

KENTUCKY HISTORIC RESOURCES  
Individual Inventory Form

Resource # 55  
Shelby County

1. Name of Resource: William J. Thomas House		16. Date: Original Building 1900 [ 4 ] Addition [ ]	
2. Original Owner: William J. Thomas		17. Style: Colonial Revival [ 51 ] [ ]	
3. Other Names: None		18. Architect/Builder: Lynn T. Gruber & Sons	
4. Prehistoric Site <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building Object Historic Site Structure Other		19. No. of Stories: 2 1/2 [ 2.5 ]	
5. Location: West side KY 43, 1/2 mile north-west on KY 12		20. Original Floor Plan: Center passage [CP ]	
6. Owner's Name: Ben Allen Thomas, Jr [ P ]		21. Single Pile Double Pile N.A. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
7. Owner's Address: Rte. 1, Shelbyville, KY 40065		22. Roof Form & Material: Original <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Deck on hip/slate Not Original	
8. Evaluation: National Register [ N ]		23. Structural Material: Wood frame (sawn) [ W ]	
9. Recognition & Date: Nat.Landmark _____ Local Landmark _____ Nat.Register _____ HABS/HAER _____ Highway Marker _____ KY Inventory 8-15-80 KY Landmark Certificate _____		24. Exterior Material: Weatherboard, plain [ W ]	
10. N.R.Status & Date:		25. Foundation Material: Stone, rough-faced [ S ]	
11. N.R.Group: District Name: [ ] Mult.Resource Area: Shelby County [ ] Thematic Name: [ ]		26. Major Alterations: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> None Moved/Rebuilt Other	
12. Historical Theme: Primary: Architecture [030 ] Secondary: [ ] Other: [ ]		27. Special Features: None	
13. Statement of Significance: This property is significant under criterion C, one of several large homes built by prosperous farmers on large holdings during the period around 1900. It is also the work of local designer and builder Lynn T. Gruber, who built other large homes, including Undulata(Sh-154) [ C ]		28. Outbuildings: cellar, tenant house, 2 vertical board sheds [ 4 ]	
14. History: Earlier house on this site in 1882 owned by B.A. and W.J. Thomas, part of large county holdings in the Thomas family. Former house replaced by present structure in 1900. Built for W.J. Thomas by Shelby County builder/architect Lynn T. Gruber.		29. Original Function: Residential/Domestic, single dwell [01A ]	
15. Source of historical information and/or contact person: Atlas of Henry and Shelby Counties, KY, 1882; interview with B.A. Thomas, February 1986.		30. Present Use: As above [ 01A ]	
		31. Condition: Excellent [ E ]	
		32. Endangered: Yes _____ No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
		33. Attach Photos: Roll: Photo Nos: No. of Slides: 5 29 - 36 1	
		34. Prepared by: C. Worsham	
		35. Organization: V, Shelby Co. Hist. Society	
		36. Date: February 1986	
		37. New Survey _____ Resurvey <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	

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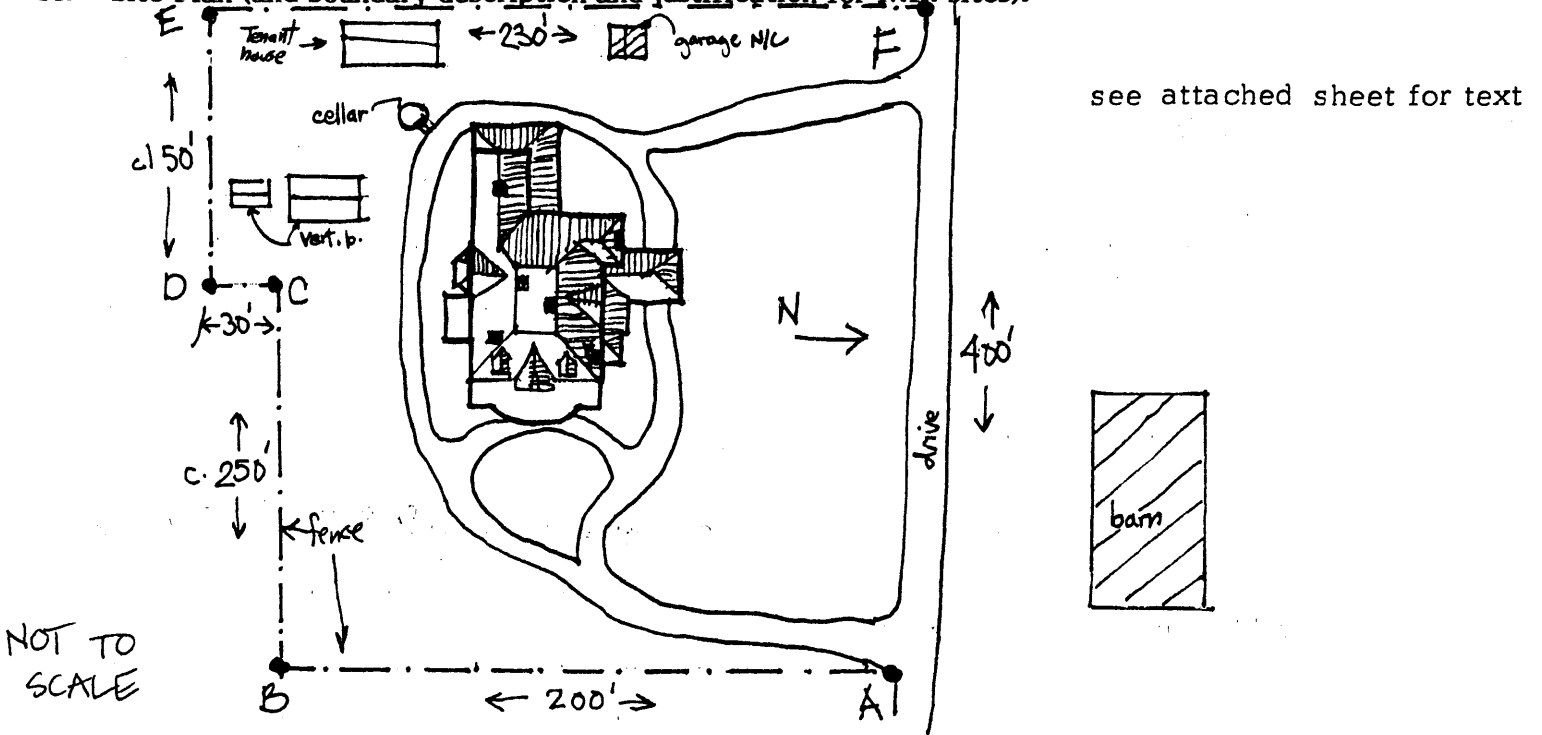
38. UTM Point of Primary Building: Zone Easting Northing 39. G.I.S. Mod. [ ]  
 Quadrant: Eminence 16 6 6 1 6 8 5 4 2 3 7 4 9 0 40. Coordi. Accuracy [ ]

41. UTM Points of Boundary (for N. R. eligible sites only):

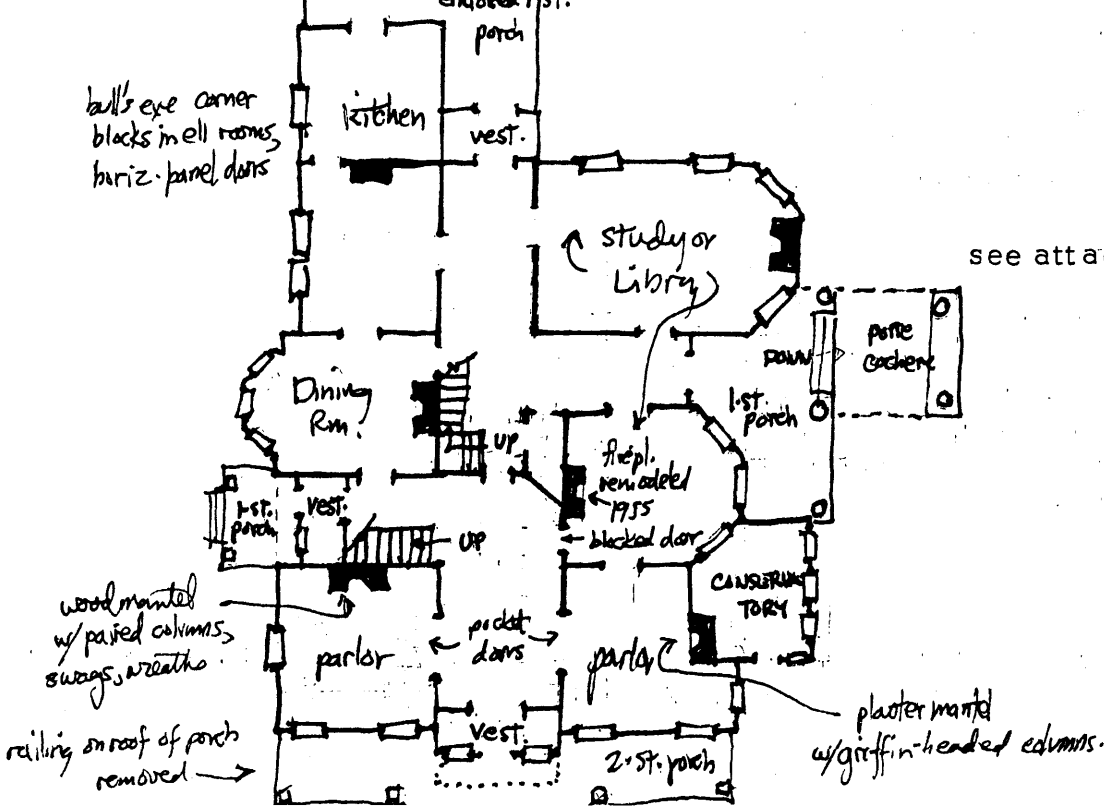
A. ----- D. -----  
 B. ----- E. -----  
 C. ----- F. -----

42. Total Acreage in Present Property: 3300 43. Acreage included in proposed N.R. boundary: 2.1

44. Site Plan (and boundary description and justification for N.R. sites):



45. Description and House Plan: enclosed st.



#### 44. Boundary Description and Justification:

Beginning at point A, proceeding along a fence 200 feet south to point B, thence west 250 feet to point C along a fence, thence 30 feet south along a fence to point D, thence 15 feet along a fence west to point E, thence to point F along a fence north 230 feet, thence along the south side of a drive 400 feet east to the point of origin. The boundaries were chosen to encompass the house and domestic-related space as enclosed by fences and a drive. Contributing outbuildings include two vertical-board frame gabled sheds, a two-story double-cell frame tenant house, and a domed stone cellar. There is, in addition, a non-contributing modern frame garage. Not included in the nomination is a frame barn to the north of the house. Point A is the intersection of the southern edge of the straight drive that borders the yard on the north with the easternmost edge of the curved drive which approaches the house from the east.

#### 45. Description and House Plan:

Exterior: The unusually large 2 1/2-story 5-bay frame house incorporates elaborate Colonial Revival detailing, a flat-topped hipped roof with a gabled dormer on each of the three main fronts, as well as flanking pedimented dormers on the east front. The principal (east) front is completely sheltered by a colossal curve-fronted porch supported on fluted Ionic columns on stone plinths. The porch cornice, which is continuous with and identical to that on the entire house, is ornamented with dentils and modillions. The central entry bay projects slightly to form a vestibule, with sidelight and transoms, surmounted by a bracketed second floor balcony reached by a three-part opening spanned by an elliptical fanlight. The north front has inset and projecting bays, 2nd-floor balconies, and an Ionic porte cochere adjacent to a ground-level solarium or conservatory.

On the south a central one-story Ionic porch gives access to a stair hall, and is flanked on the north by a one-story bay. An ell to the west with an enclosed one-story porch gives onto the rear yard. The entire house has a complex floor plan that might be said to derive from the double-pile type, but is clearly of professional origin. From the south it appears to be a double-pile house with a two-room ell, while in plan and on the north it is clearly three rooms in depth, as if a conventional two-room ell was buried partially within a larger house.

Interior: A pair of parlors flank the center passage on the north front. Dentillated cornices over interior openings. North parlor, reached by pocket door from passage, has mantel shelf supported on griffin-headed columns, leaf molding applied to ceiling. South parlor, also reached by pocket door from passage, has wood mantel on paired columns, wreaths, and swags. Passage and south parlor ceilings have applied rope molding. Stair is located in passage to south off center passage, its landing lit by leaded glass window with elliptical fanlight. Rear rooms have bull's eye corner block trim on openings. Second set of stairs rises in narrower extension of center passage. Dining room and two large rooms on the north each have polygonal projecting fronts.

Outbuildings: Two frame outbuildings located to the south of the house appear to be integral dependencies from the house's earliest days. Both may be meat curing structures. A nearby round stone cellar may predate the house, but is typical in the region for the storage of food when a cellar was not found under the house. A large frame two-story double cell tenant or servants' house is located to the east. It is of comparable age, and like the other structures is contributing as integral parts of the house's domestic space and function. A modern frame garage is non-con-

The nominated area contains five contributing buildings and one non-contributing building.