

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

For NPS use only

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

received

date entered

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

5AH280

historic William Smith House

and or common William Smith House

2. Location

street & number 412 Oswego Court n/a not for publication

city, town Aurora n/a vicinity of

state Colorado code 08 county Arapahoe code 005

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
n/a district	n/a public	XX occupied	n/a agriculture	n/a museum
XX building(s)	XX private	n/a unoccupied	n/a commercial	n/a park
n/a structure	n/a both	n/a work in progress	n/a educational	XX private residence
n/a site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	n/a entertainment	n/a religious
n/a object	n/a in process	XX yes: restricted	n/a government	n/a scientific
	n/a being considered	n/a yes: unrestricted	n/a industrial	n/a transportation
		n/a no	n/a military	— other:

4. Owner of Property

name Randall & Kathy Sanders

street & number 412 Oswego Court

city, town Aurora n/a vicinity of state Colorado

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Arapahoe County Courthouse

street & number 5334 S. Prince Street

city, town Littleton state Colorado

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

Aurora Historic Preservation Inventory,
title Volume I has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 1978 federal state county local

depository for survey records Colorado Historical Society, OAHF, 1300 Broadway

city, town Denver state Colorado 80203

7. Description

Condition

XX excellent

n/a good

n/a fair

n/a deteriorated

n/a ruins

n/a unexposed

Check one

n/a unaltered

XX altered

Check one

XX original site

n/a moved date _____

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The William Smith House is a single, detached, brick dwelling of rectangular plan, located in a 1960s residential neighborhood, and overlooking the Highline Canal which runs directly behind the property. An example of the American Foursquare style of architecture, the Smith House is one of only two Foursquare residences in Aurora, and has remained basically unaltered since it was built in 1910.

Characteristic elements of the Foursquare style of architecture evident in the Smith House include the square plan, hipped roof, broad overhanging eaves with brackets of Oregon pine, two story side bay, and a porch with hipped roof, supported by square posts.

The house features wood frame, double-hung, one over one sash windows with plain surrounds and stone sills. A brick belt course connects the sills of the larger windows on both stories. There are two small windows on the second story, one on the southwest side and the other centered on the front facade. On the southwest and northeast sides of the house are stained glass windows with stone sills and capped with radiating voussoirs and brick keystones.

The main door is a single panel with a pine core and white oak veneer, and a large window pane and sidelights. There are two external chimneys, both brick, located on the southwest and northeast sides of the structure. Sidelight windows are leaded glass.

Porch details include a pedimented entrance decorated with fishscale shingles, concrete steps, square posts with flat stone caps. The original screens have been removed. The porch wraps around the front facade to the southwest facade.

A two-story frame addition on the rear facade is original and features a lean-to roof, large screened windows, and a staircase connecting the two floors. The second floor veranda was enclosed at a later date.

A small brick, one-car garage with wood doors and gable roof is located on the southeast corner of the lot. Most of the original landscaping has been removed with the exception of the large trees which line the canal.

The interior of the Smith House remains basically intact, with the exception of the renovation of the unfinished basement into living space. The basic style of the interior is Craftsman, with emphasis on natural wood materials. Ground floor wood is oak, and pine on the second floor. All of the moldings are original, as are the fireplace with green tiles and the built-in buffet with leaded glass doors in the dining room. Wood floors of fir are found throughout the house. The stairs are of Texas pine.

Original architectural drawings indicate that there have been no major alterations to the Smith House since it was built. The only major change has occurred in the site which has changed from an agricultural setting to a residential setting.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400–1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500–1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600–1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/ humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900–	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		

Specific dates 1910

Builder/Architect Joseph Wilson, Architect

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The William Smith House is significant for its association with William Smith, gentlemen farmer and a prime mover in the organization of Aurora School District, #28; as one of the best examples of historic residential architecture in Aurora as well as being one of only two surviving illustrations of the American Foursquare style in the community; and for its association with the agricultural heritage of Aurora and the influence of European land investment companies in eastern Colorado.

William Smith was born in Aberdeen, Scotland in 1860 and came to America in 1878 under the sponsorship of Lord James W. Barclay, head of the banking house of Barclay and Company, a member of the English Parliament, and a director of the Colorado Mortgage and Investment Company of London, Ltd. Involved in numerous irrigation projects, the Colorado Mortgage and Investment Company was best known for its development of the Highline Canal. James Duff was the local director of the company and its subsidiary, the Platte Land Company which managed land along the canal. Lord Barclay arranged for William Smith to work for James Duff in Denver for a period of twelve months in exchange for his passage and expenses traveling from New York to Denver.¹

By 1882 William Smith was able to purchase his own farm land in the vicinity of what is now Sixth Avenue and Peoria Street in Aurora. He built a one-room frame house to which more rooms were added. The yard was a field of cactus bordering the Highline Canal which watered the semi-arid fields to the north. The land south of the canal had to be dry-land farmed. Smith raised sheep, alfalfa, barley, corn, wheat, and sugar beets in addition to a small dairy operation.²

William Smith's official involvement with the Aurora schools began around 1885 when the school district was organized. However, the district would not have been developed without the participation of Smith, who rode up and down the canal promoting the establishment of the school district. Smith was appointed secretary of the school board in 1885, a position he held for fifty years, the longest term for any school board member in the state. The district, which stretched from the city limits of Fletcher (now Aurora) to Colorado Boulevard, was one of the largest school districts in the state. Smith loaned a parcel of land to the school district for the site of the first school in Aurora, a frame structure built in 1886. It was replaced in 1892 by a brick, one-room school. In recognition of his long service to the Aurora Public Schools, the first high school in Aurora was named in his honor in 1931: William Smith High School.³

In 1910, William Smith commissioned Denver architect Joseph Wilson to build a new home. The large brick house is one of only two examples of the Foursquare style of architecture in Aurora. The other example will be torn down next year to make way for a housing development.

The Smith House features many of the characteristic elements of the Foursquare, including the square plan, hipped roof, broad overhanging eaves with brackets, two-story side bay, and a wrap-around porch. The house also features a built-in buffet with leaded glass doors

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**



Continuation sheet William Smith House Item number 8 Page 2

and stained glass windows. The original architectural drawings aided in the restoration of the house, and indicated that very few changes have occurred to the property since 1910. Only the setting has changed significantly, from an agricultural environment to a residential neighborhood. However, the Highline Canal still flows directly behind the house, and some of the original vegetation remains on the property.⁴

The Smith House remained in the family until 1983 when Margaret Smith, the eldest daughter of William Smith, passed away.

¹Alvin T. Steinel, History of Agriculture in Colorado, (Fort Collins: Colorado State Agricultural College, 1926), pp. 167-235. Also Smith Family Papers and collection, Aurora History Center, Aurora, Colorado

²Carl Vincent McFadden, et al. Early Aurora, (Aurora: Aurora Technical Center, 1978), pp. 234-235.

³Ibid., p. 234-235.

⁴Sarah J. Pearce and Merrill Wilson, A Guide to Colorado Architecture, (Denver: Colorado State Historical Society, 1983), pp. 36.

9. Major Bibliographical References

- Pearce, Sarah J. and Merrill Ann Wilson. A Guide to Colorado Architecture. Denver: Colorado Historical Society, 1983.
- McFadden, Carl Vincent, et al. Early Aurora. Aurora: Aurora Technical Center. 1978.
(continued)

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property _____

Quadrangle name Fitzsimons (1965/1980)

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References

A

1	3	5	1	2	9	10	10	4	13	9	16	6	14	10
Zone			Easting					Northing						

B

Zone			Easting					Northing						

C

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

D

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

E

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

F

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

G

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

H

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

Verbal boundary description and justification

Lot 12, Block 4, Park East Addition, 3rd Filing

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state n/a code county code

state code county code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Sarah J. Pearce, Consultant

organization date 6/1/85

street & number 888 S. Dexter, #710 telephone (303) 691-0187

city or town Denver state Colorado

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

title date

For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

date

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For NPS use only
received
date entered

Continuation sheet William Smith House Item number 9 Page 2

Steinel, Alvin T. History of Agriculture in Colorado. Fort Collins: Colorado State Agricultural College. 1926.

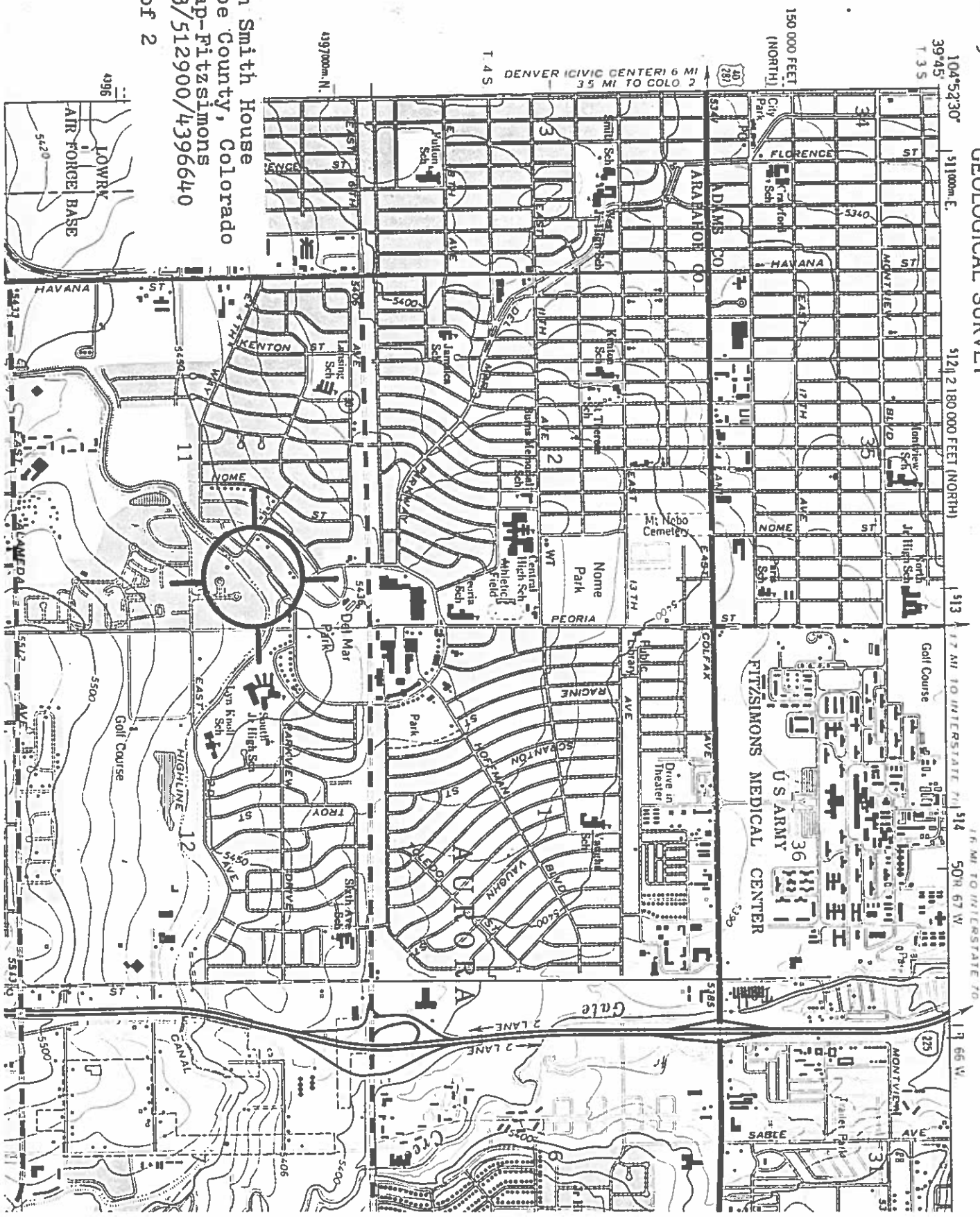
Smith Family Papers and Collection. Aurora History Center. Aurora, Colorado.

Aurora Historical Society Newsletter. Volume 9, Number 3. May, 1984.

5063 1/4 SW
(COMMERCIAL CITY)

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

William Smith House
Arapahoe County, Colorado
USGS Map-Fitzsimons
UTM: 13/512900/4396640
Map 1 of 2



104°52'30" 11100m. E. 5121 180 000 FEET (NORTH) 1913 17 MI TO INTERSTATE 70 1914 50R 67 W 16 MI TO INTERSTATE 70 119 66 W

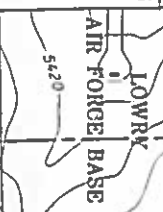
150 000 FEET (NORTH)

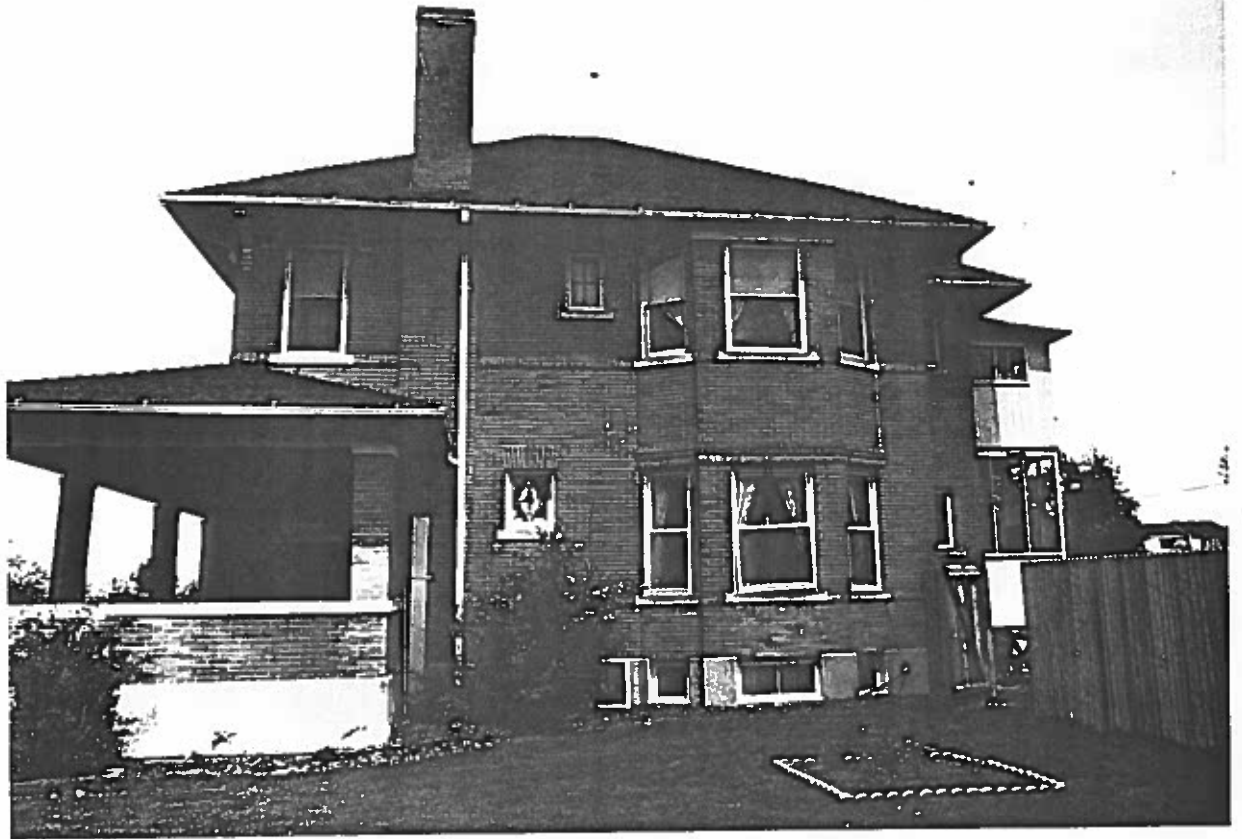
DENVER CIVIC CENTER 6 MI
35 MI TO COLO 2

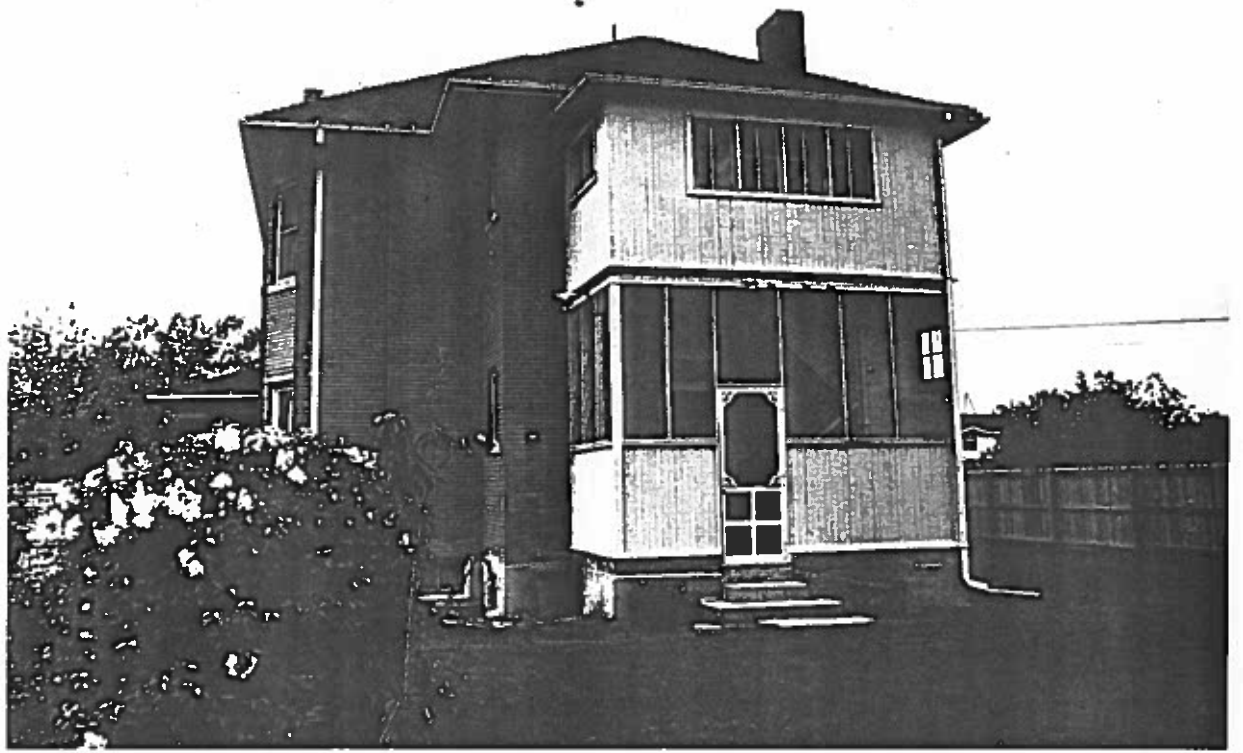
439700m. N.

4396

LOWRK
AIR FORCE BASE











William Smith House
Arapahoe County, Colorado
May 17, 1985
Negative: Aurora History
S. Pearce Center

Photo 1
Looking Southeast



William Smith House

Arapahoe County, Colorado

May 17, 1985

Neg. - Aurora Hist. Center

S. Pearce

Photo 2

Looking northeast



William Smith House
Arapahoe County, Colorado
May 17, 1985
Neg.- Aurora Hist. Center
S. Pearce

Photo 3
Looking northwest



William Smith House

Arapahoe County, Colorado

May 17, 1985

Neg.- Aurora Hist. Center

S. Pearce

Photo 4

Living Room



William Smith House
Arapahoe County, Colorado
May 17, 1985
S. Pearce
Neg.- Aurora Hist. Center

Photo 5
Dining Room