

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name Smith Clinic
other names/site number N/A

2. Location

street & number 17 Randolph Street N/A not for publication
city, town Thomasville N/A vicinity
state North Carolina code NC county Davidson code 057 zip code 27360

3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	Contributing	Noncontributing
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u> buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u> sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u> structures
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u> objects
		<u>1</u>	<u>0</u> Total

Name of related multiple property listing:
N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, 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. See continuation sheet.

William S. Price 10-22-91
Signature of certifying official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register. See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the National Register. See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register.
- removed from the National Register.
- other, (explain:)

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)
HEALTH CARE/clinic

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)
COMMERCE/TRADE/professional

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(enter categories from instructions)

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

Art Deco

foundation Brick

walls Brick

Concrete

roof Asphalt

other Metal

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

Smith Clinic is a simple Art Deco-style office building constructed in 1939 according to plans designed by High Point architect Tyson T. Ferree. It is located in the center of Thomasville, a town of approximately 14,000 in northeastern Davidson County in the piedmont region of North Carolina. The small, one-story brick building is prominently situated between the First Baptist and First Presbyterian churches and across the street from the Thomasville branch of the Davidson County Library.

During the 1980s' use of the building as a day care center, a variety of mostly cosmetic changes occurred, such as the painting of the natural birch doors on the interior, the remodeling of the front reception area, and the removal of the metal Smith Clinic sign on the facade. The sensitive rehabilitation by the present owner during 1990 and 1991 has brought back much of the original appearance of the building.

The Smith Clinic building is a narrow but deep structure, measuring approximately 34' x 104'. The rear is ten feet wider on the southeast side, forming a small ell. The rather austere exterior features plain brick walls interrupted by one-over-one sash windows on the sides, along with three doors on the southeast side, and a slightly vaulted roof hidden by a parapeted cornice. Stylistic features are confined to the three-bay facade, which displays a bold, yet restrained, Art Deco design concentrated on the projecting central entrance bay. The cast concrete water table, window lintels, cornice coping, and entrance surround of the facade contrast sharply with the red brick walls. The glass-paneled door is accentuated by flanking cast concrete pilasters, the name "Smith Clinic" in Broadway-style aluminum letters above the door, and the crowning stepped parapet typical of the Art Deco. The whole serves to draw visual attention to the main entrance. The windows on either side of the entrance are modern replacements similar to the original casement windows with transoms.

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Smith Clinic
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Concrete steps bordered by metal railings lead from the front entrance down the slight hill to the sidewalk. Southeast of the building is a paved driveway with a small paved parking area which services the building.

The projection of the central entrance bay creates a small vestibule which leads into the reception/waiting room. This room spans approximately two-thirds of the width of the building and features walls which curve into the ceiling, rather than meeting at the usual ninety-degree angle. To the left of the reception room, a library extends the remaining width of the building. Behind these front rooms, a center hall runs all the way to the rear ell, where it turns southeast to run along the ell. Flanking the center hall are a collection of irregularly sized rooms--originally offices, examination rooms, and bathrooms and now used as offices, conference rooms, bathrooms, storage rooms, and a kitchen. Several lavatories remain in place as a reminder of the days when the building was a medical clinic. Wood door and baseboard moldings are simple, and the doors--some of which have their natural birch finish restored--are trimmed with metal knobs, pulls, and plates of Art Deco influence.

Statement of Significance

...ing official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally statewide locally

Applicable National Register Criteria A B C D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) A B C D E F G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)
Architecture

Period of Significance
1939

Significant Dates
1939

Cultural Affiliation
N/A

Significant Person
N/A

Architect/Builder
Ferree, Tyson T.

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

SUMMARY:

Smith Clinic is a one-story brick office building in central Thomasville built in 1939 according to the plans of High Point architect Tyson T. Ferree. The locally significant building exemplifies the Art Deco style as it was expressed in modest buildings of the Piedmont's small towns. For more than thirty-five years after its construction, Smith Clinic served as the medical office of Dr. William Gordon Smith, Sr., a prominent Thomasville family physician. During most of these years, it also served as the offices of several other physicians, including W. Gordon Smith, Jr., and of a dentist. After some years of decline in the 1980s, the Smith Clinic building was sensitively rehabilitated in 1990-1991 by present owner Paul Rush Mitchell and is now used as his law office.

ARCHITECTURE CONTEXT:

The architectural significance of Smith Clinic lies in its status as a well preserved example of the Art Deco style as it was interpreted in the modest buildings of piedmont North Carolina's small towns during the 1930s and early 1940s.

The Art Deco as applied to architecture was essentially an urban style which stressed the vertical and expressed modernity, primarily through the use of streamlined forms and ornamentation. It was an outgrowth of the Exposition des Arts Decoratifs, held in Paris in 1925. Common motifs of the Art Deco are fluting, reeding, chevrons, zigzags, various frets, and highly stylized plant and animal forms. Used mostly for commercial, office, government, and apartment buildings, the Art Deco style appeared primarily during the late 1920s and 1930s,

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Carolina and elsewhere examples continued to be built during the early 1940s.

Because the Art Deco style was so urban in feeling, the most sophisticated examples were naturally found in the larger urban areas of the state. Some of the foremost examples in North Carolina were found in nearby Winston-Salem--the 1928-1929 R. J. Reynolds Tobacco Company Office Building, which was the predecessor to New York's Empire State Building; the 1929 Pepper Building; and the former Sosnik's Department Store building, erected in 1929; and in Greensboro--the ca. 1930 S. H. Kress Building and the 1931 U. S. Post Office and Courthouse.

High Point had its share of examples from the 1930s, including the former Guilford County Office and Court Building designed by the firm of Voorhees and Everhart and the former High Point Enterprise Building and the Professional Building at 300 S. Main Street, both designed by the architect of the Smith Clinic, Tyson T. Ferree. Ferree, a 1933 graduate of North Carolina State, opened his own practice in High Point in 1934. Except for 1942-1944 during World War II, he continued to practice until his death in 1948 at the age of forty-four. During those years he and the firm of Voorhees and Everhart were the High Point firms who designed most of the architectural work in town. Ferree's office was in his Art Deco-style Professional Building at the corner of Main and Green. Ferree designed numerous houses, along with some commercial buildings and churches. He also designed buildings in neighboring Thomasville, Ashboro, Archdale, and Lexington (Ferree and Ferree interview).

Other area examples of the Art Deco style include the 1938 boldly designed Ashboro City Hall in neighboring Randolph County, and Charles Hartmann's 1946 Lexington Memorial Hospital in Davidson County. In Thomasville itself, as in the other smaller towns of the Piedmont, the examples tend to be fewer and more modest in scope, except for the occasional public building. The survivors of the Art Deco style in Thomasville include the 1938 City Hall, a large, two-story cast concrete and brick structure; the Carolina Apartments, a two-story brick building with simple Art Deco door surrounds in cast concrete, and the 1939 Smith Clinic.

The use of modest Art Deco styling for the small, one-story Smith Clinic suggests the owner's desire to be as up-to-date as possible but with a conservatism appropriate to a small town. The well preserved Smith Clinic remains an excellent example of this approach to the Art Deco style in the smaller urban areas of North Carolina's Piedmont.

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HISTORICAL BACKGROUND:

In 1928 Dr. William G. Smith arrived in Thomasville to begin a practice in family medicine that was to last for nearly fifty years. A native of Faison, North Carolina, he received a B.S. degree in medicine from the University of North Carolina in 1925 and an M.D. degree from Tulane University in 1927 (Mitchell Interview). Smith was a leading physician in Thomasville, and in addition to his long-time private practice, he served for twenty-nine years on the board of City Memorial (later Community General) Hospital (1945-1974) (Times, October 2, 1974).

On April 3, 1939, Smith purchased a lot on Randolph Street from the Thomasville Masonic Lodge No. 214, and proceeded with the construction of what became known as the Smith Clinic (Deed Book 136, 231-232). Smith commissioned High Point architect Tyson T. Ferree to design the building (Thomasville Tribune).

Not long after Smith opened his clinic, other medical professionals established their offices in the building. Among these were dentist Robert H. Holliday and physician Rowland V. Long. In 1962 Smith's son, surgeon W. Gordon Smith, Jr., also opened his practice in the building (Thomasville City Directories). From 1963 until his death from cancer in 1974, Gordon Smith contributed his time as team physician for the varsity football team of Thomasville Senior High School (Times, September 25, 1975).

After Dr. W. G. Smith's death in 1977, the Smith Clinic building was sold in 1980. During the 1980s it changed hands numerous times and was utilized as a day care center. On June 19, 1990, Mr. and Mrs. Paul Rush Mitchell purchased the property (Mitchell Letter). They have sensitively rehabilitated the building, which now serves as Mitchell's law office.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Davidson County Deed Book 136, pp. 231-232. Copy of deed in Smith Clinic property file, Survey and Planning Branch, SHPO, Raleigh, North Carolina.

Ferree, Chloe L. (widow of Tyson T. Ferree) and Ferree, Thad (son of Tyson and Chloe Ferree). Interview with author. High Point, North Carolina, July 19, 1991.

Mitchell, Paul Rush (present owner of Smith Clinic). Interview with author. Thomasville, North Carolina, July, 1991.

Mitchell, Paul Rush. Letter to author, June 4, 1991.

See continuation sheet

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- 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
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Specify repository: _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property less than 1

UTM References

A 17 582960 39711010
Zone Easting Northing

B _____
Zone Easting Northing

C _____

D _____

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

The nominated property consists of Lot 80 of Block B, Davidson County Tax Map 115 (Thomasville Township), otherwise known as parcel number 16115000A0080, Thomasville Township. Measuring Approximately 71' x 130', the boundary is shown as the heavy black line on the accompanying tax map.

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The boundary of the nominated property includes the city lot of less than one acre which has been associated historically with the Smith Clinic and on which the Smith Clinic building stands.

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Laura A. W. Phillips, Architectural Historian
organization N/A date July 30, 1991
street & number 637 N. Spring Street telephone 919/727-1968
city or town Winston-Salem state North Carolina zip code 27101

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The (Thomasville) Times, October 2, 1974, September 25, 1975.

Thomasville City Directory, 1941/1942 - 1976.

Thomasville Tribune, 1939. Copy of clipping in Smith Clinic
property file, Survey and Planning Branch, SHPO, Raleigh,
North Carolina.

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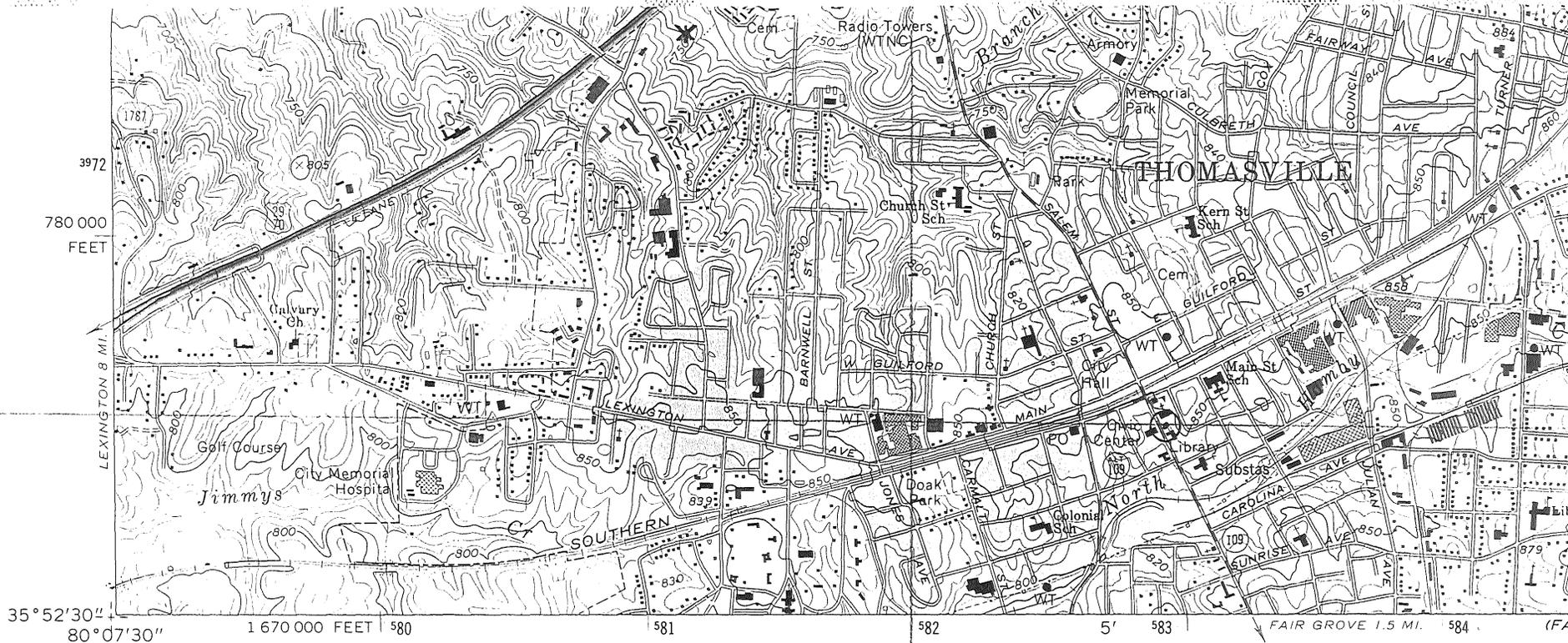
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Smith Clinic
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The following information applies to all nomination photographs:

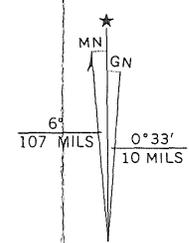
- 1) Smith Clinic
- 2) Thomasville, Davidson County, North Carolina
- 3) Laura A. W. Phillips
- 4) May 24, 1991
- 5) State Historic Preservation Office, Raleigh, North Carolina
- 6-7) A: Facade, view to NE
B: Area context, view to NW along Randolph Street
C: SE elevation, view to N
D: NW elevation, view to E
E: Interior, center hall
F: Interior, door knob and plate



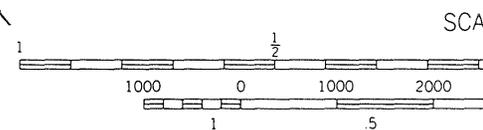
(LEXINGTON EAST)
4955 1 SW

Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey
 Control by USGS, USC&GS, and North Carolina Geodetic Survey
 Topography by photogrammetric methods from aerial photographs
 taken 1965. Field checked 1969
 Supersedes map dated 1949

Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum
 10,000-foot grid based on North Carolina coordinate system
 1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks, zone 17,
 shown in blue
 To place on the predicted North American Datum 1983
 move the projection lines 10 meters south and
 19 meters west as shown by dashed corner ticks
 Red tint indicates areas in which only landmark buildings are shown



UTM GRID AND 1987 MAGNETIC NORTH
 DECLINATION AT CENTER OF SHEET



SMITH CLINIC
DAVIDSON Co., N.C.
HIGH POINT WEST QUAD
 1:24 000
 17/582960/3971000

CONTOUR I
 NATIONAL GEODETIC

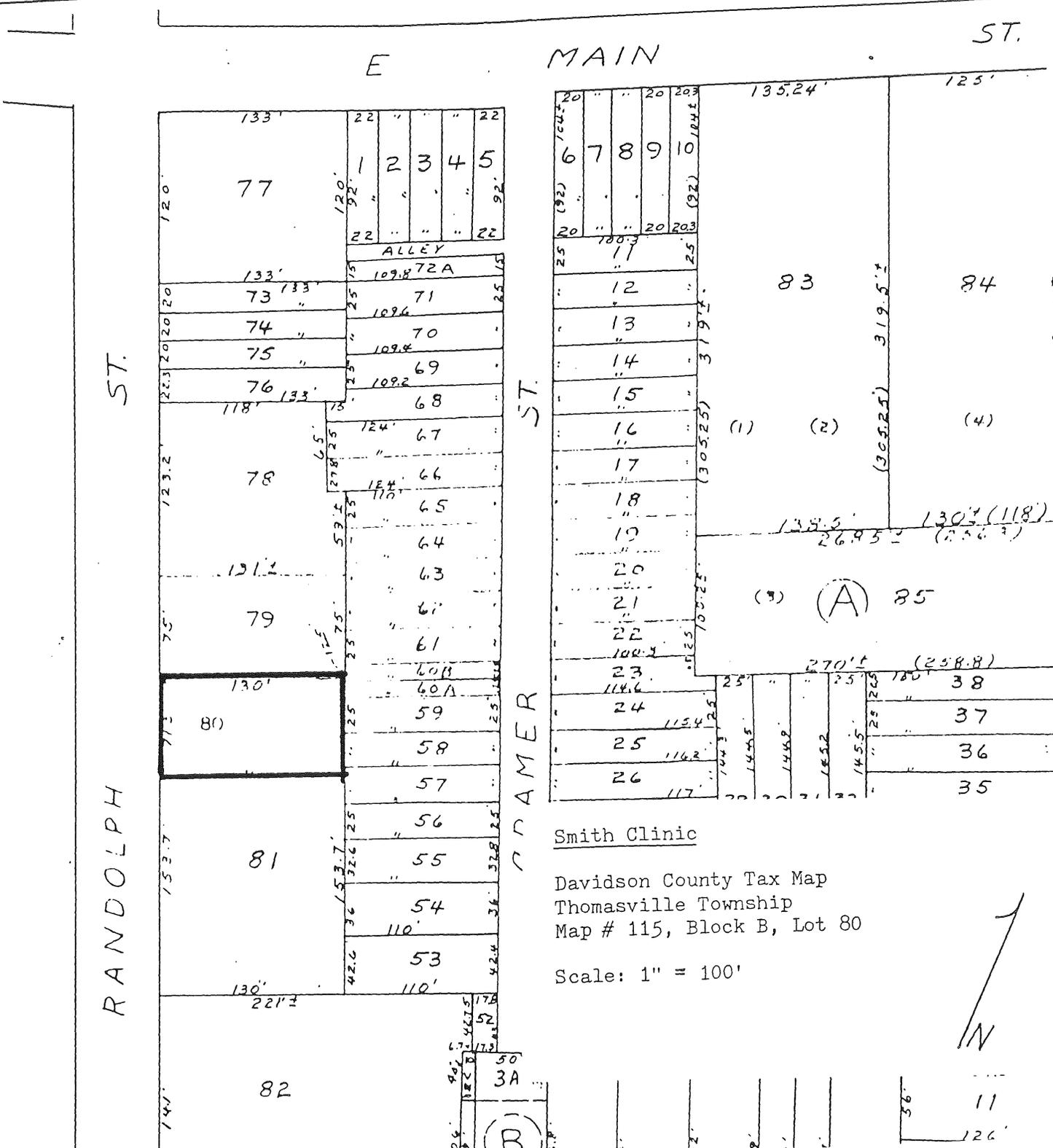
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 FOR SALE BY U.
 DENVER, COLORADO 802
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Smith Clinic
 Davidson County Tax Map
 Thomasville Township
 Map # 115, Block B, Lot 80
 Scale: 1" = 100'



SMITH
CLINIC

17

LIMIT
25