

AMOH 12-15-001



A Half Mile of History

**NOMINATION FORM
HALF MILE OF HISTORY**

Section A: Nomination Information

Name of Nominated person, place or event:

Thomas Elam Swann

The nominee is being honored for outstanding contributions in the area(s) of (please check all that apply):

<input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment/Media	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Philanthropy
<input type="checkbox"/> Architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> Government/Military	<input type="checkbox"/> Religion
<input type="checkbox"/> Arts and Culture	<input type="checkbox"/> Industry	<input type="checkbox"/> Science
<input type="checkbox"/> Aviation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Invention/Innovation	<input type="checkbox"/> Sports
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Business/Corporate Leadership	<input type="checkbox"/> Law	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Community Service	<input type="checkbox"/> Medicine	<input type="checkbox"/> Other
<input type="checkbox"/> Education	<input type="checkbox"/> Oil/Gas	

Section B: Nominator's Information

Name of person making nomination:

Mauree Ann Frank

Address:

918 East Walnut KINS

City:

Tyler

State:

Texas

Zip:

75701

Daytime telephone:

903780 9811

Email:

swfrank@suddenlink.net

Relationship to nominated individual:

COUSIN -

Nominated Individual's year of birth:

1875

Nominated Individual's year of death:

1939

Section C: Narrative

The narrative section of the application is the most important. It is the primary source of information judges use to make their selection of new inductees. The two-page narrative submittal must utilize size 12 Times New Roman font and be double spaced. Please include a recommended 25-30 word marker caption at the end of the narrative. Any additional material will be referred to only for verification of accuracy of the nomination. No submitted materials will be returned.

The narrative section must contain an explanation of the nominee's enduring contribution that make this person/place/event worthy of the honor. Please describe the impact the nominee has had on the community, county, region, nation and/or world. For Individuals, please include any honors earned by the nominee as well as a list of organizations in which the nominee has been involved. Also, please indicate their educational background as well as the length of time the individual has lived in Smith County. Inclusion of photos is preferred but optional. Do not send original photos. All submitted materials will become property of the City of Tyler and its Historical Preservation Board.

Please submit nominations to:

City of Tyler Historical Preservation Board
Attention: Half Mile of History
P.O. Box 2039
Tyler, Texas 75710

November 8, 2015

**City of Tyler Historical Preservation Board Half Mile History
P.O. Box 2039
Tyler, Texas 75710**

Dear Sirs,

Attached is an application for Thomas Elam Swann. Enclosed you will find the requested narrative submitted by several of T. E. Swann's cousins. We have provided you with photographs and advertisements regarding Mr. Swann's life and work. We have also included a Swann family tree for your convenience. If you have further questions regarding this application, contact Laurie Ann Frank 903-780-9811 she is the lead on this application. We appreciate your time and attention to this worthy nominee.

Regards,

Cousins of T.E. Swann

Half Mile History

Nomination of Thomas Elam Swann

Thomas Elam "T. E." Swann was the son of an early Texas Pioneer whose father Thomas Rowan Swann came to Smith County in the late 1840s from Sumter County, Alabama. T. E. Swann lived in Smith County from 1875 to 1938. He was a businessman, entrepreneur, corporate leader, and philanthropist. Mr. Swann left a strong legacy that is present today with his business sense and his desire to contribute and to help others.

Mr. Swann began his business career at the early age of thirteen when his father died. He took a job in a drug store for 25 cents a week. By 1895 he had saved enough to open a small store - Swann Furniture Company. By 1901, he was running catchy ads in the local paper labeled "T.E. Swann, the Furniture Man" and he was looking for new fields of endeavor. He opened additional stores in Marshall and Palestine. Mr. Swann was always conscious of new trends. For example, he foresaw the coming popularity of the phonograph soon after it was invented and he bought the RCA Victrola franchise for the State of Texas. T.E. Swann also had other various enterprises including the local Ford agency, Tyler Motor Company, and local real estate developments. It is described in an article by Frances Dossett Swann in the Chronicles of Smith County that he had a zest for life that included far more than his business enterprises. He was a lover of nature, of sports, a booster of the Tyler Trojans - a local baseball club, of art and of all people - particularly young people.

In T. E. Swann's obituary he was described as an institution. He made it his practice to provide something worthwhile for Tyler people every year. Sometimes it took the form of beneficial lectures or programs. He gave annual Christmas Tree celebrations for poor children in Smith County. In 1927 he started his annual Camp Audubon awards which was a foundation for youth. Annually he sent six boys to Camp Audubon. This award was given through the Tyler Public Schools. T.E. Swann also established a student loan college fund for girls. Mr. Swann also made contributions to Tyler area churches. He gave a large lot to Marvin United Methodist for the erection of a church hall. He was described in his obituary as "builder of homes and men." In February 1937 he was awarded the T.B. Butler Award for meritorious service. It was mentioned in the award that he had built more homes in the past year than any other in Tyler. His active brain was always working, planning and thinking along progressive lines in business, real estate, insurance and automobiles.

Thomas Elam Swann's legacy lives on in Swann's Furniture and Design, the homes he built, the churches he helped build, the scholarships he established and above all the people's lives he touched, his friends, his extended family and his community providing support and opportunities for enrichment and growth. His fingerprint continues to be on the legacy of Tyler and Smith County.

Recommendation for marker caption:

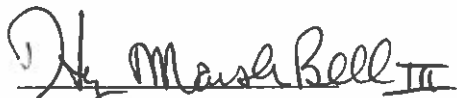
Thomas Elam "T.E." Swann in 1895 founded Swann's Furniture Company. He was a businessman, entrepreneur, corporate leader and philanthropist. He was known as "T.E. Swann, the Furniture Man." He was always looking for new fields of endeavor and conscious of new trends. He had various enterprises including RCA Victrola franchise for Texas, Tyler Motor

Company and local real estate development. He valued children by establishing scholarships and college funding opportunities.

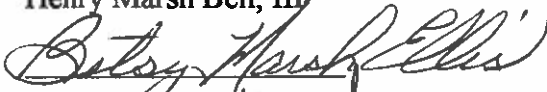
Reference:

Swann, F.D. (1984, Summer) The Swann's of Smith County and Their Business. Chronicles of Smith County Texas, volume 34 number 1, 1-7.

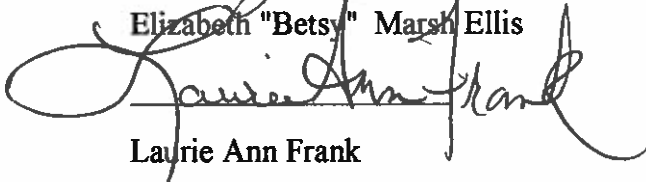
Application endorsed by cousins of Thomas Elam "T.E." Swann:



Henry Marsh Bell, III



Elizabeth "Betsy" Marsh Ellis



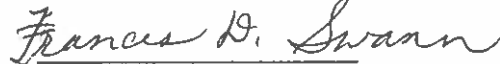
Laurie Ann Frank



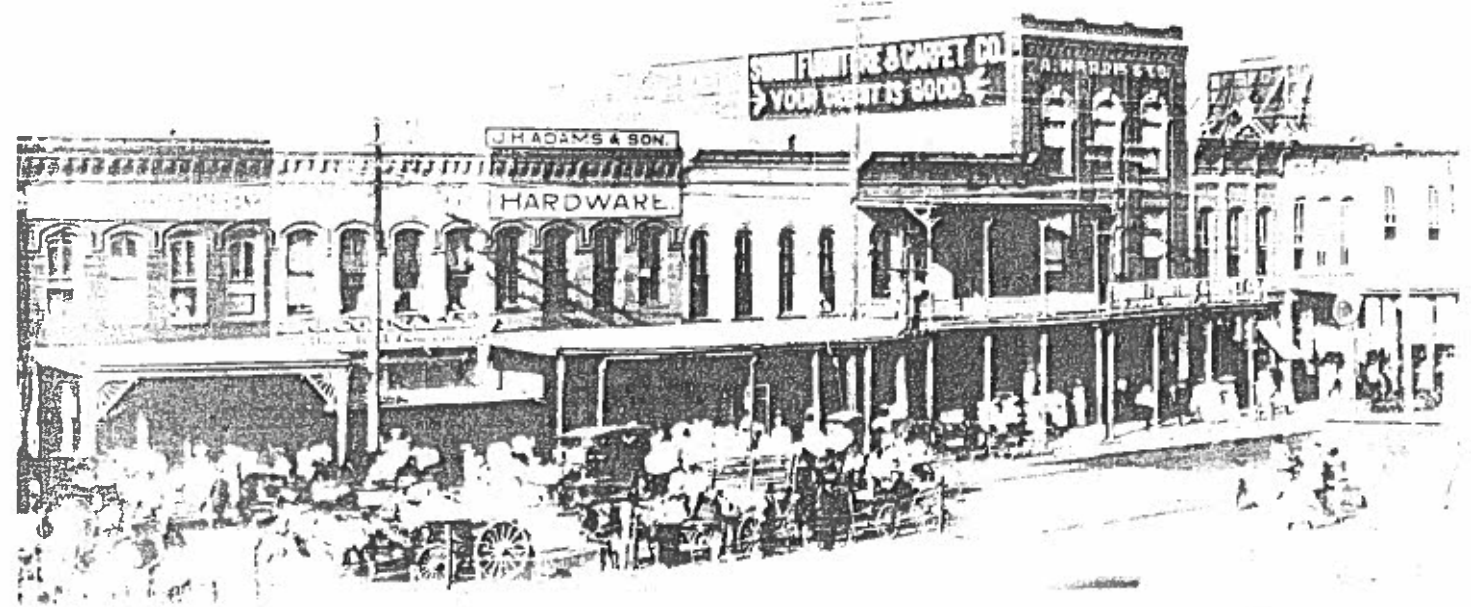
Elam Franklin Swann, III



Elam Franklin Swann, IV



Frances "Poesie" Dossett Swann

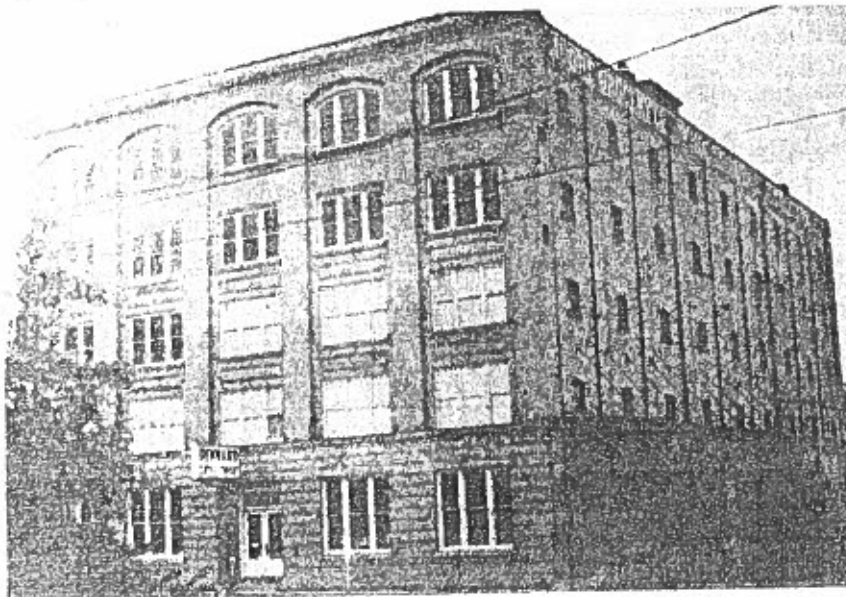


Swann Furniture and Carpet Company was still on the square, but had moved to this building at 105 West Ferguson Street sometime before 1900.



Swann Furniture Company maintained its West Erwin Street location for about 70 years before moving to its present location on Southeast Loop 323, Tyler.

Photo above from SCHS Archives. Photo at left from Tyler Morning Telegraph, May 16, 1980.



This building at 408 North Broadway in Tyler, commonly known as the Dennard Building, was built by Thomas E. Swann about 1912 on the site of the old W. W. Grinnan home. Swann bought the old Grinnan homeplace from the estate in 1911. In 1913 Swann sold the lot to the Swann Furniture Company, stating the lot con-

tained the five story brick building occupied by Swann Furniture Company.

Swann Furniture sold the lot and building to Moore Grocery Company for \$12,500 in 1917. Moore Grocery occupied the building until the mid-1950s, followed by Dennard Supply Company until recent years.

YOUR CREDIT IS GOOD

T. E. SWANN

AT ALL TIMES THE LARGEST AND
MOST COMPLETE STOCK IN EAST
TEXAS OF

Furniture, Carpets, Pianos, Or-
gans, Shades, Draperies, Lace
Curtains, Portiers, Matting
and House Furnishings.

SOLED ON EASY TERMS AND
LONG TIME

T. E. SWANN

YOUR CREDIT IS GOOD

... LET US ...
Furnish Your Home!

¶ It means absolute protection from the many shams, unreliable and untrustworthy goods with which the market is now flooded.

We pride Ourselves Upon Handling
Thoroughly honest Furniture

Which alone insures satisfied customers. ¶ Consider the soundness of construction and honesty of workmanship and you will realize our prices in the end far below the average dealer.

Swann Fur. & Carpet Co.

T. E. Swann,
President

D. H. Rankin
Sec.-Treas.

Swann Family

Thomas Swann m. Catherine McConnaughy

Isaac Swann m. 1812 Ann Robinson

James Harris Swann 1812-1862 m. 1831 Nancy Margaret W. Sims
m2nd 1855 Margaret J. Stephens
Came to Smith County about 1857

1. Martha C. Swann c1833-_____
2. Frances A. Swann 1835-1879 m. 1855 David Smith Lavender
3. Thomas C. Swann 1838-1908 m. 1858 Sarah Hastletine Hitt
4. Irene E. Swann c1842-1917 m. 1865 A. H. Thompson
5. William David Swann 1845-1935 m. 1873 Sarah Hitt
m2nd Hattie Whitton
6. Sarah A. Swann 1847-_____ m. 1877 I. N. Stovall
7. Henry M. Swann 1854-_____ m. Edna Farrar
8. John H. Swann 1856-_____ m. Lula Pool
9. James S. Swann 1859-_____ m. 1889 Elizabeth Dean
10. Alfred R. Swann 1860-_____ m. 1888 Hope Smith (Sarah Lucinda)

Elam Franklin Swann 1816-1883 m. 1849 Sarah (Jackson) Dant
Came to Texas 1850's. No children.

William Berry Swann 1818-_____ m. 1849 M. A. Dean

Thomas Rowan Swann 1825-1888 m. Maria Louisa Wells
m2nd 1869 Alicia J. Evans.
Came to Texas 1840's.

1. Laura Louisa Swann c1854-_____ m. 1876 George W. Smith
2. Sallie Amanda Swann 1856-1927 m. 1876 Francis Marion Bell
3. Anna Swann 1858-1912
4. Willie Swann c1871-_____ m. 1895 Fitzhugh Foster,
m2nd J. M. Hons
5. Maude Swann c1873-_____ m. 1897 Earl Fain
6. Thomas Elam Swann 1875-1939 m. 1901 Carrie Rowland
7. Alicia Evans Swann 1878-1969
8. Nancy Lee Swann 1881-1966
9. Evans Sam Swann 1883-1960 m. 1915 Lillian Price

Isaac Harrison Swann 1827-1892 m. Roberta E. Hamil
Came to Texas 1860's

1. Robert H. Swann 1864-1922 m. Annie A. Hammell
2. S. Roland Swann 1871-1948 m. 1898 Ethel Borden
3. Lida E. Swann 1873-1969
4. Fanny Flay Swann 1875-1916 m. 1899 Edward J. Borden
5. J. Marshall Swann 1879-1943
6. Josie H. Swann 1883-_____ m. W. B. Murphey

Samuel Davidson Swann 1830-1897 m. 1874 Julia E. Bailey.
Came to Texas 1860's.

1. Ella Mae Swann 1877-1952 m. Thomas Lee Odom
2. Anna C. Swann 1879-1922 m. G. L. Yates

Andrew Jackson Swann 1833-1896 m. 1865 Louisa E. Wimberly.
Came to Texas 1850's.

