

Dr. Allison Smith Dental Office & Residence

284 – 6 St. S.E.

*Historical Address: 722 Highland*

Date of Construction: 1911

Lot 10

Block 88

Plan 636

#### Historical Permit Information:

Permit #53      March 29, 1911      Est. cost: \$3800, House 2 ½ story, 25' x 38'      Builder: Dr. A. Smith

Permit #52      March 29, 1911      Est. cost: \$500, Stable Lot 11

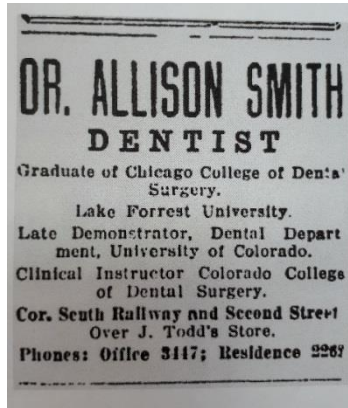
Around 1911, rancher/dentist, Dr. Allison Smith purchased 2 lots on 6<sup>th</sup> St. S.E., then known as Highland St. He built his home on Lot 10 and a stable on Lot 11. At some point in time, the property was subdivided as today a house currently sits on Lot 11, now 246 – 6 St. S.E. These two properties are about a block east of the Hill Safeway store.

Dr. Allison Smith was born near Stratford, ON, Dec. 30, 1873. He was the son of Abram B. Smith and Eliza Cunningham Smith. He had one brother William and three sisters, Annie, Hattie and Eliza. Allison's grandparents were Thomas and Matilda Smith, Irish immigrants who came to Canada in 1834. Allison received his degree in dentistry in 1899 at the Chicago College of Dental Surgery. He received his post-graduate work in dentistry in Denver, CO. His first practise was in Winnipeg. He and his younger brother William Cunningham Smith, also a trained dentist, practised in Colorado for a couple of years, then returned to Canada. According to brother William, the boys "bought a buckboard and a team of horses and set out on the thousand-mile odd trek to Winnipeg, stopping along the way to practice our profession." The travelling dentist was common in those days.

After returning to Canada, Allison practised dentistry in Prince Albert where he met Margaret (Gertrude) Maveety, the daughter of John D. Maveety, the owner and editor of the Prince Albert Times. Allison and Gertrude were married on Feb. 6, 1901. Brother William joined the Second Canadian Mounted Rifles and saw combat during the Boer War. In 1903, Allison and Gertrude left Prince Albert, arriving in the Medicine Hat area. Allison and brother William established homesteads between Chappice Lake and Rush lakes in the NWT (between Medicine Hat and Shuler) and with another homesteader, Thomas Lokier, took up stock raising. They raised Herefords, Clydesdales, and a few thoroughbred race horses. The brothers convinced their parents and their 3 sisters to move West and join them. Sister Eliza married Thomas Lokier.

Ranching was difficult in this arid part of Alberta. Famous cloud seeder Charles Hatfield was hired to bring rain to Chappice Lake in 1921. *Charles Hatfield's story inspired the 1956 Burt Lancaster movie "The Rainmaker"*. Although Allison built the Highland St. home in the City in 1911, he continued to ranch at Chappice Lake. From 1911 to 1922, the house is listed as both Dr. Allison Smith's personal residence and place of business. In 1922, Smith gave up ranching altogether in this harsh country and set up a permanent dentistry practise at 667-2 St., the Hargrave Sissons block (today "Inspire") where he maintained a business until 1933.

Medicine Hat News: Apr. 12, 1923



From 1934-1948 the business operated from the Huckvale Block (today the “Assiniboia Inn”). Smith retired in 1949.

Dr. Allison and Gertrude Smith celebrated their fiftieth wedding anniversary in their home at 284 – 6<sup>th</sup> St. S.E. on Feb. 6, 1951.



Dr. Allison and Gertrude Smith Feb. 6, 1951  
Courtesy Esplanade Archives #1943

The couple raised 5 children in the house; Cecil, who trained as a dentist, Gertrude, who trained as a lawyer, Phyllis, Patricia and Lorraine. Dr. Allison Smith died on Feb. 23, 1957. Wife Gertrude remained in the house until 1965, having lived in the residence for 5 years.



284 – 6 St. S.E. February 2018

*Heritage Resources Committee  
Prepared by Sally Sehn, July 26, 2018  
Sources: Esplanade Archives, MH News*