

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
RECEIVED	MAR 22 1976
DATE ENTERED	SEP 28 1976

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*  
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC

*nr*  
Major Hampden Smith House

AND/OR COMMON

Same

**2 LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER

909 Frederica Street

\_\_ NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Owensboro

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

\_\_ VICINITY OF

02

STATE

Kentucky

CODE

021

COUNTY

Daviess

CODE

059

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

**CATEGORY**

DISTRICT

BUILDING(S)

STRUCTURE

SITE

OBJECT

**OWNERSHIP**

PUBLIC

PRIVATE

BOTH

**PUBLIC ACQUISITION**

IN PROCESS

BEING CONSIDERED

**STATUS**

OCCUPIED

UNOCCUPIED

WORK IN PROGRESS

**ACCESSIBLE**

YES: RESTRICTED

YES: UNRESTRICTED

NO

**PRESENT USE**

AGRICULTURE

COMMERCIAL

EDUCATIONAL

ENTERTAINMENT

GOVERNMENT

INDUSTRIAL

MILITARY

MUSEUM

PARK

PRIVATE RESIDENCE

RELIGIOUS

SCIENTIFIC

TRANSPORTATION

OTHER: 3 apartment

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

Mrs. Raphael Smith

STREET & NUMBER

909 Frederica Street

CITY, TOWN

Owensboro

\_\_ VICINITY OF

STATE

Kentucky

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Daviess County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

Third and Frederica Streets

CITY, TOWN

Owensboro

STATE

Kentucky

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

Survey of Historic Sites in Kentucky

DATE

1971

FEDERAL  STATE  COUNTY  LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

Kentucky Heritage Commission

CITY, TOWN

104 Bridge Street

STATE

Frankfort

## 7 DESCRIPTION

### CONDITION

—EXCELLENT  
XGOOD  
—FAIR

—DETERIORATED  
—RUINS  
—UNEXPOSED

### CHECK ONE

XUNALTERED  
—ALTERED

### CHECK ONE

XORIGINAL SITE  
—MOVED DATE \_\_\_\_\_

### DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Owensboro, county seat of Daviess County, is located on a southern bend of the Ohio River in western Kentucky. The city is laid out as a grid southward from the river front. A low ridge extends east-west south of the original town. At the time the Smith House was built it was virtually out in the country, and in 1876 it was still surrounded on the north and west by open land, although the area to the north is marked on the 1876 map (see map 1) "Ross & May's Subdivision," and the land to the south and east of the Smith property had already been subdivided. Now, however, the building, located on the east side of the main north-south thoroughfare of the city less than ten blocks from the courthouse, is the only remaining residence facing Frederica Street on a built-up block (see map 2). The Carnegie Library building (soon to be converted into a local history museum) is adjacent on the northwest corner of the block; a filling-station with mechanic's garage and other commercial development are directly south; and the railroad tracks are a block away farther south (the handsome old railroad station has been adapted as a successful restaurant-nightclub). Nevertheless, the massive Smith house, because it is set well back from the street and in effect isolated by its bulky neighbors, and because of its cubic self-containment, retains a sense of seclusion. Shade trees in the well-kept front yard abet this illusion. Although most of the older residential sections of Owensboro have long since been replaced by other development, there are still a number of such mansions on landscaped lots scattered about the downtown area and along the ridge. Most of them have been adapted to other uses but some (like the Smith House) are still residential; this phenomenon contributes an unusual character to the city.

The Smith house was built in 1859-61 as a late Greek Revival block; the exquisite castiron front porch, balcony railing on the ground-floor windows, and widow's or captain's walk were added just after the Civil War. This lacy trim seems only to emphasize by contrast the massive plainness of the brick building itself. The main block has two stories, with a deep flat cornice and a hipped roof sloping up to a rectangular monitor. (Note on photo 3 that the monitor originally served as a ventilator as well.) The west facade has five bays: four long windows on each side flank the wider center entrance and double window above. The entrance is also fairly plain with narrow transom and sidelights.

The lintels of the windows, which descend to the floor on the first story, are plain except for moldings at the top that curve in from the ends to meet at stylized conch shells. The windows on the side and rear of the house have plain stone sills and lintels (see photos 2 and 3). There is an original one-story brick service ell on the north side of the rear of the house, with several one- and two-story modern frame additions and porches. None of these is visible from the street, however, and the facade is just as it was in the late 19th century.

The interior of the house is also essentially intact, although portions of it have been divided into apartments. Most of the woodwork is unpainted, with handsome if heavy Greek Revival moldings. Door and window frames are eared, with a slight rise in the center giving the effect of a pediment (see photo 4). The finest feature of the interior is the main staircase, which curves up from an octagonal newel, with sinuous stringers.

# 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 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input 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 1859-61

BUILDER/ARCHITECT Unknown

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

This substantial yet elegant residence, located near the center of downtown Owensboro, was begun in 1859 and completed in 1861 for Major Hampden Smith. Major Smith, a prominent Owensboro citizen, was a respected tobacco merchant, and stock holder and director of the Deposit Bank of Owensboro. The house, in remarkably intact condition, is an outstanding example of Greek Revival architecture with the Italianate influence which became popular just before the Civil War.

John Hampden Smith, born in Richmond, Virginia, in January 1810, was the son of Peter Field Smith and Mary Turpin Smith. Peter Smith and his wife moved to Owensboro, Kentucky, in 1835. Here he established a tobacco stemming plant, being the first to do so in the area (tobacco is stripped of its stems prior to drying and fermentation). Two years later Hampden Smith joined his parents in Owensboro and worked with his father in his thriving tobacco business. In 1839 the log warehouse, which was filled with 600,000 to 700,000 pounds of tobacco, burned to the ground. Peter Smith lost \$50,000 as a result of the catastrophe, and was never able to recover his loss.

After the death of his father in 1844, Hampden Smith moved to nearby Yelvington, Daviess County, Kentucky where he married Elizabeth Hawes, daughter of Samuel Hawes. Hawes was the first merchant in Yelvington, having opened his business prior to 1830. A year later Smith returned to Owensboro and worked for D. B. Harris and A. B. Barret in the tobacco stemming business. At this time A. B. Barret (1811-1861) was considered the most extensive tobacco merchant in the world, having established branch stemmeries in Henderson, Louisville, Owensboro, Cloverport, and other areas in Kentucky. Most of the tobacco produced was sold in England (Armstrong (1878), p. 157; see also the National Register nomination form on Barret's house in Henderson, approved at the state level on March 25, 1975).

It was between 1859 and 1861 while Smith was employed by Harris and Barret that he constructed his mansion on Frederica Street that was to become a showplace of Owensboro. Also at this period Smith took an active interest in the organization of the Deposit Bank of Owensboro, which was established October 1860. Major Smith served as a director of the bank, as well as being a large stock holder. In the Daviess County Gazetteer-Owensboro Family Directory 1891-92, the Deposit Bank is described "as being one of the strongest financial concerns of Kentucky" (Potter (1974), p. 159).

(continued)

**9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

Anonymous. History of Daviess County, Kentucky. Chicago: Inter-State Publishing Co.,1883.  
Axton, W. F. Tobacco and Kentucky. Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky  
(Kentucky Bicentennial Bookshelf), 1975.  
The Biographical Encyclopedia of Kentucky of the Dead and Living Men of the Nineteenth  
Century. Cincinnati: J. M. Armstrong & Co., 1878, pp. 157-158.

(continued)

**10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY One-half acre

UTM REFERENCES

A | 16 | 490100 | 4179700 |  
ZONE EASTING NORTHING  
C | | | | |

B | | | | | | | |  
ZONE EASTING NORTHING  
D | | | | | | | |

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE CODE COUNTY CODE

STATE CODE COUNTY CODE

**11 FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME / TITLE

Tony Rinaldo, Planning Director, and Phil Altman, Planner

WEL:MC

ORGANIZATION

Green River Area Development District

DATE

September 26, 1975

STREET & NUMBER

311 West Second Street, P. O. Box 628

TELEPHONE

CITY OR TOWN

Owensboro

STATE

Kentucky

**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

*Edred W. Melton*

TITLE State Historic Preservation Officer

DATE

*3/16/76*

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

*9/28/76*

Attesting DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST:

DATE

*9/27/76*

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
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Major Hampden Smith House

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 2

In 1867 Smith entered into partnership in the tobacco stemming industry with A. B. Barret's brother, John Henry, an equally successful businessman. Three-fourths of all their tobacco was shipped to England. The partnership ended in 1871, when Smith withdrew and built his own warehouse. Major Smith retired from the tobacco business after three years, turning it over to his son, Peter S. Smith, and his son-in-law, Joseph Fuqua.

According to W. F. Axton in his recent study of Tobacco and Kentucky, Daviess and the adjacent Henderson Counties, along with Christian and Todd south of them on the Tennessee border, were the leading tobacco-producing counties in Kentucky in 1850, producing over 3,000,000 pounds per annum. They were the focal points for the entire western half of the State (where more than two dozen counties produced over a million pounds a year each at mid-century) because of the ease of access for the heavily loaded hogsheads of tobacco to the Ohio, Tennessee, Green, and Cumberland rivers, denied to relatively landlocked central and eastern Kentucky. The deep, broad streams in the west were more favorable for the transportation of tobacco than the narrow, swift rivers to the east. By 1860, the year Major Smith built his mansion, all but one of the major tobacco-growing counties in the State were in the western portion: of the State's total of 108 million pounds, over 98 million pounds were raised in the forty-two westernmost counties, according to Axton.

The tobacco market in western Kentucky was further supported by the upsurge in settlement of the area in the first half of the century, especially by farmers who looked to tobacco as their basic cash crop; by the worldwide spread of a taste for tobacco, particularly after the end of the Napoleonic Wars in 1815 reopened the European market to the United States; and by the development of a variety of types of tobacco (such as the dark-fired burley of south-central Kentucky) to cater to the preferences of foreign nationalities as well as immigrants in this country.

Tobacco processing, manufacturing, storage, and shipment also expanded along with production, of course, and followed the movement from central toward western Kentucky in the years before and after the Civil War. According to Collins writing in 1874, for instance, there were 15 stemmeries in Owensboro which annually prepared more than 7 million pounds of tobacco for market, principally for export to Europe. Thus, Smith and his associates were participating in a booming business, one which in its various manifestations proved the basis of western Kentucky's economy during much of the 19th century. (See Map 1 for a vivid illustration of the role of the tobacco industry in Owensboro in 1881.)

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ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 3

Major Smith's first wife died and he remarried. His second wife, Hettie Raphael, a native of Ireland, was a well-known teacher in Owensboro. Their daughter, Eleanor Raphael Smith, married Joseph A. Fuqua, a native of Virginia, in 1874. Fuqua came to Owensboro in 1869 and worked as a clerk in a tobacco warehouse. In 1879 he entered into partnership with his father-in-law. At this time he also bought an interest in a distillery and grocery business. Joseph and Eleanor Fuqua's daughter, Jean Raphael Fuqua, born in 1879, married John Crepps Wickliffe Beckham, governor of Kentucky (1900-1907) in November 1900.

The house remains in the Smith family to this time.

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Major Hampden Smith House

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 9

PAGE 2

Collins, Lewis and Richard H. History of Kentucky. 2 Vols., Maysville, 1874.

An Illustrated Historical Atlas Map of Daviess County, Kentucky. Chicago: Leo McDonough & Co., 1876.

Handy, Riley. "Some Historic Architecture of Western Kentucky." The Magazine Antiques, CV, 3 (March 1974), pp. 584-85.

Additional information from Mrs. David Orrahood, Owensboro.

# OHIO

# RIVER



**ORIGINAL TOWN**

**ROSS & WARD**

**MAY'S UPPER**

**J.H. Smith**

**J.H.McFarland 10 ac.**

**L.P. Little 8 ac.**

**M.F. Smith 1/2 a.**

**W.N. Sweeney 15 ac.**

**SUBDIVISION**

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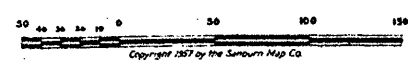
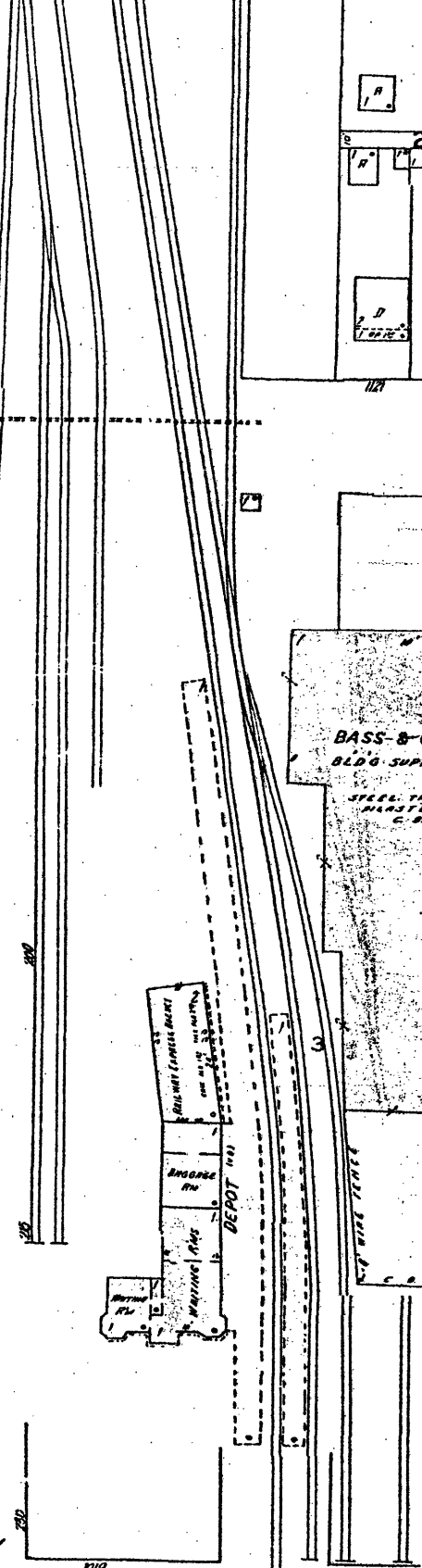
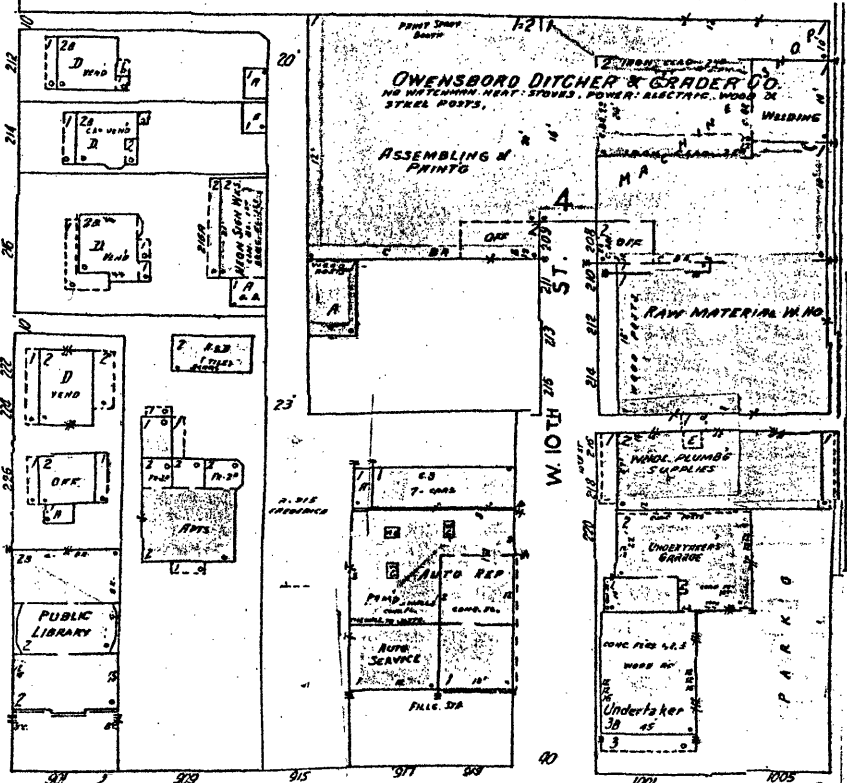
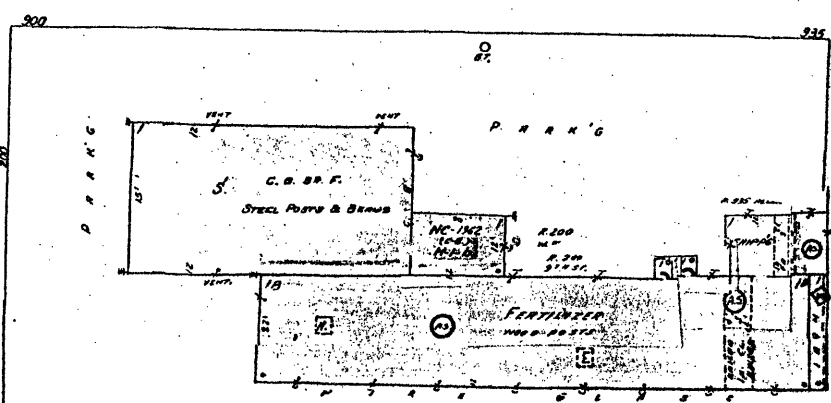
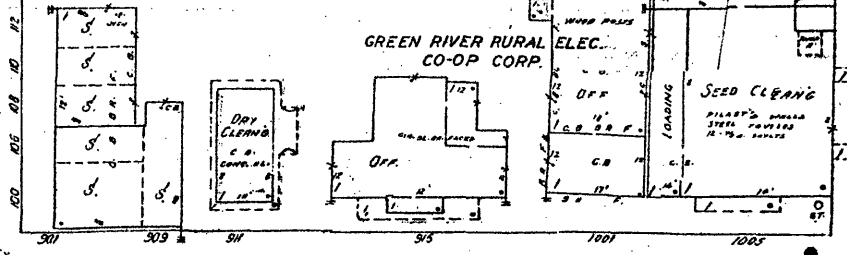
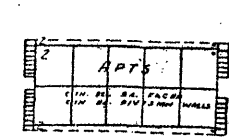
W. 9TH ST.

ALLEN

FREDERICA

FREDERICK COURT

W. 11TH ST.



39