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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions.



1. Name of Property

Historic name: Reverend L.W. Thomas Homestead

Other names/site number: N/A

Name of related multiple property listing:
N/A

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

2. Location

Street & number: 5805 Oktaha Road

City or town: Summit State: OK County: Muskogee

Not For Publication: Vicinity:

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, 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. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

___ national ___ statewide X local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

X A X B ___ C ___ D

 Signature of certifying official/Title:	<u>4/23/18</u> Date
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government	
In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.	
Signature of commenting official:	Date
Title :	State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

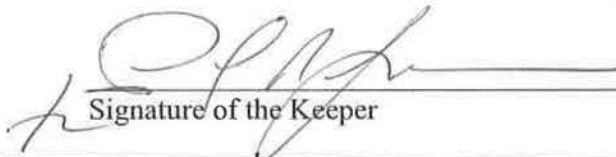
Reverend L.W. Thomas Homestead
Name of Property

Muskogee County, OK
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4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register
- determined eligible for the National Register
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register
- other (explain:)


Signature of the Keeper

6/7/2019
Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

- Private:
- Public – Local
- Public – State
- Public – Federal

Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

- Building(s)
- District
- Site
- Structure
- Object

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Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>2</u>	<u>0</u>	buildings
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	sites
<u>3</u>	<u>0</u>	structures
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	objects
<u>5</u>	<u>0</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Domestic: Single Dwelling

Domestic: Secondary Structure

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

VACANT/NOT IN USE

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7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Late 19th & Early 20th Century American Movements:

Bungalow/Craftsman

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property:

WEATHERBOARD

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

Summary Paragraph

The Reverend L.W. Thomas Homestead consists of five buildings located just outside Summit in Muskogee County. The 1922 house was constructed for Reverend Thomas, a Mexia oil tycoon. The two-story house was a custom design with a primary elevation facing north, away from the highway. Constructed of wood, stucco and concrete, the house maintains integrity of location, design, materials, setting, feeling, and association. The house is designed in the Craftsman style and features a full-width porch on the facade.

Narrative Description

The façade of the house faces north with a sweeping view across the landscape. The two-story house is clad with wood clapboards, has a variety of window types and is dominated by brick porches. The first floor of the façade is dominated by a full width stucco clad porch. The gable front roof of the porch is supported by three stucco clad columns. The roof has decorative brackets and cross timbers in the pediment rather than clapboards. The first floor has a pane and panel door with a four-over-one double hung window. East of the entry and window is a brick exterior chimney. The second floor has five six-over-six double hung windows under the side

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gable eave. West of the main portion of the house is a one-story gable front wing with ornamental brackets at the eaves and two, one-over-one double hung windows.

The east elevation has a partial width gable front porch. The roof is supported by two stucco clad columns and is identical in design to the façade porch. The first floor has a central panel entry that is flanked by three, four-over-one double hung windows on either side door. The second floor has two sets of six-over-six windows and brackets in the gable front eave.

The first floor of the south elevation has three four-over-one double hung windows and a single four-over-one hung window at the east corner. Slightly off center is a gable front bump-out. The gable front eaves have ornamental brackets. This portion of the first floor has four larger four-over-one double hung windows and one smaller four-over-one double hung window. West of the bump-out is a one-over-one double hung window and a pane and panel door. The second floor has two sets of three four-over-one double hung windows with a single three-over-one double hung window in the center.

The west, rear, elevation has two, four-over-one windows on the first floor and two sets of four-over-one windows on the second floor.

Along the south elevation of the house is a driveway that divides the house from two stucco clad columns. The columns once supported an open air porte-cochere. This porte-cochere was removed historically but the stucco columns remain.

Interior:

The first floor of the home consists of a large living room coat closet, dining room, master bedroom and den suite, kitchen, and breakfast room. The second floor consists of 3 large bedrooms and a hall closet.

Shed #1, Ca. 1930

The gable front one-story shed is located southwest of the house. The façade has a large opening that is missing the door. The walls are clad with vertical wood boards. The roof has deep eaves and is clad with asphalt shingles.

Shed #2, Ca. 1930

The gable front shed is located between the house and the barn to the west. The façade faces east and has a wood panel door. The walls are constructed of concrete block. The gable ends are horizontal wood planks. The gable front roof has exposed rafter tails and is clad with asphalt shingles.

Barn, Ca. 1925

Located west of the house is a one-story barn. The gable front barn has vertical wood boards on the east, south and west elevations. The north elevation and the roof are clad with tin panels. The south elevation has an open air lean-to. The façade, east elevation, has two large entries that are missing their doors. Located in the gable peak is a hay door.

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Rock Shed, Ca. 1925

Located northwest of the house is the one-story rock shed. The gable front roof has corrugated tin panels in the eaves and on the roof. The walls are rough faced, rectangular stone. The only opening on this building is on the south elevation which is a wood panel door.

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8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A. Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B. Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C. Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D. Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

- A. Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes
- B. Removed from its original location
- C. A birthplace or grave
- D. A cemetery
- E. A reconstructed building, object, or structure
- F. A commemorative property
- G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

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Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Community Development

Ethnic Heritage: Black

Period of Significance

1922-1940

Significant Dates

1922

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

Rev. L.W. (Lee Wilder) Thomas

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Unknown

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Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

The All-Black towns of Oklahoma represent a unique chapter in American history. Nowhere else did so many African American men and women come together to create, occupy, and govern their own communities. From 1865 to 1920 African Americans created more than fifty identifiable towns and settlements; some were of short duration and some still exist today. The All-Black towns in Oklahoma were, for the most part, small agricultural centers that gave nearby African American farmers a market place. Prosperity generally depended on cotton and other crops. Reverend L. W. Thomas, arrived in Summit in July of 1922 where he envisioned creating a model community for African Americans; sustained and governed by African-Americans. Investing over \$100,000 of his own money, he purchased the town site of South Muskogee and the surrounding lands (576 acres), and named it Summit. He divided the land adjacent to his home into available lots to be purchased for future homes to be built by those migrating to Summit. Therefore, the Reverend L.W. Thomas Homestead is eligible under Criteria A for its association with Community Planning and Development for the formation of Summit, an All-Black town, as well as Ethnic Heritage: Black, and Criteria B as it best represents Reverend L.W. Thomas' productive life.

Narrative Statement of Significance (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

All-Black towns grew in Indian Territory after the Civil War when the former slaves of the Five Tribes settled together for mutual protection and economic security. When the United States government forced American Indians to accept individual land allotments, most Indian "freedmen" chose land next to other African Americans. They created cohesive, prosperous farming communities that could support businesses, schools, and churches, eventually forming towns. Entrepreneurs in these communities started every imaginable kind of business, including newspapers, and advertised throughout the South for settlers. Many African Americans migrated to Oklahoma, considering it a kind of "promise land."

One of the towns established during this time period was Summit, Oklahoma. Summit was platted as South Muskogee in 1910 by the South-Muskogee Town Company. Prior to its platting, the location of South Muskogee was a whistle stop known as Summit. The station served a dispersed agricultural community made up of lands allotted to Creek Indians and Freedmen. When the area never developed as planned for a town, Reverend L.W. Thomas purchased the area outright.

Lee Wilbur Thomas was born in Limestone County, Texas. At a young age he became a Christian and was called to preach at the age of 22. He pastored many churches in Texas before moving to Oklahoma in 1922. Upon his arrival, he purchased the entire town site of South Muskogee where he also financed the construction of a general store and a cotton gin to provide

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momentum to the town. He focused his marketing efforts to African-Americans in his native state of Texas. Thomas promoted not just cotton, but also the raising of vegetables and other truck crops for markets in Muskogee and Tulsa.

In an interview in the *Muskogee Times*, Thomas stated that “(I)t is my desire to help my fellow man. I’ve plenty of money and I believe there is a big field open to the Negro with money who is altruistically inclined.” His philanthropy and Philosophy attracted a number of people to the town in the first few month and the town began to grow.

I shall recommend diversified farming. I shall preach the growing of smaller and better crops. I shall see that members of my colony are furnished with the best of seed and that they are instructed in the tilling of the grain or vegetable.

At all times I shall endeavor to turning a market for the product of the Summit farmer.

Ten years from now it is my prediction that motorist will shift gears when going through Summit. Instead of stepping on the gas and ‘making’ the town at a mile a minute, they will heed our city limit sign and look the cotton and melon fields over. (*Muskogee Times*, 1922)

Thomas had no way to foresee the coming of the Great Depression. Ten years after the founding of Summit, the thriving community began to wane in the disastrous agricultural economy of the 1930s and 1940s.

As the original settlers grew older, their children graduated from the community’s only high school and moved away. The town sustained a substantial decrease in population. A rash of fires struck the community of Summit destroying many of the original homes and the DuBois School (NRIS#84003161). With the burning of many historic resources in Summit and the lack of integrity of the remaining historic properties in Summit, the Reverend L.W. Thomas Homestead is the representation of the formation of Summit.

The vision of Reverend L.W. Thomas to build a self-sustaining, Black community was never fulfilled. The promise was in Summit with the building of the cotton gin, the post office and the main street businesses but with the Dust Bowl and the Great Depression quick on the heels of Summit’s formation, the town never had the opportunity to become everything Thomas had planned. The Reverend L.W. Thomas Homestead is the best representation of the planning of the community of Summit and as the property most directly linked to Thomas during his productive life in Summit. The property retains excellent integrity of location, design, setting, feeling, and association. It is eligible under Criteria A for its association with Community Planning and Development and Ethnic Heritage: Black and Criteria B for its association with the Reverend L.W. Thomas.

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9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

“Buildings Model Town for Negro.” *Muskogee Times*. 11 November 1922.

Corsicana Semi-Weekly Light. “Negro College to Open Soon at Mexia.” 1929.

Carney, George. "Historic Resources of Oklahoma's All-Black Towns: A Preservation Profile." *The Chronicles of Oklahoma*. 69 (Summer 1991).

Franklin, Jimmie Lewis. *Journey Towards Hope: A History of Blacks in Oklahoma* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1982).

O’Dell, Larry. "Summit," *The Encyclopedia of Oklahoma History and Culture*, www.okhistory.org (accessed September 23, 2017).

“Texan Founded Summit for African-Americans.” *Muskogee Phoenix*. 21 September 1991.

The Dallas Express. “South Muskogee.” 1922.

The Dallas Express. “Mexia.” 1929.

Tolson, Arthur. *The Black Oklahomans: A History, 1541–1972*. (New Orleans, La.: Edwards Printing Co., 1972).

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____
- recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository: Dallas Express Newspaper Articles, Thomas Family Archives

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Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): N/A

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 29 acres more or less

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: _____

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

- | | |
|------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Latitude: 35.673316 | Longitude -95.416584 |
| 2. Latitude: 35.673972 | Longitude: -95.418716 |
| 3. Latitude: 35.673161 | Longitude: -95.419086 |
| 4. Latitude: 35.672625 | Longitude: -95.417071 |

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

T14N R18E S20 Farmland in Summit N2 SE W of RY Less 6.77 Highway & LS 1A
Cruthers LS 1.34 A

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

These boundary lines represent the primary land used for the farming carried out by the Thomas family. Although a substantial larger amount was owned by Rev. Thomas, the nearly 30 acres noted here is what he used most often for personal use to provide for his family.

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11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Schuyler S. Carter/Lynda S. Ozan
organization: N/A
street & number: 909 Horn St. /800 Nazih Zuhdi Drive
city or town: Muskogee/Oklahoma City state: OK zip code: 74403/73105
e-mail schuylercarter24@gmail.com/lozan@okhistory.org
telephone: (918) 441-1363/(405)522-4484
date: February 2018

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

Photo Log

Name of Property: Reverend L.W. Thomas Homestead

City or Vicinity: Summit County: Muskogee State: OK

Photographer: Lynda Ozan

Date Photographed: February 2018

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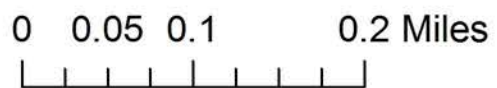
Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

Photograph Number	Subject	Direction
0001	House	South
0002	House	West
0003	Shed #1	West
0004	Shed #2	West
0005	Barn	Southwest
0006	Rock Shed	Northwest

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

Reverend L.W. Thomas Homestead
5805 Oktaha Road
Summit, Muskogee County, Oklahoma















UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Requested Action: Nomination

Property Name: Thomas, Reverend L.W., Homestead

Multiple Name: _____

State & County: OKLAHOMA, Muskogee

Date Received: 4/25/2018 Date of Pending List: 5/16/2018 Date of 16th Day: 5/31/2018 Date of 45th Day: 6/11/2018 Date of Weekly List: _____

Reference number: SG100002544

Nominator: State

Reason For Review:

- | | | |
|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Appeal | <input type="checkbox"/> PDIL | <input type="checkbox"/> Text/Data Issue |
| <input type="checkbox"/> SHPO Request | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape | <input type="checkbox"/> Photo |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Waiver | <input type="checkbox"/> National | <input type="checkbox"/> Map/Boundary |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Resubmission | <input type="checkbox"/> Mobile Resource | <input type="checkbox"/> Period |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other | <input type="checkbox"/> TCP | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than 50 years |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> CLG | |

Accept Return Reject 6/7/2018 Date

Abstract/Summary Comments: The Reverend L.W. Thomas Homestead is locally significant under National Register Criteria A and B in the areas of Community Planning & Development and Ethnic Heritage-Black. The two-story, wood-frame Craftsman-style house was built in 1922 for local entrepreneur Reverend Lee Wilder Thomas. The Rev. Thomas arrived in Muskogee County in 1922 envisioning the establishment of a self-sustaining, agricultural-based African American freedman's community. Continuing a significant tradition of All-Black town development in Oklahoma, Thomas purchased and subdivided the surrounding lands, financed the construction of a general store and cotton gin, and actively promoted the settlement of African Americans to the community, even offering financial and instructional assistance. The Depression put a halt to local development and subsequent events removed most traces of the historic Summit community. The Thomas family's once grand homestead is one of the few extant resources to convey the history of the town from this period.

Recommendation/ Criteria Accept NR Criteria A and B

Reviewer Paul Lusignan Discipline Historian

Telephone (202)354-2229 Date 6/7/2018

DOCUMENTATION: see attached comments : No see attached SLR : No



Oklahoma Historical Society
State Historic Preservation Office

Founded May 27, 1893

Oklahoma History Center • 800 Nazih Zuhdi Drive • Oklahoma City, OK 73105-7917
(405) 521-6249 • Fax (405) 522-0816 • www.okhistory.org/shpo/shpom.htm



April 23, 2018

J. Paul Loether
Keeper and Chief National Register and
National Historic Landmark Programs
National Park Service
1849 C Street NW, Mail Stop 7228
Washington D.C. 20240

Dear Mr. Loether:

We are pleased to transmit five National Register of Historic Places nominations for Oklahoma properties. The nominations are for the following properties:

Downtown Altus Historic District, Altus, Jackson County
Pioneer Telephone Company Warehouse and Garage, 1-13 NE 6th Street,
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma County
Reverend L.W. Thomas Homestead, 5805 Oktaha Road, Summit, Muskogee County
Cheairs Furniture company Building, 537 South Kenosha Avenue, Tulsa, Tulsa
County
Vernon A.M.E. Church, 311 North Greenwood Avenue, Tulsa, Tulsa County

All members of the Historic Preservation Review Committee (state review board) were present for the public meeting at which each of these nominations was considered and the recommendation to the State Historic Preservation Officer was formulated. Therefore, the member possessing the requisite professional qualifications for evaluation of each nominated property participated in the recommendation's formulation.

We look forward to the results of your review. If there any further questions regarding the nominations, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Lynda Ozan
Deputy State Historic
Preservation Officer

Enclosures