

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

For NPS use only

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

received 29 1985  
date entered JAN 16 1986

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

**1. Name**

historic Thomas Brown House

and or common

**2. Location**

On the west side of Berkeley County Route #30, 2.2 miles north of the street & number intersection with W.Va. State Route #51. \_\_\_ not for publication

city, town Inwood  vicinity of

state West Virginia code 54 county Berkeley code 003

**3. Classification**

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture <input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial <input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment <input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government <input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial <input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military <input type="checkbox"/> other:

**4. Owner of Property**

name Mr. and Mrs. David C. Butler

street & number Route #1, Box 388

city, town Inwood  vicinity of state West Virginia

**5. Location of Legal Description**

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Berkeley County Courthouse

street & number 100 West King Street

city, town Martinsburg state West Virginia

**6. Representation in Existing Surveys**

T-77 Berkeley County Historic  
title Landmarks Commission Survey has this property been determined eligible? \_\_\_ yes  no

date July 1984 \_\_\_ federal \_\_\_ state  county \_\_\_ local

depository for survey records Berkeley County Courthouse

city, town Martinsburg state West Virginia

## 7. Description

### Condition

excellent  
 good  
 fair

deteriorated  
 ruins  
 unexposed

### Check one

unaltered  
 altered

### Check one

original site  
 moved

date N/A

### Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Thomas Brown House is located on Berkeley County Route #30, 2.2 miles north of the intersection with West Virginia State Route #51. It is situated on the west side of the road on Middle Creek nestled in tall trees and shrubbery. The house faces south, with the gable end toward the road.

Built of large sixteen and seventeen inch logs hewn on two sides with "V" notching, the one-and-a-half story dwelling house consists of a three bay central block with two bay symmetrical wings of lower elevation. Measurements are central block twenty-three by twenty-nine feet, original log west wing sixteen feet by twenty-one feet, and new frame east wing sixteen feet by twenty feet. The central block has two large stone chimneys, one single flue interior across the southeast corner and another centered on the west gable that serves three fireplaces, one in the west wing and two in the central part. The windows are 6/6 early pegged double hung sash with eyebrow casement sash on the second floor and in the frame wing. The second floor windows were installed in 1825. The date is cut into the sill and is well worn.

Purchased by the Butlers in 1983, the house was in ruinous condition. The late 19th century novelty siding had termites and because of a poor roof, moisture had rotted some of the logs. The siding was removed and replaced with plain weatherboard with corner boards, and the few rotted logs were replaced with old ones from another log outbuilding that had fallen down. Across the front is a three bay, one story shed roofed porch and a one story recessed porch with pantry on the west wing. These are restorations; the old porches were in very poor condition. The house has a newish appearance because of the new weatherboarding. It is to be painted next year, after a year's seasoning.

The entrance doors to the central block are original and are Indian doors, raised six panel on the exterior side reinforced with beaded boards on the interior. Hardware includes decorative early iron Suffolk latches, HL hinges, strap hinges on pintles, and butt hinges. Doors to the wing are board-and-batten. The south entrance door has its original wooden lift latch and cannot be opened outside without a string, an exceptional feature.

The wings both have one room down and one room up. The original wing has only a hole cut in the floor that probably had a trap door and access is by ladder only. The central section has two rooms down, each with a stone fireplace, and all interior partition walls are made of vertical, hand planed, beaded boards. The interior doors are all board-and-batten,

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and most are made of only three boards and one is made of only two wide beaded boards (full size door). These are all exceptional doors. The second floor is divided into three rooms with board walls, board-and-batten doors, and some board ceilings. There is one fireplace on the south gable wall in the large bedroom.

Only one fireplace in the house has a mantel and that is located in the ground floor parlor room of the central section. It has plain beaded stiles and frieze with a decorative molding along the outer edge and under the narrow shelf. A chair rail also is only in this room. The enclosed winder staircase enters from the parlor and this is also the only plastered room. All the others are of chinked logs and all the fireboxes are stone, as is the foundation. Ceiling joists are exposed and have rough chamfered edges to reduce the risk of fire from splinters. There are gun ports in both the south front facade and north rear facade, a very distinctive feature.

Outbuildings include a log meat house covered with later board-and-batten vertical siding, a stone springhouse reveted into a knoll and facing the stream, and a shed roofed frame privy. All buildings are in very good condition. The complementary addition to the house was necessary in order to accommodate a four member household and still preserve the old house, which has been done very well.

# 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 checked="" 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/
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900–	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

**Specific dates**      1741                      **Builder/Architect**    Thomas Brown

**Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)**

The Thomas Brown House is historically significant for its associations with the Brown family, an early, 1741 pioneer family who settled in Berkeley County. It is architecturally significant for being a rare survivor of a true, one-and-a-half story log pioneer home. It is the earliest known dwelling house in Berkeley County in good condition. However, it predates the Gerrard House Museum by only two years. It is basically unchanged except for new siding and the addition of a wing on the east side.

In 1722, according to the Buckingham Township, Pennsylvania, Poor Tax List, Thomas Brown was a bachelor and lived with Jacob Holcombe. Thomas married in 1723 and moved to present Berkeley County in 1741. The Browns were Quakers and so had to transfer their membership from the Buckingham Friends Society to the Hopewell Friends Society, here in (then) Virginia. Approval for this was given in February 1741. One of Brown's contributions to Berkeley County was in his early development of orchards and fruit tree nurseries in an area later to become known as "Apple Pie Ridge." Orchardry today is one of the leading industries of the area.

Thomas Brown acquired approximately 1,200 acres on Mill Creek, and according to his will, probated in 1750, left, among other provisions, his log dwelling house and sixty acres to his wife Ruth, who was to dispose of the orchard crop and nursery trees as she saw fit, which provided for her very well. Brown had not acquired final title to the land. A survey by John Baylis was made August 29, 1752, for 1,056 acres in the names of Samuel, Thomas, and Joseph Brown (all sons). This was granted in November. Brown also owned a separate two hundred acre parcel which he bequeathed to his son William, who lived there. Ruth Brown with her sons Thomas and Samuel sold their final share of the estate, 628 acres, in 1753 and moved to Cane Creek, North Carolina. Joseph Brown had kept 428 acres which included the log house. He sold to Thomas Ellis in 1766. Ruth Brown became a member of Cane Creek Quaker Meeting House in 1753 and died in 1763.

There were other prominent owners of this farm, among them Ellis Rees who lived here from 1790 to 1820, although he owned it longer. Rees also owned the stone built Bunker Hill Mill. He farmed this farm, the David Rees Farm (National Register 1983), and others with his brothers who had a co-op arrangement and the family became very wealthy. Ellis Rees, in later years, became a philanthropist who was very well known in the

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

Bucks County Courthouse Records, Doylestown, Pa.  
Berkeley County Courthouse Records, Martinsburg, W.V., including Original Survey and Land Grants, Richmond, Va. (copies in Martinsburg Courthouse)  
Frederick County, Va. Records, microfilm, Courthouse, Martinsburg, W.V.  
Henshaw, American Quaker Genealogy of N. C., Gen. Pub. Co., Baltimore, Md.

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property 1 acre

Quadrangle name Tablers Station

Quadrangle scale 1 : 24,000

UTM References

A 

1	7	7	5	4	1	6	0	4	3	6	4	4	9	0
Zone		Easting				Northing								

B 

Zone		Easting				Northing								

C 

Zone		Easting				Northing								

D 

Zone		Easting				Northing								

E 

Zone		Easting				Northing								

F 

Zone		Easting				Northing								

G 

Zone		Easting				Northing								

H 

Zone		Easting				Northing								

**Verbal boundary description and justification** Nominated area is the entire property, bounded on the north by a fence, east by the road, south by the south side of the driveway, and west by Middle Creek (See map). Property is shown as the red line on the survey map and is recorded in BCDeed Book 368, p.502.

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

state	code	county	code
N/A			

state	code	county	code
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## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Frances D. Ruth, Administrator

organization Berkeley County Historic Landmarks Commission

date September 30, 1984

street & number Route 2, Box 320

telephone (304) 754-7097

city or town Martinsburg

state West Virginia

## 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 State Historic Preservation Officer

date May 2, 1985

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

date 1/16/86

  
Keeper of the National Register

date

Attest:

Chief of Registration

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county for helping poor people through charitable gifts of money, food, and grain. His lengthy obituary in the Martinsburg Gazette, 1845, describes him in saintly terms.

For nearly a hundred years, this small dwelling house was used as the tenant house on the 400+ acre farm and thereby escaped Victorian remuddling. Vacant for many years, it was purchased by the Butlers in 1983 who recognized its log cabin distinctions. The building had termites and several rotten logs were replaced. The novelty siding was removed and replaced with weatherboarding.

Built in 1741, the Thomas Brown House is an important example of an early (1730 - 1760) permanent settler dwelling in Berkeley County. The earliest, the Morgan Morgan Cabin, was constructed ca. 1730 but is now a reconstruction and must be termed an historical building instead of an historic one. The Thomas Brown House has survived, two hundred and forty-three years, virtually intact. The log wing may have been a later addition, but is none-the-less an early attachment. The new wing, of like size to the other was necessary in order to preserve the old house. There is no basement, so furnace, water heater, etc. are hidden in a large closet in the new wing. None of the rooms in the old house were repartitioned so the early floor plan survives. The two large stone chimneys and four stone fireboxes are all here. This is an interesting house with chamfered ceiling joists, all exposed, some early hardware, and marvelous original doors. Hand work is obvious everywhere. Also, the house is built like a fort, of huge hewn logs, on a stream for availability of water, and has gun ports placed high in both the north and south walls for shooting down. There were known Indian raids in the area.

The Thomas Brown House is significant for being the earliest known dwelling house in Berkeley County. It stands intact, with little alteration, and represents that era of special and brave people who risked their lives to settle and make their homes on the frontier.

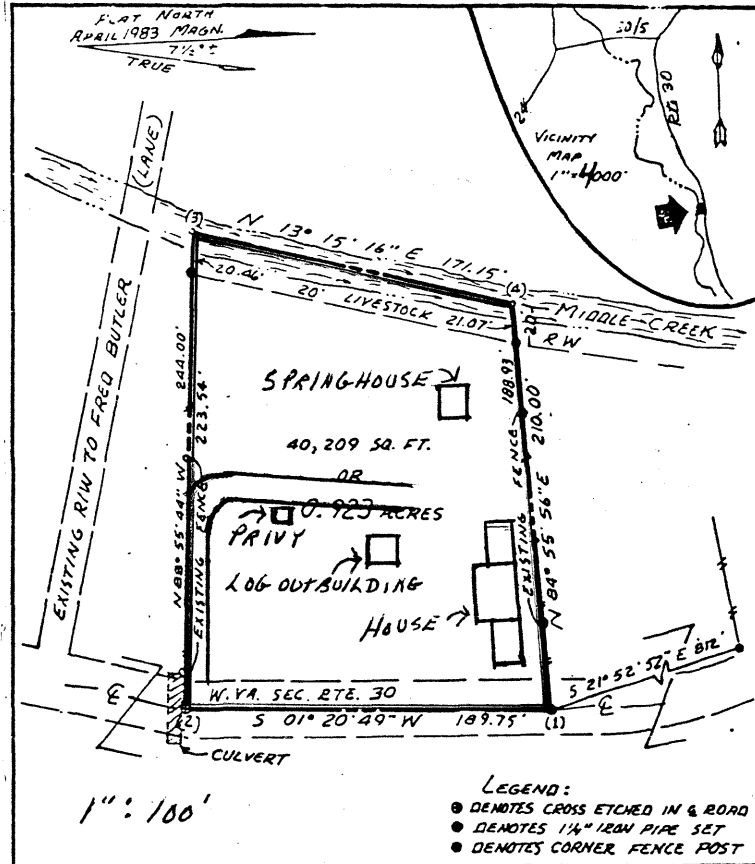
THOMAS BROWN HOUSE

Tablers Station Quadrangle

T-77

SURVEY\*

Area 1 acre



\*Survey done by G.V. Hafer, Surveying and Engineering, 700 East Moler Avenue, Martinsburg, WV 25401. Recorded in Deed Book 368, p. 502, Berkeley County Courthouse, Martinsburg, WV, May 1983.