

**United States Department of the Interior  
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**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 THORNEWOOD

and/or common

**2. Location**

Manor House: 8601 North Thorne Lane S.W.  
street & number Carriage House: 4 Thorne Wood Lane S.W. not for publication  
Gatehouse: 8307 North Thorne Lane S.W.  
city, town Tacoma vicinity of congressional district 6th - Norm Dicks  
state Washington code 053 county Pierce code 053

**3. Classification**

<b>Category</b>	<b>Ownership</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Present Use</b>
<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 type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government <input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input 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 See continuation sheet

street & number

city, town vicinity of state

**5. Location of Legal Description**

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Pierce County Assessors Office

street & number 2401 South 35th Street

city, town Tacoma state Washington 98409

**6. Representation in Existing Surveys**

Washington State Cultural Resource  
title Survey: Pierce County has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date November, 1980  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation

city, town Olympia state Washington 98504

## 7. Description

<b>Condition</b>		<b>Check one</b>	<b>Check one</b>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved    date _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

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

Thornewood stands on the southeastern shore of American Lake, one of several lakes in the glacial prairie south of Tacoma, Washington. The 100-acre estate was designed by the nationally known architect Kirtland Kelsey Cutter in collaboration with the Olmsted Brothers, between 1909 and 1911. The property originally included three major structures, extensive gardens and landscaping, both formal and picturesque, and sweeping lawns with views of Mount Rainier to the east and American Lake to the northwest.

When Mrs. Chester Thorne died in 1957, Thornewood was sold and subdivided. The famed gardens were not maintained after that time, and hence have been excluded from this nomination. Included in the nomination are the three major Kirtland Cutter buildings--the manor house, the gatehouse, and the carriage house--which remain intact on three non-contiguous parcels of land. Modern housing has grown up around and within the perimeter of the original estate. Although much vegetation remains in place, and the large new homes are not unattractive, the integrity of the Olmsted-designed grounds as a whole has been lost.

The manor house was sold with three acres of grounds; therefore, the approach from the east with Mount Rainier in the background, over rolling lawns with native shrubs, and the approach from the west sloping down to American Lake remain essentially the same. The two and one-half story red brick residence is a basic rectangle in plan. Its eclectic neo-Elizabethan design is defined by one source on English manor house architecture as the "Tudor Gothic" style. The steeply pitched red tile roof is broken by three large cross gables on each of the two major facades. The northeast and southwest gable ends are finished with Tudor half-timbering. A series of ornate chimneys also interrupt the roofline. One is a clustered, Jacobean type, and the rest are paired with high, decorative terra-cotta chimney pots. Unity is achieved along the length of each long facade by crenellated parapets and by the stepped gable effect of inset sandstone within each major gable. All of the sandstone used in door and window surrounds, casings and mullions, and facings on oriel and bay windows is of local origin, supplied by the Wilkeson Cut Stone Company (National Register, 1976). All windows within the varied fenestration system are leaded. In England, Chester Thorne purchased a collection of period stained and painted glass medallions of various sizes which Cutter set into the leading at Thornewood. The interior of the forty room manor house has been sensitively divided into six apartments, leaving the exterior unchanged. Like its English predecessors, the manor house owes the success of its design as a whole both to the quality of its masonry and to the picturesque but carefully balanced irregularity of its various components.

The gatehouse is located at the original entrance to the estate on North Thorne Lane to the east and slightly south of the manor house. The exterior of the gatehouse, like the manor house, is essentially unchanged. Clad with brick and roofed with tiles, this cottage echoes many of the design elements of the great house on a reduced scale. Half-timbering and juxtaposed large and small gables are employed. Window casings and mullions are of wood with keystones of Wilkeson sandstone. Copings and various decorative details are also of sandstone. The relationship of the gatehouse to the manor house is particularly apparent in the massing of forms and in the quality of balanced irregularity.

The carriage house is situated west of the gatehouse and southwest of the manor house. Whereas Cutter's use of half-timbering was underplayed in the manor and gatehouse, in his design for the carriage house the motif is prominent. Here the half-timbering begins at the eaves line and fills the gables. The carriage house was made into a duplex many years

## 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/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" 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)

<b>Specific dates</b>	1909-1911	<b>Builder/Architect</b>	Kirtland Cutter, architect
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### Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

Thornewood, the one hundred-acre country estate of Tacoma financier and industrialist Chester Thorne, was designed and built by noted architect Kirtland Kelsey Cutter on American Lake in Tacoma, Washington, between 1909 and 1911. The grand manor house, the gatehouse and the carriage house remain standing today. Together they represent an unusual architectural assemblage, a rare example of an early 20th century English manor in the Pacific Northwest. In Mrs. Thorne's lifetime the grounds of the estate boasted extensive gardens, "one of the most beautiful gardens in America" (Horticulture, March, 1931), and a landscape laid out by the Olmsted Brothers of Brookline, Massachusetts. Today, unfortunately, the grounds have been subdivided and the gardens allowed to deteriorate, so that the landscape is no longer a significant feature of the property. Chester Thorne himself was associated over the years with many financial commercial and industrial interests which contributed to the development of Tacoma. After his death Thorne was officially recognized by Tacoma's Chamber of Commerce as one of the city's great builders.

Chester Thorne was born in New York to Edwin Thorne and Charlotte Pearsall, both of English ancestry, on November 11, 1863. For five years following his graduation from Yale University in 1884, Thorne worked in the engineering and traffic departments of the Missouri Pacific Railway Company whose headquarters were in St. Louis. In May, 1890, Chester Thorne arrived in Tacoma and became director of the National Bank of Commerce. This was at the peak of a building boom that had started in the city of 1887-1888 after the Northern Pacific Railroad had completed its trans-continental line from St. Paul, Minnesota, to Tacoma, its west coast terminus. Three years later Thorne was elected president of the bank in the hopes that he could raise the money needed to keep the bank solvent after the national depression of 1893. Through his efforts the National Bank of Commerce was one of the few Tacoma banks to survive the depression of 1893.

In 1913, the National Bank of Commerce was consolidated with the Pacific National Bank and became the National Bank of Tacoma. Thorne resigned his presidency and became chairman of the board of directors. He was also associated with the Pacific Coast Cold Storage Company, Pacific Coast Gypsum Company, Alaska Coast Company, Tacoma Savings Bank and Trust Company, Pacific Alaska Navigation Company, and Pacific Steamship Company. Through his recommendations local businesses received financial assistance from east coast investors. He was also associated with the development of the Pacific Northwest lumber industry and the reclamation of logged-off lands.

Thorne's primary interest was that Tacoma become a great city. To achieve this goal he assisted in the development and financing of the Rainier National Park Company, and was active in the establishment of Fort Lewis during World War I. Between 1920 and 1927, he was elected to four consecutive terms as chairman of the Tacoma Port Commissioners, the only public office Thorne held. He has been called the "Father of the Port of Tacoma." He served for twenty-five years as a member of the board of trustees for the Tacoma General Hospital, and was a charter member of the Pierce County Social Hygiene Society, a group which provided gifts to the poor and needy.

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

Hunt, Herbert. Tacoma-Its History and Its Builders. Chicago, S.J. Clarke Publishing, 1916.  
 National Bank of Tacoma. "Appreciation of Chester Thorne at the Time of His Death," n.p.,  
 n.d.  
 Nicolson, Nigel. Great Houses of Britain. Boston, Godine, 1978.

ACREAGE NOT VERIFIED  
 UTM NOT VERIFIED

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property each parcel less than one

Quadrangle name Steilacoom

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

### UMT References

A	1 0	5 3 4 1 1 0	5 2 1 9 5 6 0	B	1 0	5 3 4 0 4 0	5 2 1 9 4 6 0
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
C	1 0	5 3 4 5 0 0	5 2 1 9 3 9 0	D			
E				F			
G				H			

### Verbal boundary description and justification

A-Manor House: Lot 16 of Thornewood Addition (Parcel No. 906500-016-0) in T19N, R2E, Sec. 16.  
 B-Carriage House: Lot 4 of Thornewood Addition (Parcel No. 906500-004-0) in T19N, R2E, Sec. 16.  
 C-Gatehouse: Lot 073 of T19N, R2E, Sec. 15.

### 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 Patricia A. Sias and Caroline Gallacci

Edited by F.K. Lentz  
 OAHF, Olympia, WA 98504

organization Office of Historic Preservation

date December 31, 1980

street & number 704 St. Helens - 10th Floor

telephone (206) 593-4960

city or town Tacoma

state Washington 98402

## 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 Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

title Jacob E. Thom

date 2/1/82

For HCRRS use only  
 I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

date 3/18/82

Keeper of the National Register

date 3-18-82

Attest: Emma Jane Saxe

Chief of Registration

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Manor House: Mr. and Mrs. Perry Palmer  
8601 North Thorne Lane S.W.  
Tacoma, WA 98498

Carriage House: Mr. John T. Mason  
4 Thornewood Lane S.W.  
Tacoma, WA 98498

Gatehouse: Mr. and Mrs. Donald Dietz  
8307 North Thorne Lane S.W.  
Tacoma, WA 98498

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ago. The present owner has returned the house to a single family dwelling and plans to remove exterior intrusions such as the porch across the front facade as part of the restoration work. The large entrance door designed for carriages and automobiles is now a leaded glass window.

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In 1911, Chester Thorne and his wife moved to Thornewood on American Lake. The estate was one of two designed by Kirtland Cutter in the Tacoma area. The second, known as Villa Carman or Madera on Gravelly Lake, was completed in 1919 for Joseph L. Carman, founder of Carman Manufacturing Company. Both were located in the Lakes District south of Tacoma and thus influenced the development of this area as a prime residential district for the families of prosperous businessmen.

Thornewood's gardens and picturesque buildings gained wide reknown. The estate was visited at the height of its development in 1930 by members of the Garden Club of America, then meeting locally in Seattle. The group described the gardens as "simple perfection," an example of "the perfect consummation of the ideal garden...not too large, not too elaborate..." Against a backdrop of towering Douglas firs, the heavy lines and massing of the neo-Elizabethan manor house set a formal tone that was accentuated by elegant garden "rooms" with ponds and fountains, sculpture and garden furniture. A carriage house or garage, and a gatehouse or lodge echoed the materials and massing of the much grander "Tudor Gothic" manor house. Although the grounds have been disrupted by the construction of modern housing, the original buildings of Thornewood still express a unity of fine design and craftsmanship characteristic of fashionable early 20th century country estates.

Kirtland Kelsey Cutter was born in Cleveland, Ohio, on August 20, 1860. After early schooling at Brooks Military Academy in Cleveland, Cutter enrolled at the Art Student's League in New York. There he studied under Kenyon Cox. He traveled for five years in Europe where he studied drawing, painting, sculpture and tapestry. While in Europe he met Austin Corbin, a successful railroad man who lived in Spokane, Washington. The friendship which developed between these two men contributed to Cutter's decision to move to the Pacific Northwest. In 1886, he moved to Spokane where his uncle, Horace Cutter, who was president of the First National Bank, gave the young architect his first job as a bank clerk.

In 1889, Spokane suffered a disastrous fire which destroyed thirty-two developed blocks. During the rebuilding of Spokane, Cutter made his reputation designing residences for the city's wealthier citizens. The design which established Cutter's reputation beyond regional bounds was the Idaho State Building at the World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago in 1893. This design was admired for its "indigenous" quality and Cutter was awarded a gold medal for his use of building materials native to the region.

Early in his career Cutter worked in association with John C. Poetz, co-designer of the Idaho State Building. The partnership terminated in 1894. Subsequently Cutter formed a partnership with K.C. Malmgren, former draftsman in the Cutter and Poetz office. In 1906, the partners moved to Seattle, but returned to Spokane two years later. Cutter and Malmgren remained partners until 1914. Henry C. Bertelson, who joined the firm in 1909, remained until 1923, when Cutter moved to California. The Southern California Chapter of the American Institute of Architects presented Cutter with an award for exceptional work done between 1927 and 1929 in the Palos Verdes district near Long Beach. He died at Long Beach, California, on September 26, 1939.

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Cutter's work is found throughout the Pacific Northwest. In Spokane, where he is recognized as the most influential local architect, his buildings included the Davenport Hotel, the Spokane County Courthouse and the Chronicle Building. Residences include those for the Corbin, Campbell, Clark, and Glover families. He designed the Rainier Club and the Seattle Country Club in Seattle, the Glacier National Park Hotel at Lake McDonald, Montana, and St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Walla Walla, Washington. That his influence transcended the region is exemplified by Kirtland Hall (Sheffield Scientific School) on the Yale University campus which Cutter designed in 1902. Cutter was also asked by Mrs. Andrew Carnegie to design a group of camp buildings in the Adirondack Mountains at Racquet Lake.

At Thornewood, Cutter worked closely with the Olmsted Brothers, landscape architects, who may have also designed the gardens at Villa Carman. Thornewood, with its magnificent gardens and great house, became a popular landmark for Pierce County citizens. Presidents Theodore Roosevelt and Warren G. Harding were guests there; and Thorne, who counted as his friends people from all social and economic classes, freely allowed the public to view his gardens.

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Plumb, Chuck. "Spokane's K.K. Cutter, Architect Who 'Rebuilt' City." Spokesman-Review, October 23, 1962.

Tacoma News Tribune and Tacoma Daily Ledger. Chester Thorne obituaries, October 17, 1927.

Vaughan, Thomas, ed. Space, Style and Architecture: Building in Northwest America, Vol. II. Portland, Oregon, Oregon Historical Society, 1974.