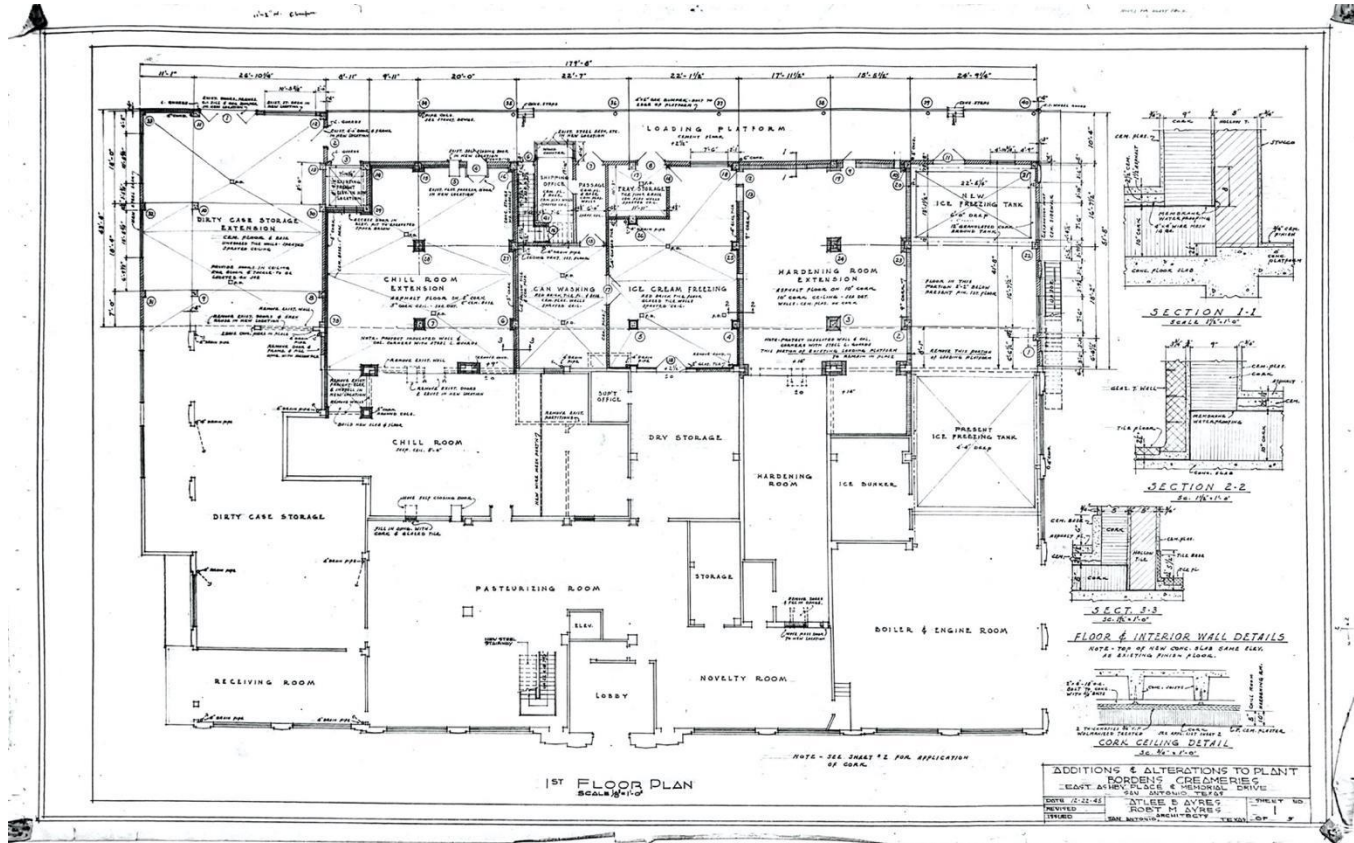
Figure 19: Newspaper Image, 1951.



San Antonio *Light*, November 25, 1951.

Borden's Creamery, San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas

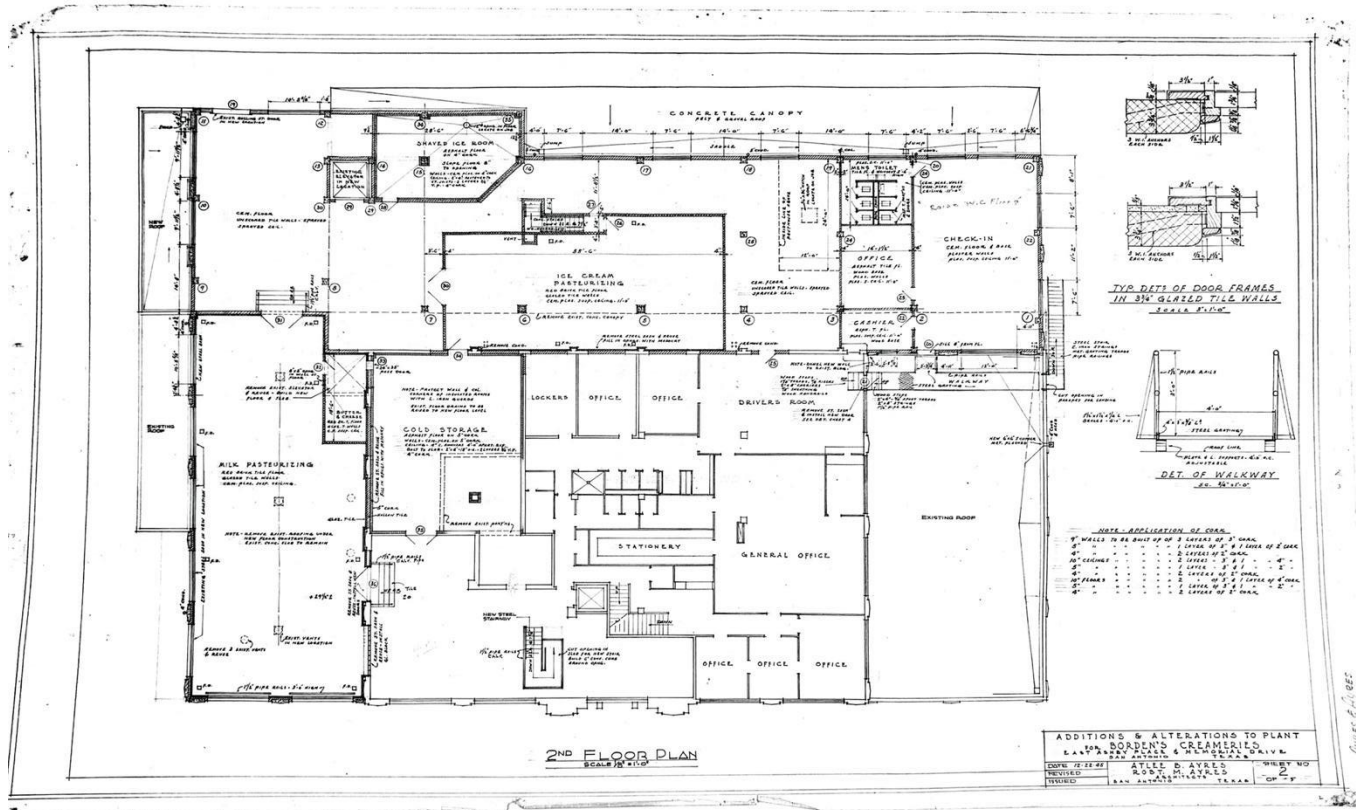
Figure 20: Historic First Floor Plans Showing 1946 Addition, December 22, 1945.



Courtesy: Ayres and Ayres Collection, Alexander Architectural Archives, University of Texas at Austin.

Borden's Creamery, San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas

Figure 21: Historic Second Floor Plans Showing 1946 Addition, December 22, 1945.

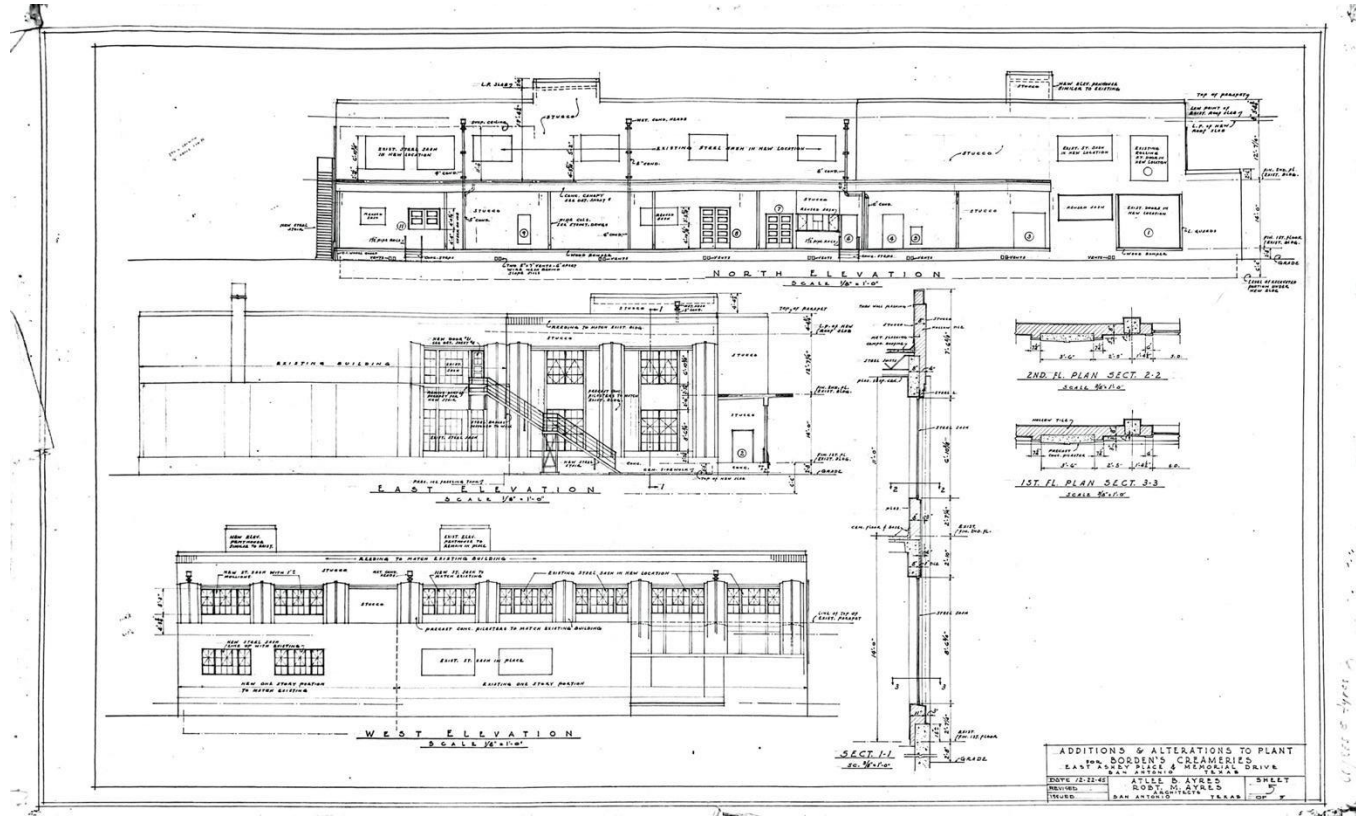


Courtesy: Ayres and Ayres Collection, Alexander Architectural Archives, University of Texas at Austin.



Borden's Creamery, San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas

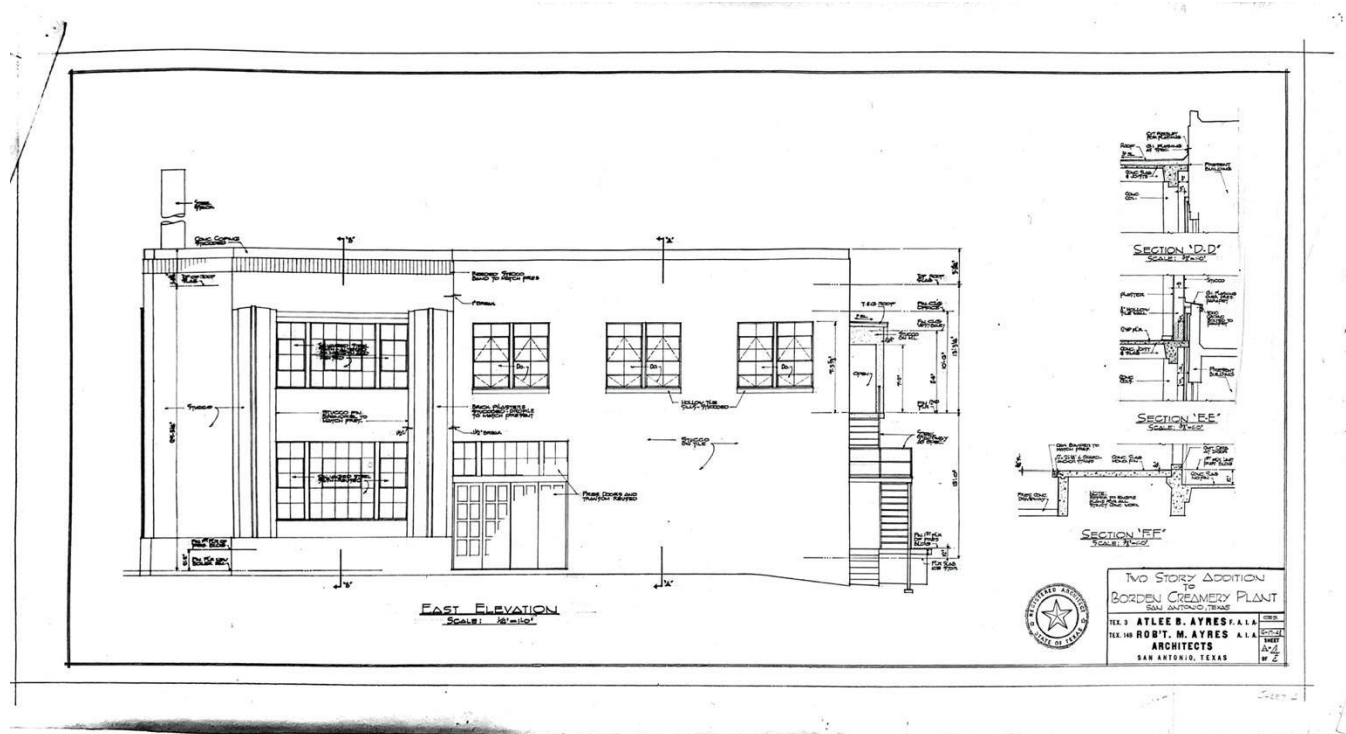
Figure 22: Historic Plans Showing 1946 Additions, December 22, 1945.



Courtesy: Ayres and Ayres Collection, Alexander Architectural Archives, University of Texas at Austin.

Borden's Creamery, San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas

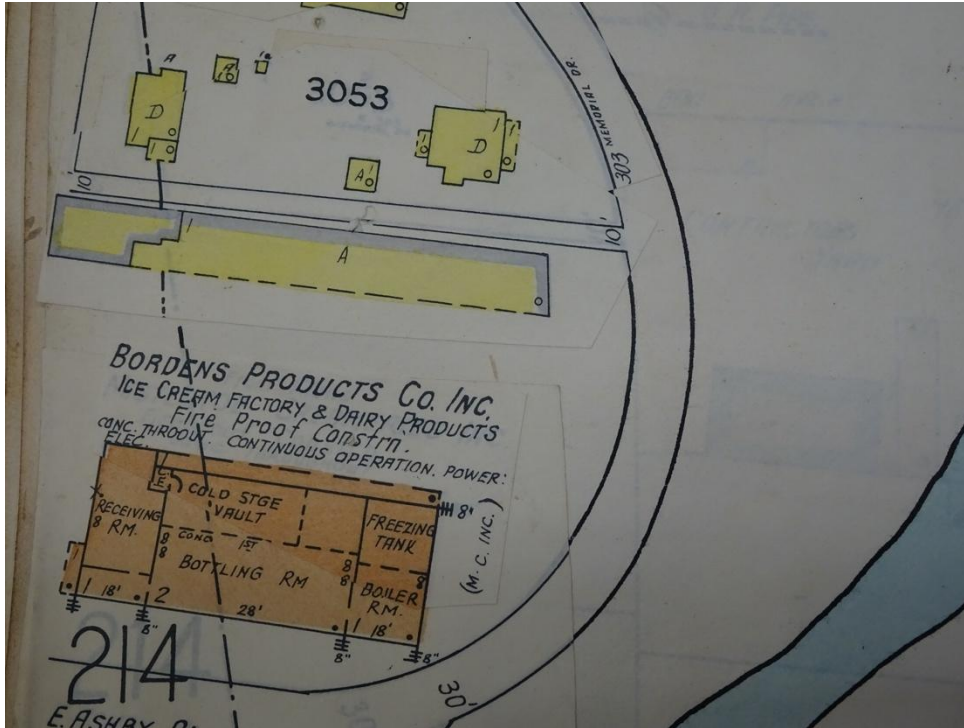
Figure 23: Historic Plans Showing c.1949 Addition on East Elevation, June 7, 1948.



Courtesy: Ayres and Ayres Collection, Alexander Architectural Archives,  
University of Texas at Austin.

Borden's Creamery, San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas

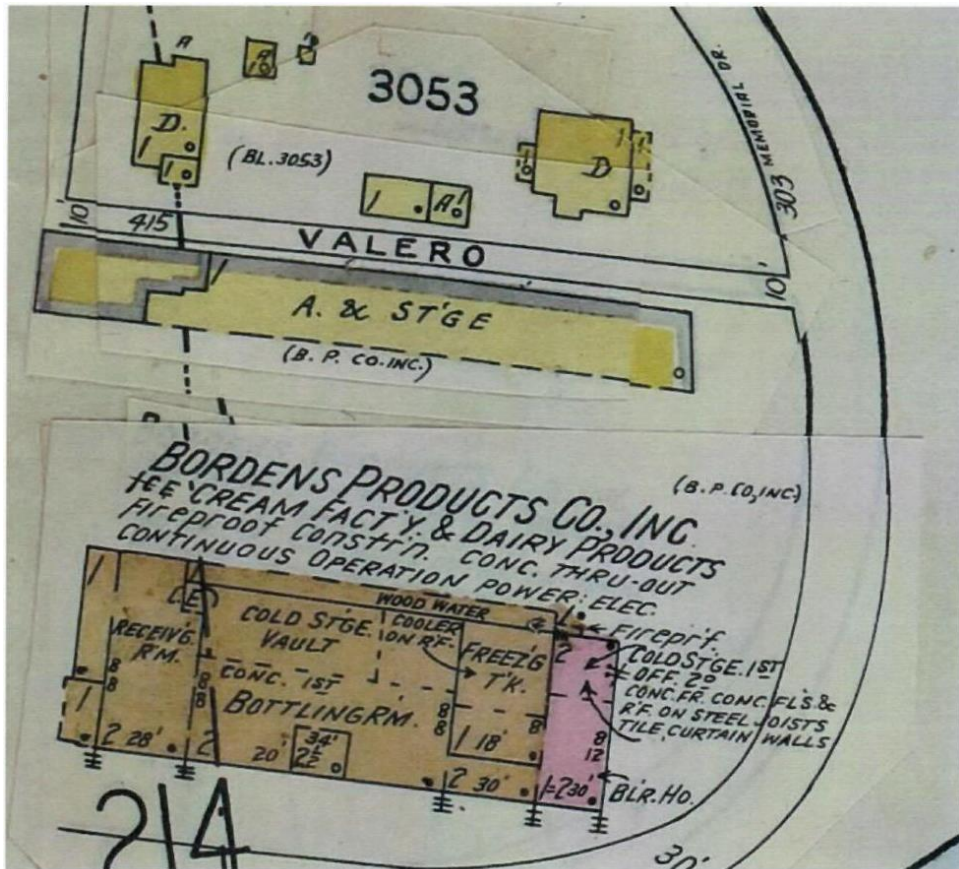
Figure 24: 1939 Sanborn Map



Original located at the San Antonio Conservation Library

Borden's Creamery, San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas

Figure 25: 1951 Sanborn Map

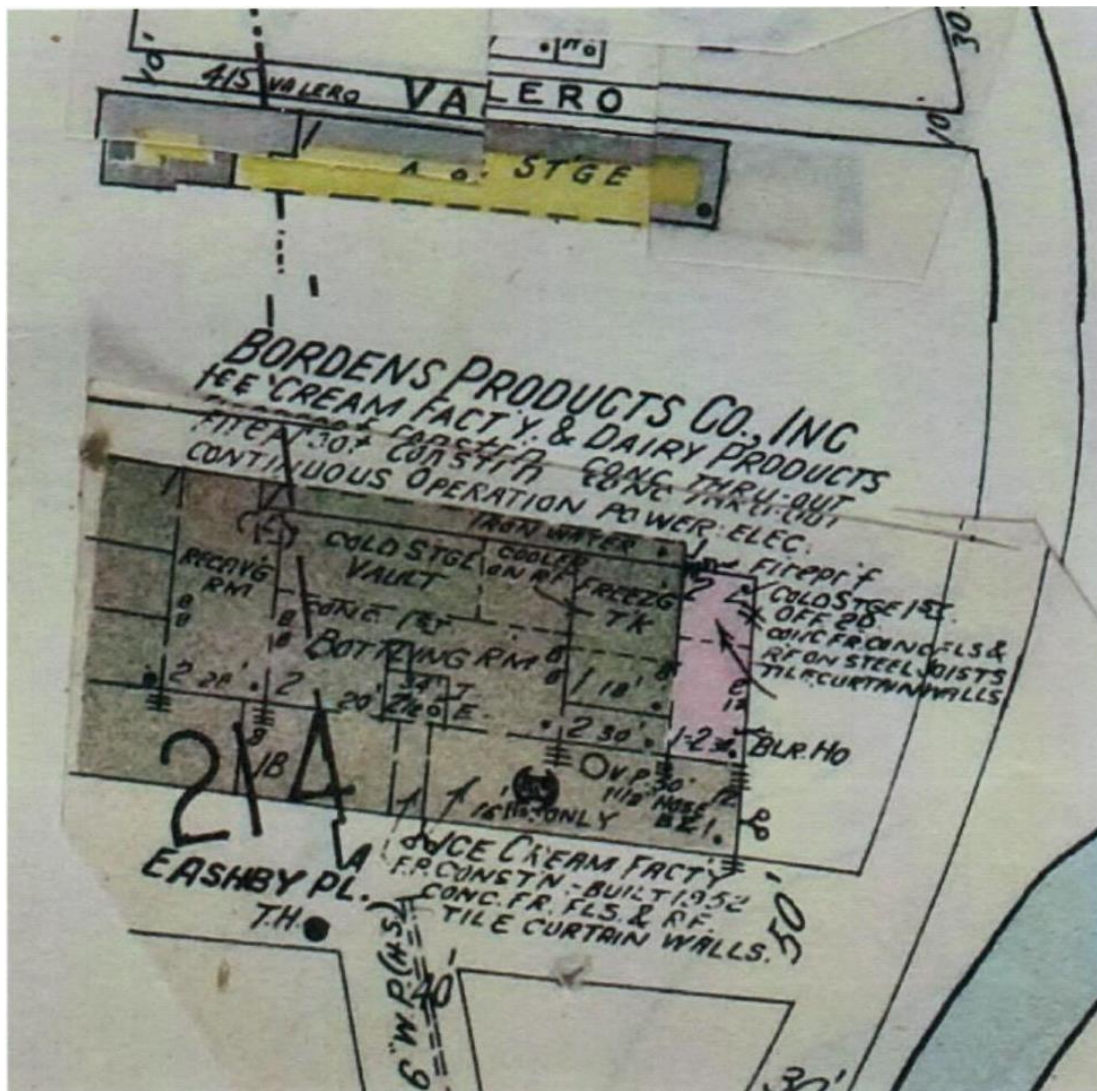


Original located at the San Antonio Conservation Society Library



Borden's Creamery, San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas

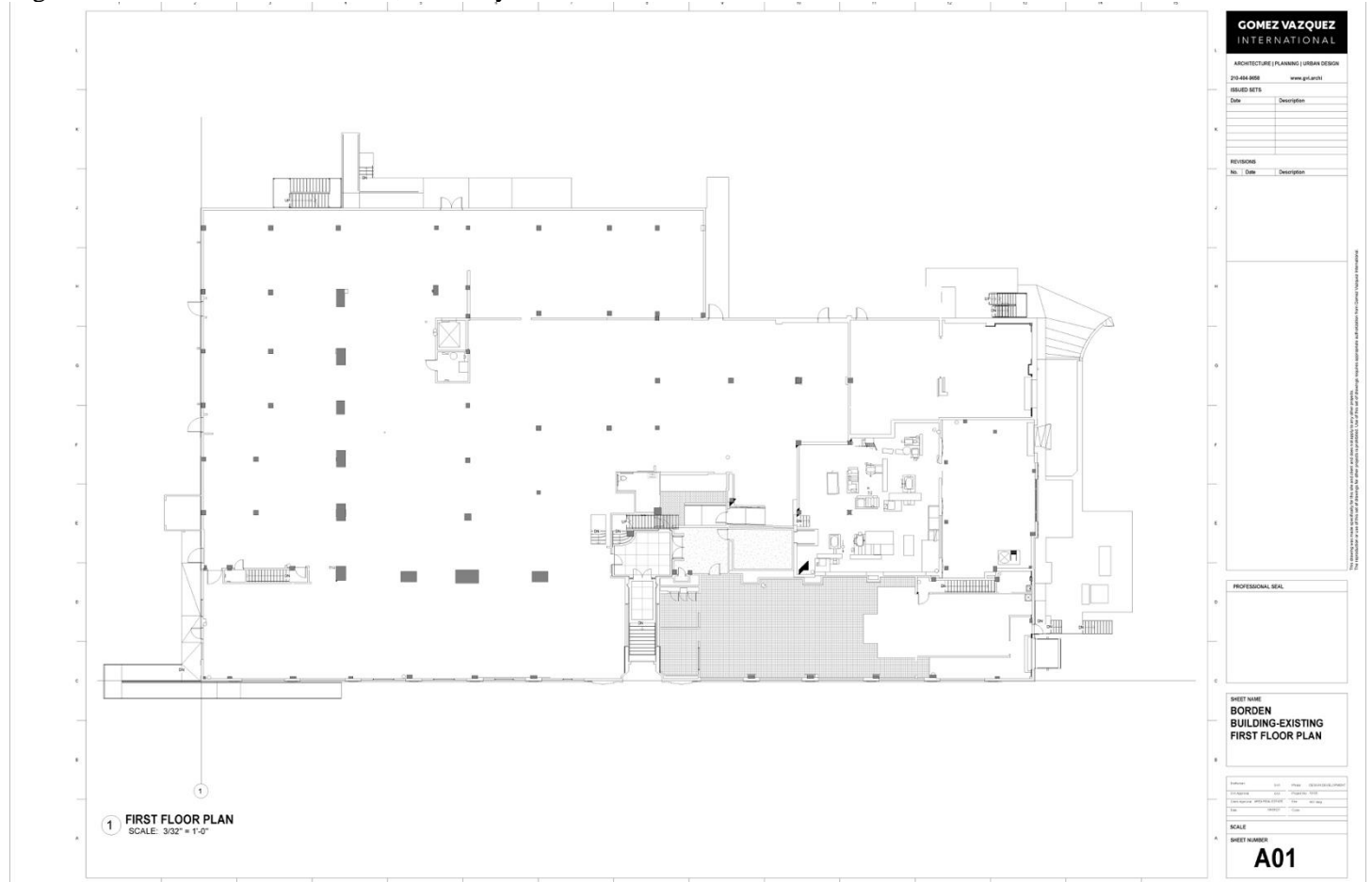
Figure 26: 1971 Sanborn Map



Original located at the San Antonio Conservation Society Library

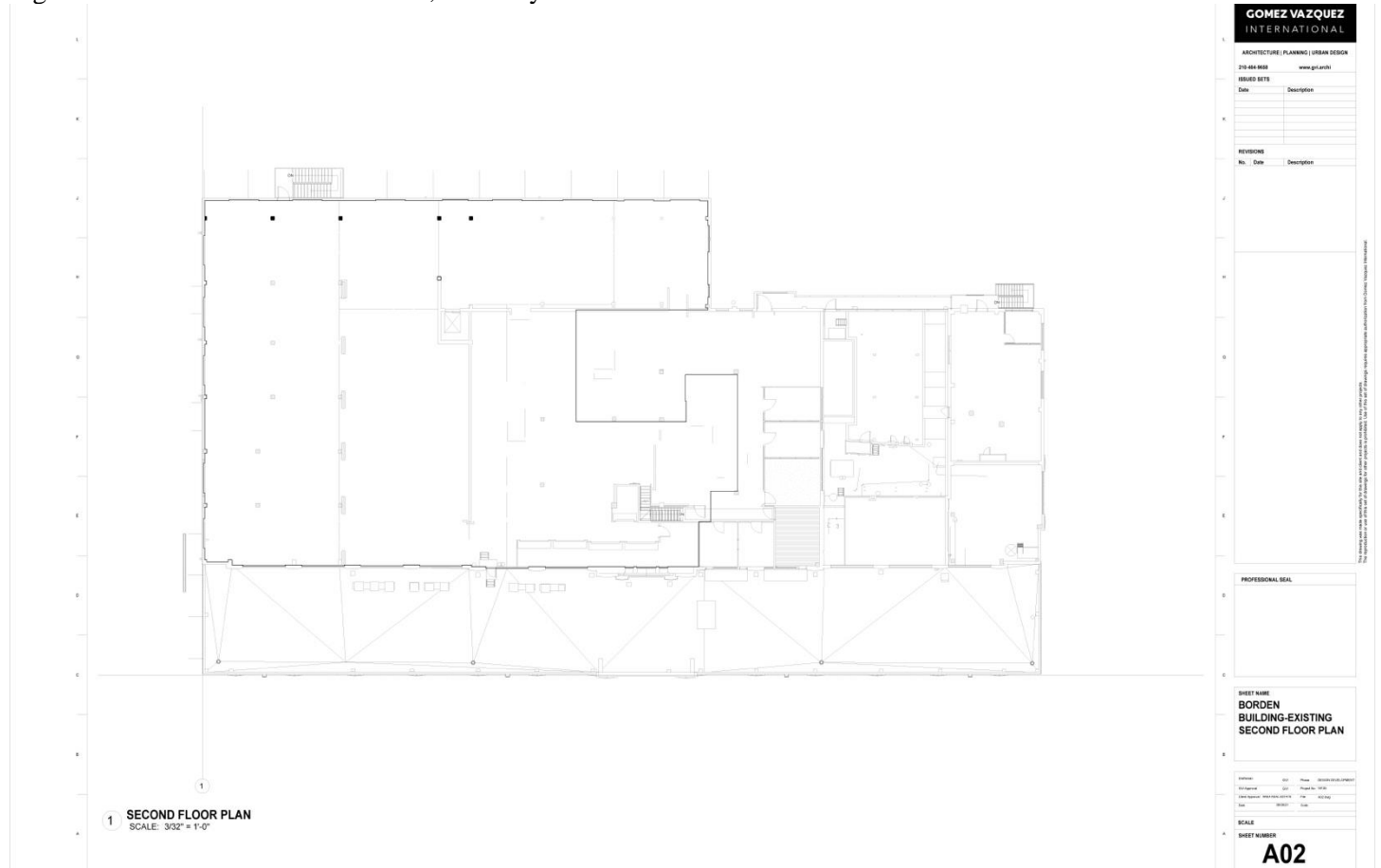
**Borden's Creamery, San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas**

Figure 27: Current First Floor Plan, Courtesy Post Oak Preservation Solutions



**Borden's Creamery, San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas**

Figure 28: Current Second Floor Plan, Courtesy Post Oak Preservation Solutions



**GOMEZ VAZQUEZ INTERNATIONAL**  
 ARCHITECTURE | PLANNING | URBAN DESIGN  
 210 464-9659 www.gvintl.com

REVISIONS	
No.	Description

PROFESSIONAL SEAL

SHEET NAME  
**BORDEN  
 BUILDING-EXISTING  
 SECOND FLOOR PLAN**

NO.	DATE	BY	CHKD.	DESC.

SCALE  
**A02**

Borden's Creamery, San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas

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Figure 29: Early data on dairymen in San Antonio.

YEAR	POPULATION	OCCUPATION-DAIRY	DAIRYMAN	TOTAL IN DAIRY BUSINESS
<b>1870</b>	<b>12,256</b>			
1877		0	7	7
1879		0	11	11
<b>1880</b>	<b>20,550</b>			
1881		0	23	23
1883		2	19	21
1885		1	41	42
1887		2	87	89
<b>1890</b>	<b>37,673</b>			
1891		15	22	37
1892		24	24	48
1895		34	20	54
1897		56	25	81
1899		66	21	87
<b>1900</b>	<b>53,321</b>			
1901		61	18	79

Figure 30: Primary (Southwest) Elevation, View Northeast. Taken November 2019, prior to partial demolition. Non-historic additions and window infill have been removed.





Borden's Creamery, San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas

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Figure 31: Administration Building at Randolph Field, designed by Ayres and Ayres, photograph, May 3, 1932; (<https://texashistory.unt.edu/ark:/67531/metaph531714/>; accessed November 18, 2021), University of North Texas Libraries, *The Portal to Texas History*, <https://texashistory.unt.edu/>; crediting The University of Texas at Dallas.



Borden's Creamery, San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas

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Photo 1: Primary (Southwest) Elevation, View Northwest.



Photo 2: Southeast Elevation, View West.



Borden's Creamery, San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas

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Photo 3: Rear (Northeast) Elevation, View West.



Photo 4: Rear (Northeast) Elevation, View South





Borden's Creamery, San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas

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Photo 5: Northwest Elevation, View East.



Photo 6: Primary (Southwest) Elevation Showing Second Floor Exterior from Roof, View East



Borden's Creamery, San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas

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Photo 7: Tower from Roof, View Southwest.



Photo 8: First Floor Interior Window Detail



Borden's Creamery, San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas

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Photo 9: Second Floor Skylight Detail



Photo 10: First Floor Entrance Vestibule





Borden's Creamery, San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas

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Photo 11: First Floor Lobby



Photo 12: First Floor Southeast Space



Borden's Creamery, San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas

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Photo 13: First Floor Central Space



Photo 14: First Floor Northwest Space





Borden's Creamery, San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas

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Photo 15: Second Floor Northwest Space



Photo 16: Second Floor Central Space



Borden's Creamery, San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas

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Photo 17: Second Floor Mosaic Tile Detail



Photo 18: Second Floor Corridor



Borden's Creamery, San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas

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Photo 19: Second Floor Office



Photo 20: Tower Interior

