

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service



NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM

NATIONAL
REGISTER

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1. Name of Property

=====

historic name: David W. Thomas House

other name/site number: CRS# N-6237

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2. Location

=====

street & number: 326 Thomas Landing Road

not for publication: N/A

city/town: Odessa, Appoquininmink Hundred

vicinity: X

state: DE county: New Castle

code: 003

zip code: 19709

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3. Classification

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Ownership of Property: private

Category of Property: building

Number of Resources within Property:

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	buildings
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	sites
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	structures
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	objects
<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: 0

Name of related multiple property listing: Dwellings of the Rural Elite in Central Delaware, 1770-1830 +/-

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4. State/Federal Agency Certification
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As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this X 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 X meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. See continuation sheet.

Daniel P. [Signature] 7/24/92
Signature of certifying official Date

Division of Historical and Cultural Affairs
State or Federal agency and bureau

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

Signature of commenting or other official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

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5. National Park Service Certification
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I, hereby certify that this property is:

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

Guy M. Papsley 9/11/92

Signature of Keeper Date of Action

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National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

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David W. Thomas House, N-6237

In my opinion, the property meets/ does not meet
the National Register criteria.



Dennis Greenhouse
County Executive
New Castle County
Delaware

7/11/89

Date

=====
6. Function or Use
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Historic: Domestic Sub: single family
Secondary domestic building

Current : Domestic Sub: single family
Secondary domestic building

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7. Description
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Architectural Classification:

Early Republic/Federal

Other Description: _____

Materials: foundation Brick roof Asphalt
walls Brick other Wood

Describe present and historic physical appearance. X See continuation sheet.

The David Wilson Thomas House is located in Appoquinimink Hundred, New Castle County, southeast of Odessa at 440 Thomas Landing Road. A dwelling, an icehouse, garage, sheds, and a barn are located on the edge of 143 acres of cultivated farmland. A nineteenth-century icehouse on the property is eligible for the National Register and is included in this nomination. Built about 1820, the Thomas house is a two-story, three-bay, gable-roofed brick building with an interior brick chimney pile in either gable end. A contemporary kitchen wing abuts the eastern gable end. A twentieth-century laundry room was added against the eastern wall of the kitchen wing.

The house measures 32' x 19' and is built on a hall-parlor plan. It stands on a brick foundation above a cellar and is capped with a coursed composition shingle roof. The exterior walls are clad in modern aluminum siding with ornamental aluminum shutters affixed by each window, replacing the original shutters of the house (some shutter pins still survive). The north or front elevation is symmetrically fenestrated with a three-bay arrangement including two double-hung windows and a centrally-placed door on the ground floor. A section of siding missing at the second-floor level reveals the plain flemish bond brickwork with thick joints underneath. Brick steps built in the mid-twentieth century lead up to the front door.

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8. Statement of Significance
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Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties: locally

Applicable National Register Criteria: A and C

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) : _____

Areas of Significance: Architecture
Social History

Period(s) of Significance: 1820-1830 +/-

Significant Dates : _____

Significant Person(s): N/A

Cultural Affiliation: N/A

Architect/Builder: Unknown

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.
X See continuation sheet.

The David Wilson Thomas House is eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A because it represents the changes in the landscape due to the emergence of a new class of farmers in the federal period (1770-1830 +/-) and under Criterion C as a type or method of construction that represents the late Georgian/Federal vernacular styles popular among Delaware's rural elite during the 1770-1830 +/- period. The houses of the rural elite as a functional type relate to the following historic context in the Delaware Comprehensive Historic Preservation Plan: Upper Peninsula Zone; 1770-1830 +/-; agriculture, settlement patterns and demographic change, and architecture, engineering, and decorative arts.

Beginning in the third quarter of the eighteenth century, a self-described class of agriculturalists arose who were less actively engaged in the physical practice of farming and more heavily involved in the administration and management of agricultural estates. They purchased land in towns and in the countryside as investments, often renting out the land to tenants or transferring operations to individual farm managers. By 1850, the result was a dominant class of farmers who did not cultivate the soil but recorded and regulated the annual cycle of planting and harvest through

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9. Major Bibliographical References

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X See continuation sheet.

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

N/A preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.

N/A previously listed in the National Register

N/A previously determined eligible by the National Register

N/A designated a National Historic Landmark

N/A recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____

N/A recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary Location of Additional Data:

X State historic preservation office

— Other state agency

— Federal agency

— Local government

X University

— Other -- Specify Repository: _____

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10. Geographical Data

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Acreage of Property: Approximately 3 acres

UTM References: Zone Easting Northing Zone Easting Northing

A	<u>18</u>	<u>446020</u>	<u>4366220</u>	B	—	—	—
C	—	—	—	D	—	—	—

— See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description: X See attached map.

The boundary of the David Wilson Thomas House is shown on the accompanying New Castle County tax parcel map (tax parcel 14.3.11) and is outlined in bold black lines. The nominated property is a roughly square 800 by 800 foot plot fronting the south side of County Road 440 opposite its intersection with County Road 439 and containing approximately 3 acres. Beginning at a point on the south side of County Road 440 opposite its intersection with County Road 439, proceed east along the south side of Road 440 for approximately 880 feet. Then, turn south for approximately 800 feet,

Boundary Justification: — See continuation sheet.

The boundary includes the farmhouse and yard that have been associated historically with the David Wilson Thomas House and that maintain historic integrity.

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11. Form Prepared By
=====

Name/Title: Bernard L. Herman, Rebecca J. Siders and Max Van Balgooy

Organization: Center for Historic Architecture and Engineering

Street & Number: University of Delaware Telephone: (302) 451-8097

City or Town: Newark State: DE ZIP: 19716

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The rear or south elevation is symmetrically fenestrated with three sash windows on both the first and second floors. At the southeast corner, a modern metal bulkhead door leads down to the basement. The west and east walls each have two windows at the attic level. Missing sections of siding expose the thick mortar joints and common bond brickwork of the walls.

The front door opens to the 16' x 14' common room or hall. The interior was remodeled in the mid-twentieth century with vertical knotty pine planks sheathing the walls and enclosing the fireplace. Although the modern paneling hides the fireplace, the original hearth and jamb cupboard survive. In the northeast corner the original winder stair survives to reach the second floor. The cellar stair was converted to a closet during the remodeling, although the stairs still survive and are visible in the cellar.

A doorway leads to the 16' x 13' parlor trimmed with moulded baseboard, chair rail, and window casements. The central fireplace on the west wall has a wooden mantle with Doric pilasters and keystone decorated with reeded banding which support a moulded cornice and shelf. Small cupboards built into both jambs of the chimney breast are fitted with paneled doors and shelves. The stair in the hall leads to the second floor, which retains its original plan of three chambers and an entry.¹ The chamber above the parlor survives with its fireplace mantle closely matching the trim of the parlor fireplace. Closets were added on both sides of the fireplace breast in the twentieth century. The other two chambers survive in plan; however, the interiors were remodeled during the twentieth century. The middle chamber was converted into a bathroom, and the third chamber has a modern door leading to the chamber above the kitchen. In the entry, a raised panel door opens to a winder stair leading to the attic. The attic is divided into two rooms, each finished in plaster.

Situated about two feet lower and abutting the east wall of the main block is a two-story kitchen wing with an interior brick chimney at the eastern gable end. The front elevation has two sash windows at the ground floor and a sash window at the second floor. The rear elevation has a door and window, and the east elevation possesses two sash windows on the second floor. Situated about two feet lower and abutting the east wall of the kitchen wing is a one-story laundry wing with a door on the south elevation. These two wings are sheathed and roofed to match the main block of the dwelling.

Originally, the chambers on the second floor of the kitchen wing could be reached only by a winder stair next to the fireplace. Access was altered in the twentieth century when the interior was remodeled, removing the stair and cutting a doorway through the wall to provide access to the second floor of the main block. The laundry wing is not original to the house; originally it may have served as a separate smokehouse that was later moved and joined to the house to serve a new purpose.

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Contributing Buildings

dwelling
icehouse

Noncontributing Buildings

garage
sheds
barn

Footnotes

1. "Entry" is defined according to the Builder's Dictionary (1734) as "a Door, Gate, Passage, Etc. through which we arrive at any place."

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ledgers and daybooks.

Samuel Thomas was a member of the group of elite farmers. By 1816, he owned seven houses and lots in town and four farms in the surrounding countryside and was assessed at \$16,850, placing him near the top of the top wealth decile for Appoquinimink Hundred.¹ Thomas lived in Odessa and worked as a merchant, leaving the operation of the farms to tenants and managers. Individuals like Thomas who were associated with the rural elite turned their attentions from cultivating the soil to building new houses and outbuildings. Significant portions of farm income were invested in these new buildings. The new houses increased the value of the farms as well as symbolizing economic and social success.

The David Wilson Thomas House represents a dwelling of this new class of farmers. The house was built shortly after Samuel Thomas purchased 200 acres in 1815 from Alexander and Rebekah Crawford.² Alexander Crawford was the brother of James Crawford, the builder of Brook Ramble (CRS# N-101, also included in this nomination). The following year the land had an "old log dwelling in the tenure of Joshua Deputy."³ By 1822, the property had a brick dwelling and two outbuildings assessed at \$1000.⁴ It was probably built as the home of David Wilson Thomas, the son of Samuel Thomas, for when Samuel died in 1829, he left David the "land purchased from Alexander Crawford in Appoquinimink Hundred already lived in by David."⁵

Built of brick with a flemish bond facade, Thomas' dwelling would have been associated with the wealthy citizens of Delaware. During the federal period, the majority of dwellings were of log or frame construction; a significantly lesser number were made of brick. The 1816 tax assessment for St. Georges Hundred reveals that only 5 percent of the taxable population owned brick houses. Ownership of brick houses was directly associated with wealth and prosperity. Of the owners of brick houses, 90 percent possessed more than a hundred acres of land; 93 percent were among the richest 20 percent of the population.

The hall-parlor plan reflected the regional plantation and mansion houses of the early eighteenth century. Later, during the federal period, hall-parlor houses remained the predominant plan-type selected by middle-income farmers. These houses typically had three openings across the facade--a doorway and a single window on each side illuminating each of the rooms. Inside, the house was divided into two rooms. The hall--with its larger fireplace, access to the upper stories, entry from the outside, and a greater amount of floor space--formed the social and working center of the house. The parlor, set off to the side, served as a refined sitting room for special occasions.

Although David Wilson Thomas inherited a farm and woodland of about 300 acres along with a new brick house from his father, he followed the pattern of other gentleman farmers by purchasing additional land. In the 1830s, he acquired the adjoining Middle Neck Farm of 147 acres (CRS# N-6238), which

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was kept in the tenure of Philip Matthis.⁶ Thomas died in 1863, leaving his estate to his wife, Susan.⁷ The property passed out of the Thomas family when it was purchased by John Heldmeyer in 1900.⁸

The David Wilson Thomas House has integrity of location, design, materials, workmanship, and association.

Attachment A contains relevant historic and present day maps: Rea & Price's 1849 Map of the State of Delaware, Beers' 1868 Map of the State of Delaware, Hopkins' 1881 Map of New Castle County, present-day highway maps for New Castle and Kent counties.

Footnotes

1. NCTA, Appoquinimink Hundred, 1816. Statistical analysis by the Center for Historic Architecture and Engineering, University of Delaware.
2. NCRD, Book P, Volume 3, p. 403 (1815).
3. NCTA, Appoquinimink Hundred, 1816.
4. NCTA, Appoquinimink Hundred, 1822.
5. NCPR, will of Samuel Thomas, 1829.
6. NCRD; Book M, Volume 4, p. 403 (1831); Book S, Volume 4. p. 438 (1834). NCPR, will of David W. Thomas, 1863.
7. NCPR, will of David W. Thomas, 1863.
8. NCRD, Book D, Volume 18, p. 167 (1900).

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Primary Sources

- KCCC. Kent County Court of Chancery, Dover, Delaware.
- KCOC. Kent County Orphans Court Records, Delaware State Archives, Dover, Delaware.
- KCPR. Kent County Probate Records, Delaware State Archives, Dover, Delaware.
- KCRD. Kent County Recorder of Deeds, Dover, Delaware.
- KCTA. Kent County Tax Assessments, Delaware State Archives, Dover, Delaware.
- NCOC. New Castle County Orphans Court Records, Delaware State Archives, Dover, Delaware.
- NCPR. New Castle County Probate Records, Delaware State Archives, Dover, Delaware.
- NCRD. New Castle County Recorder of Deeds, Wilmington, Delaware.
- NCRW. New Castle County Recorder of Wills, Wilmington, Delaware.
- NCTA. New Castle County Tax Assessments, Delaware State Archives, Dover, Delaware.

Secondary Sources

- Black, Samuel Henry. 1820. "An Essay, On the Intrinsic Value of Arable Land; With some General Remarks on the Science of Agriculture." American Farmer 2: 9-51.
- Bordley, J. B. 1801. Essays and Notes on Husbandry and Rural Affairs. Philadelphia: Budd and Bartram for Thomas Dobson.
- Bushman, Claudia. 1982. "The Wilson Family in Delaware and Indiana." Delaware History 20: 28-9.
- Cunnington, C. Willett, and Cunnington, Phillis. 1964. Handbook of English Costume in the 18th Century. London: Faber and Faber.
- Delaware Register. 1838. "Rural Life." The Delaware Register and Farmers' Magazine (April) 1:3, p. 195-198.

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Munroe, John. 1979. History of Delaware. Newark, DE: University of Delaware Press.

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Pryor, Clifford. 1975. The Forest of Appoquinimink. Milford, DE: Shawnee Printing.

[Rush, Benjamin.] 1786. "An Account of the progress of Population, Agriculture, Manners, and Government in Pennsylvania, in a letter from a citizen of Pennsylvania, to his friend in England." Columbia Magazine 1:3, p. 117-122.

Scharf, Thomas J. 1888. History of Delaware, 1609-1888. Philadelphia: L. J. Richards & Company.

Spurrier, John. 1793. The Practical Farmer: Being A New and Compendious System of Husbandry, Adapted to the Different Soils and Climates of America. Wilmington, DE: Brynberg and Andrews.

Sweeney, John. 1959. Grandeur on the Appoquinimink: The House of William Corbit at Odessa, Delaware. Newark, DE: University of Delaware Press.

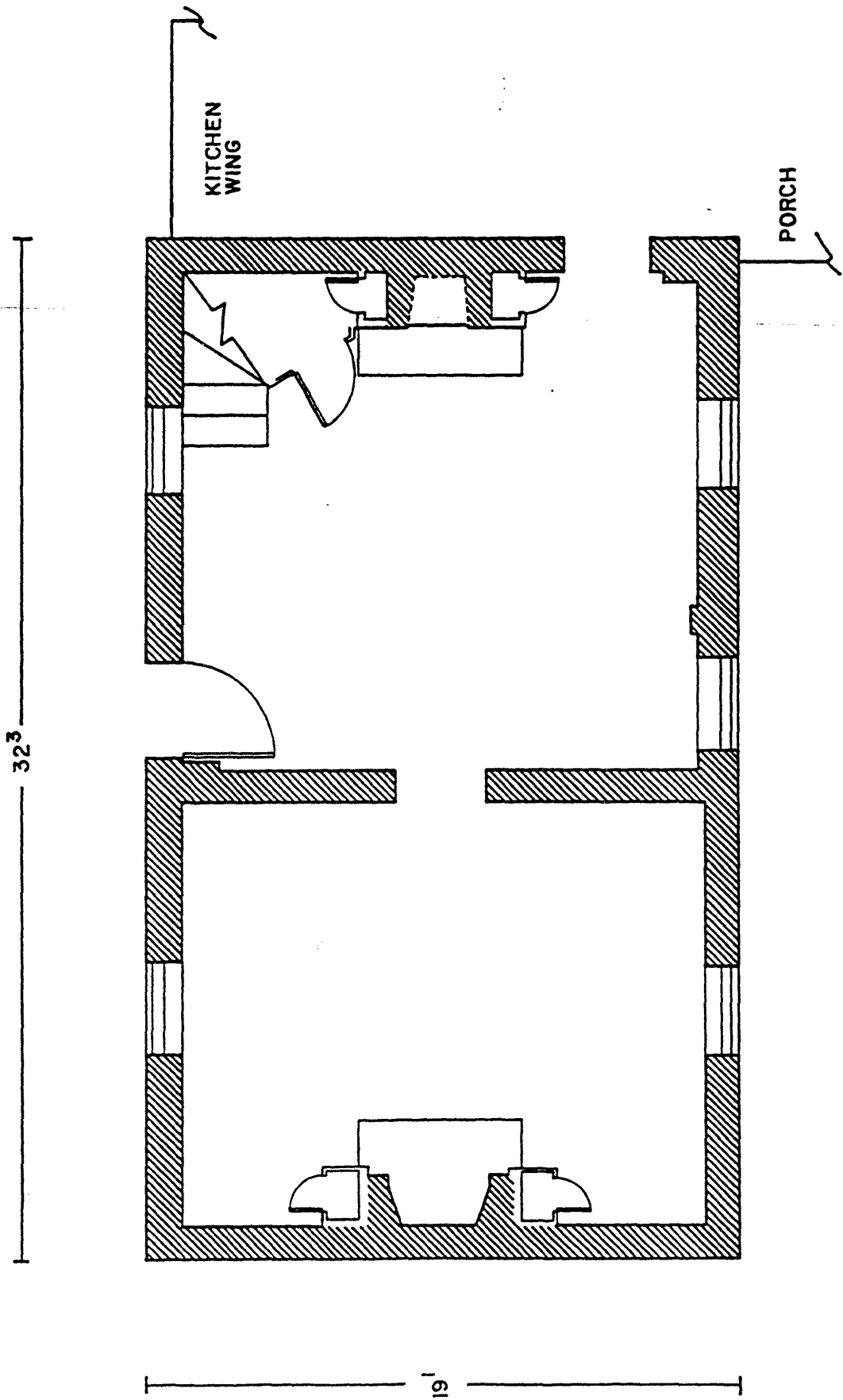
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before turning west parallel to Road 440 for approximately 800 feet. The parcel is completed by turning north and returning approximately 800 feet to the starting point. The location of the property is UTM reference point 18 446020 4366220.



D.W. THOMAS HOUSE (FIRST PERIOD)
 ODESSA VICINITY, NEW CASTLE COUNTY, DELAWARE



Shalleross Lake

1
1822

Vance Neck

1 3

DRAWYER

CREEK

Drawer Ch

DUPONT

RIVER

INDEX

RDY

Odessa

Catbit Csw

273C

APPOQUINIMINK

D.W. THOMAS HOUSE

Thomas Corners

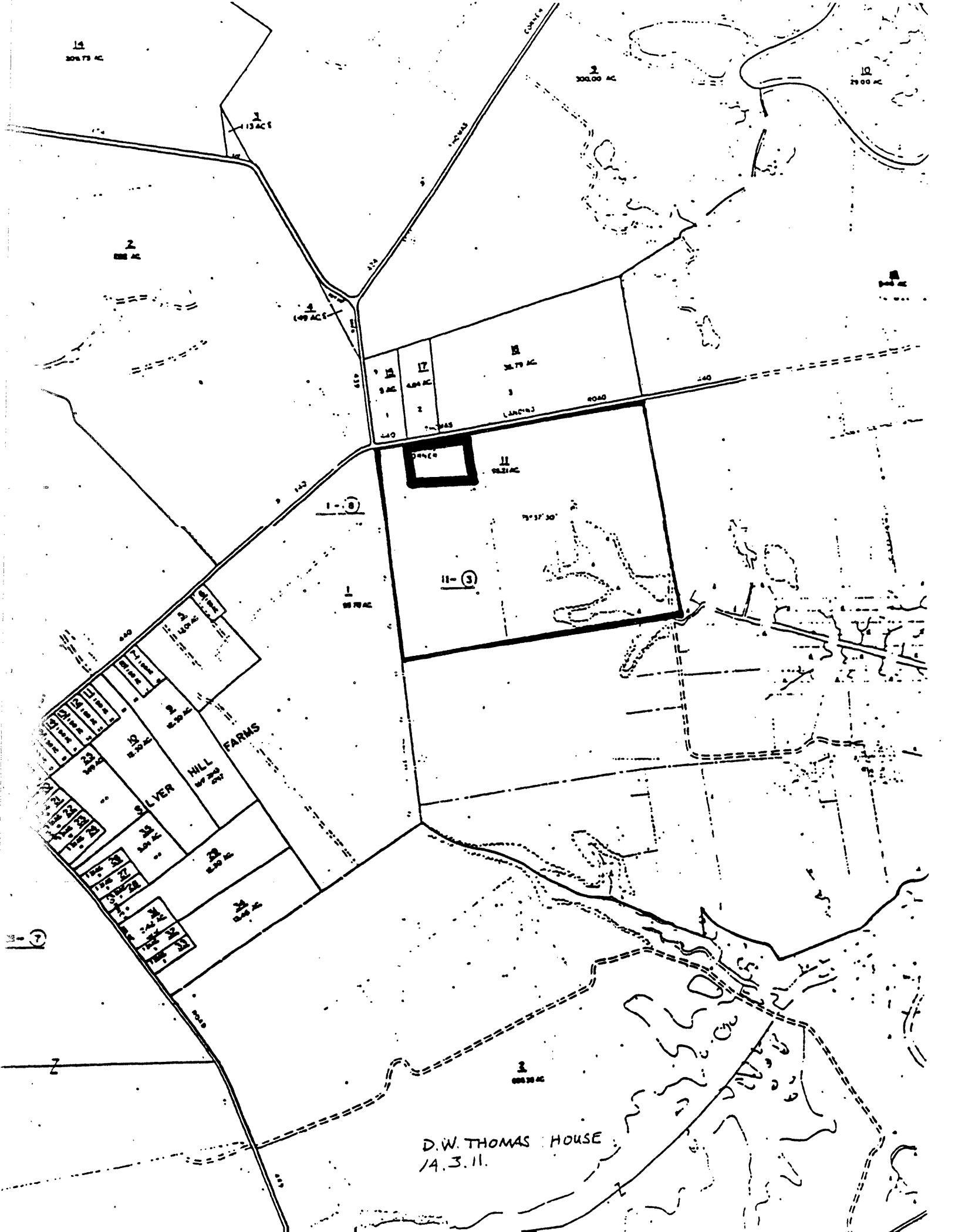
Mathews Corners

(TAYLORS BRIDGE)

UNITED STATES GEOLOGICAL SURVEY
SCALE: 1:24000

Ru 10





14
304.73 AC

2
300.00 AC

18
2900 AC

1
113 AC

2
100 AC

4
109 AC

16
9 AC

17
4.8 AC

18
38.79 AC

140

140

140

140

1-8

11-3

75° 37' 30"

1
107 AC

19
10.3 AC

20
10.3 AC

21
10.3 AC

22
10.3 AC

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10.3 AC

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10.3 AC

31
10.3 AC

32
10.3 AC

33
10.3 AC

34
10.3 AC

SILVER HILL FARM

D.W. THOMAS HOUSE
14.3.11.