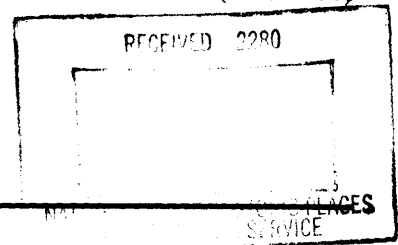


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

1023



**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM**

1. Name of Property

historic name Thomaston Central Historic District
other names/site number N/A

2. Location

street & number See continuation sheet not for publication N/A
city or town Thomaston vicinity N/A
state Alabama code AL county Marengo code 91 zip code 36783

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, 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 nationally statewide
X locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

[Signature]
Signature of certifying official

July 28, 2000
Date

Alabama Historical Commission (State Historic Preservation Office)
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria.
(See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting or other official

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

- I hereby certify that this property is:
- entered in the National Register
 See continuation sheet.
 - determined eligible for the National Register
 See continuation sheet.
 - determined not eligible for the National Register
 - removed from the National Register
 - other (explain):

[Signature] 9/14/00

for _____
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property (Check only one box.)	Category of Property (Check as many boxes as apply.)	Number of Resources within Property (Do not include previously listed resources.)	
		Contributing	Non-contributing
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<u>74</u>	<u>53</u> buildings
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> district	<u>1</u>	<u> </u> sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-state	<input type="checkbox"/> site	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u> structures
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<u> </u>	<u> </u> objects
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	<u>76</u>	<u>55</u> Total

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

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the NR
N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: <u>Domestic</u> <u>Commerce/Trade</u> <u>Commerce/Trade</u> <u>Religion</u> <u>Government</u> <u>Education</u> <u>Transportation</u> <u>Landscape</u>	Sub: <u>single dwelling</u> <u>professional</u> <u>business</u> <u>religious structure</u> <u>city hall</u> <u>school</u> <u>rail related</u> <u>park</u>
---	--

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: <u>Domestic</u> <u>Commerce/Trade</u> <u>Commerce/Trade</u> <u>Religion</u> <u>Government</u> <u>Education</u> <u>Transportation</u> <u>Landscape</u>	Sub: <u>single dwelling</u> <u>business</u> <u>professional</u> <u>religious structure</u> <u>public building</u> <u>school</u> <u>rail related</u> <u>park</u>
---	--

7. Description

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

Other: free-standing gable front / other: one-story commercial block / other: multiple-story commercial block
Late Victorian: Queen Anne / Late 19th and 20th Century Revivals: Colonial Revival, Tudor Revival
Late 19th and Early 20th Century American Movements: Bungalow/Craftsman / other: L-Cottage/ other: T-Cottage

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation brick, concrete
 roof asphalt, metal, stone: slate
 walls wood, brick, concrete
 other wood, metal, concrete

Narrative Description (Describe the historic and current condition on continuation sheet/s.)

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.) N/A

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or a grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)

- Architecture _____
- Community Planning/Development _____
- Social History _____
- _____

Period of Significance c. 1886, 1893, 1901-1950 _____

Significant Dates 1901 _____

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked above) N/A

Cultural Affiliation N/A _____

Architect/Builder Unknown _____

Narrative Statement of Significance (Explain significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

- Previous documentation on file (NPS)** N/A
- 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 # _____

- Primary location of additional data:**
- State Historic Preservation Office
 - Other state agency
 - Federal agency
 - Local government
 - University
 - Other
- Name of repository
Alabama Historical Commission

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 40 acres

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
1	<u>16</u>	<u>440840</u>	<u>3570540</u>	3	<u>16</u>	<u>441370</u>	<u>3569800</u>
2	<u>16</u>	<u>441370</u>	<u>3570470</u>	4	<u>16</u>	<u>440870</u>	<u>3569640</u>

 See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Joan Embree

organization Preservation Consultant

date April 25, 2000

street & number 1364 Lake Valley Road

telephone (601) 324-0410

city or town Starkville

state MS zip code 39759

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional items (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name multiple

street & number telephone

city or town Thomaston

state AL

zip code 36783

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 7 Page 1

Thomaston Central Historic District

Marengo County, Alabama

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION

The Thomaston Central Historic District bears essentially the same rectangular shape as the 1901 town incorporation plat map. Boundary lines run along the rear (west) lot lines of properties facing east on the west side of Chestnut Street; along the central line of Sixth Avenue from Chestnut to Main and on an arbitrary line from Main Street to Short Street; along the rear property lines of resources facing west on the east side of Short Street and then south to Second Avenue to include houses on the east side of Church Street; and from property lines east of Church to the CSX (former Louisville and Nashville) Railroad (#36) tracks and west to the boundary on the west side of Chestnut Street. It is nominated for its embodiment of the physical and associational properties of a small rural town and its associations with the guiding principles of the "New South" philosophy followed by its founder, Dr. Charles B. Thomas.

Streets within the district are gridded, running east-west and north-south. State Highway 25, connecting Faunsdale on the north and Thomasville on the south, runs along Range Road. State Highway 28, connecting Linden (to the west) with Camden (to the southeast) runs along Second Avenue, Thomaston's main commercial street. Aside from these main crossroads, the streets are narrow, black-topped, and tree-shaded. All of these streets are early 20th century in origin, the only public road in the 19th century having been the Linden to Cahaba Road, now mostly north of the district's northern boundary. Thomaston's plan is clearly influenced by the railroad, which serves as the southern boundary for the 1901 plan and the nomination boundaries. Since the railroad tracks are such an integral part of the plan and history of Thomaston, they are considered a contributing element in the district. Land encompassed by the boundaries is nearly flat, a little elevated from the surrounding territory. Soils are clay-based, rather than loamy like the "Black Prairie" to the north and east. Early native trees like walnut, oak, hickory, and yellow pine have been replaced by sweet gum and other second-growth trees, and with pecans and other crop-producing or ornamental trees. (*Alabama As It Is...*, pp.151-153)

The mixed uses common to small towns are represented in the district. The industrial sites that were designed to lure venture capital to town have largely disappeared, the industries themselves being of a 19th-century, agrarian nature. Residential resources (87) now make up 66 percent of the district, with commercial resources (30) representing 23 percent, and public and semi-public resources (15) 11 percent. The total number of district resources is 132 with 76 contributing and 55 non-contributing.

Residential resources fill the largest part of the grid. Commonly, they are one-to-two-story frame buildings set back from the streets in deep yards. Rectangular, L-shaped, and T-shaped plans predominate as house forms. The most common siding choices are weatherboard and novelty board of various kinds, reflecting the early 20th-century birth of the town and its use of contemporary sawmill products and rail transportation. Several slate roofs survive on early residences. Metal roofs and replacement asphalt shingle roofs are also common. Brick foundation pillars and chimneys and two substantial two-story brick schools (only one of which is in the district) are reminders of the town brick yard. Houses of historic age are generally raised off the ground to allow for air circulation. Many have good surviving details in the doors, windows, and modest cutwork on front and rear porches.

Residential styles and vernacular types represented in the Thomaston Central Historic District include: Colonial Revival, best exemplified by the Verna Pruett house at 24 Fifth Avenue (#021); Craftsman, best exemplified by the Nabors house on Fifth Avenue (#067), and the Moring house at 265 Church Street (#016); L-cottages, best exemplified by the house at 21122 Range Road (#065); and T-houses, best exemplified by the E.T. Hale house at 255 Main Street (#055).

Commercial resources are, as originally, grouped on Second Avenue and Range Road, near their intersection. A few wood-frame buildings and a one-story brick former livery stable survive on Range Road with several newer commercial structures. The south side of Second Street still has two early wooden storefronts and a wooden warehouse (#94, 95, & 98), along with a one-story bank building (#91) and a few modern buildings. The north side of Second has a variety of brick buildings with good original detail, including Moseley's, a two-story brick general store that served as Masonic Hall and temporary schoolroom upstairs (#100). Commercial resources, generally rectangularly-massed, front directly onto the main streets. Most of the one- and two-story commercial structures are brick or brick-veneered, the older, brick buildings having wooden floors, the brick-veneered buildings being set on concrete slabs. Most have metal or asphalt roofs that are concealed behind parapets. A few of the commercial structures, like the Quality Store (#103), and Dr. Stallworth's office and drugstore (#101), both on Second Avenue, represent the early-to-mid-20th-century commercial Craftsman style, but most are vernacular in style.

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 7 Page 2

Thomaston Central Historic District

Marengo County, Alabama

Public resources, several of them surviving from the early days of the town's development, include the Town Pond (#05) at the district's southwestern corner; the Marengo County High School (#81) and its grounds on the northwest side of Range Road; the modern City Hall (#120), barn (#122), and associated buildings on Third Avenue; the former City Hall (and former ice-house) (#49), on Main Street; the former L & N Depot (#60) and tracks (#36), now behind a laundromat on Range Road; the site of a park and the former elementary school (#41) on Main Street; and the "Calaboose," (#29) an early, plank "holding cell" on First Avenue.

Noncontributing resources within the district are mostly comprised of buildings constructed during the last 50 years within the boundaries of the 1901 town plan. Some older houses and commercial buildings were labeled noncontributing due to recent alterations and additions; one resource (#28) is noncontributing because only a fragment of its original state is still evident. While there is a high number of noncontributing resources, the district remains eligible as it had good integrity of plan, the less than 50 year old resources are located on empty lots originally laid out in 1901, and the materials, location, setting, feeling, and association of the district as a whole is still very evident.

Geographically, Thomaston lies about 11 miles west of Linden (county seat for Marengo County), about 30 miles east and south of Demopolis, and about 15 miles southwest of Uniontown. It is located in the farming country south of the Chickasaw Bogue. The town is within Township 15 North, but is split down the middle between Ranges 4 and 5 East. The highest concentration of development is in Sections 13/5 and 18/4, with additional, mostly residential, development in Sections 12, 24, and 19. The town limits include about two square miles in an extended rectangle more or less centering on the intersection of Range Road (State Highway 25) and Second Avenue (State Highway 28).

Thomaston's development area is bordered on the north, east, and west by the main and tributary branches of the Chickasaw Bogue, which empties into the Tombigbee River. At 300 feet above sea level, on a fairly level plain about 70 feet above the lowlands, Thomaston is situated in the "sandy lands" on the northern edge of the "Flatwoods" area, as shown on the 1895 map of Marengo County produced by J.B. Little. The upper half of Marengo County is included in the "Black Belt" lands, the lower half is designated as "Coastal Plain" in the Physiographic Regions of Alabama illustrated on page xviii of the introduction to Alabama, the History of a Deep South State. Thomaston lies in the transition area, with sandy loam soils rather than the rich, dark soil that produced Alabama's best cotton crops.

Archeological Component: Although no formal archeological survey has been made of the town, the potential for subsurface remains may be good. Buried portions may contain significant information useful in interpreting the area.

INVENTORY

Thomaston's historic district was identified in a 1994-96 historic resource survey along with three individually eligible buildings outside the district boundaries. The Central Historic District covers much of the area of the town as it was originally platted. This district extends from the south side of Sixth Avenue on the north to the north side of the L&N (now the CSX) Railroad on the south and from the rear property lines on the west side of Chestnut Street on the west to the rear property lines of resources facing west on the east side of Short Street on the east. At its southeastern corner, the district extends to properties east of Church Street as shown on the attached district map. It should be understood to include the streets, yards, walks, and uses presently incorporated in this distinct area. The orchards and farm yards enclosed within the district boundaries and the existing streets and setbacks are important features of the early 20th century rural feeling of the town. The inventory is organized by streets in alphabetical order. Under each street name, the resources are listed by street number. Resources without street numbers are marked NAA (No Address Available). Approximate dates are listed next, with modern properties shown as p. 1950 (Post 1950). Following the street number are letters describing the rating of each resource within the historic district: C (contributing) and NC (non-contributing). Contributing resources exhibit appropriate historic materials and styles to document their historic age and add character to the historic district. Non-Contributing buildings are either modern or have been so altered that they no longer contribute to the town's historic character. Following the rating designation is the survey number assigned to the resource, and a brief written description. Within these descriptions, abbreviations include "W" for window, "W2" for paired windows, "DH" for double-hung windows "D" for door, "Cpt." for carport, and "L" and "R" for left and right when describing individual features that differ, such as doors and windows. The resource previously designated as number 67 is not described and has been removed from the resource count as it was demolished during the project period.

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 7 Page 3

Thomaston Central Historic District

Marengo County, Alabama

Cherry Street

- | | | | | |
|-----|------------|----|-----|--|
| NAA | c. 1915-20 | C | 001 | One-story frame, hip-roofed, rectangularly-massed carriage house on tree stump piers behind 4673 Third Ave. |
| 095 | c. 1905-15 | NC | 002 | One-story, frame with vinyl, side-gabled, "L" shaped house with full-width porch. Facade has new three bay arrangement (bay W,D,bay W) with altered porch. Built as home for W.K. Chapman, early civic leader who became Marengo County Superintendent of Schools. |
| 095 | c. 1905-15 | C | 003 | One-story, one-room, frame "cook's" house with end chimney on west, side-gabled roof, weatherboard exterior. Behind #002. |
| 123 | c. 1989 | NC | 004 | One-story frame, brick-veneered ranch house with side-gabled roofs has 5-bay facade (W,W,D,W,W). Former carports have been enclosed for living space. Roof is composition shingle. |

Chestnut Street

- | | | | | |
|-----|--------------|----|-----|--|
| 050 | c. 1901 | C | 005 | (Site) Town park and pond shown on plat map of Thomaston. Pond, in shape of state of Alabama, is site of city well #1, the artesian well mentioned as the source of water in early documents and, by oral history, the source for clay used in the Thomaston Brick Co. |
| 094 | c. 1955 | NC | 006 | One-story, side-gabled concrete block community meeting house has 3-bay facade (W,D,W). Windows are 2/2 horizontal aluminum. Door is hollow core. Eaves extend over doors for shelter at front and rear. Roof is composition shingle. |
| 121 | c. 1901-1910 | C | 007 | One-story frame, "U" shaped house on brick piers has 4-bay facade and shed-roofed Craftsman style wrap porch. Known as the "Callie Walke Cannon" house for an early town merchant. |
| 261 | c. 1960 | NC | 008 | One-story, brick-veneered ranch form modern house with 2-story addition at west. Facade is 6-bay (W2,W2,W,D,W,Cpt). Windows are 2/2 DH horizontal aluminum and large multi-light. Secondary frame dwelling at rear. |
| 285 | p. 1950 | NC | 009 | One-story, side-gabled brick-veneered modern ranch has front-gabled porch on square posts, 6-bay facade, (W,W,W,D,W,W). Windows are 6/6 DH aluminum. |
| 321 | c. 1950 | C | 010 | One-story frame, side-gabled bungalow with 3-bay facade (W2,DW2,W2). Windows are 3 verticals/4 rectangulars, 3/1, and various, most DH. Door is hollow core, 3-light. Concrete stoop at entry is below street and sidewalk level. |
| 471 | c. 1916 | C | 011 | One-story frame, hip-roofed, rectangularly-massed, Craftsman/bungalow on brick piers has full-length porch, 3-bay facade (W2,D+W2). Windows are 2/2 DH. Door surround has sidelights and overlights. |
| 497 | 1915-25 | C | 012 | One-story frame, hip-roofed bungalow, rectangularly massed, has rear ell at west, attached carport at north. Facade is 3 bay (W2,D,W2). Windows are 3/1 DH. |

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
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Section 7 Page 4

Thomaston Central Historic District

Marengo County, Alabama

Church Street

- | | | | | |
|-----|------------|----|-----|--|
| 101 | c. 1910-25 | C | 013 | One-story frame, "T" shaped, former eclectic house on brick piers has 5-bay facade (W,D,W2,W,W) with 4/4 DH windows. Shed-roofed porch in ell is altered, has decorative 2" by 4" posts, new floor and steps. |
| 230 | p. 1950 | NC | 014 | One-story frame, side-gabled, rectangularly-massed modern house with composition roof and concrete block foundation. Facade is 5 bay (W,W2,D,W2,W). |
| 260 | p. 1950 | NC | 015 | Wood, metal, and plastic trailer. |
| 265 | c. 1916-30 | C | 016 | One-story frame, bungalow with Craftsman details including porch on 1/2-length battered wooden posts, brick piers. Facade is 3 bay (W,D,W2). Windows are 9/1 DH. Knee braces in gables survived vinyl siding installation. |
| 284 | p. 1950 | NC | 017 | One-story, hip-roofed, brick-veneered modern ranch house with hip-roofed, attached carport at right (S), has 5-bay facade (W,W2,D,W2,W). Windows are 2/2 DH horizontal aluminum. Concrete-based stoop at entry door. |
| 305 | p. 1950 | NC | 018 | One-story, side-gabled, brick-veneered modern ranch house has front-gabled entry porch on round classical columns, concrete floor. Windows are 2/2 DH horizontal aluminum in 5-bay facade (Cpt, W2,D,W2,W). |
| 370 | c. 1915-35 | NC | 019 | Pyramidal-roofed frame, with substantial remodeling. New windows are aluminum 1/1 and new weatherboard siding is unpainted. Brick chimneys have corbeled tops. Foundation is brick piers with concrete block infill. |
| 504 | c. 1915-35 | C | 129 | One-story frame, side-gabled, weatherboarded Craftsman bungalow has 3-bay facade (W2,D+,W2) under full-width gallery supported on battered wood columns. Windows are 6/1 DH in plain frames. Door is single-leaf wood with 6 lights over panels. Foundation is brick piers and skirting. Two brick chimneys survive. Built by Golden family on site of first Thomaston Baptist Church. |

Fifth Avenue

- | | | | | |
|-----|------------|----|-----|--|
| 023 | c. 1916-30 | C | 020 | Important Craftsman/bungalow house. Extensive porch wraps northern facade, east end. Multi-light windows and doors, knee braces in gables, porch columns are among defining stylistic details. |
| 024 | c. 1916-30 | C | 021 | One-story frame, hip-roofed, vaguely Colonial Revival house on brick piers with northern ell for storage has extensive hip-roofed wrap porch. Facade is 4 bay (W,D,D,W). Windows are 2/2 DH. |
| 080 | p. 1950 | NC | 022 | One-story, hip-roofed, brick-veneered modern house faces southwest at northeast corner of Fifth Avenue and Main Street. Facade is 6 bay (W2,W2,D,W3,W2,Cpt). Windows are 6/6 DH, have decorative shutters. |

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 7 Page 5

Thomaston Central Historic District

Marengo County, Alabama

- | | | | | |
|----------------------------|------------|----|-----|--|
| 345 | c. 1915 | C | 023 | One-story frame, "L" cottage, gable-and-hip-roofed house with projecting front and rear ells. Extensive wrap porch is supported on battered square wood columns. Facade is 3 bay (W2,D+,W2). Windows are paired 2/2 DH. Entry surround has overlights, sidelights, old door. |
| 367 | c. 1915 | C | 024 | One-story frame, irregularly-massed, hip-and-gable-roofed house on brick piers has 5-bay facade (W,W,D,W,W) with 9/1 DH windows. Craftsman porch with 1/2-length battered wood columns on wood piers wraps north and east corner. Door has transom lights. |
| 370 | p. 1950 | NC | 025 | One-story frame, ranch-style house with projecting front gable at right has 3-bay facade (W2,D,W2) with 2/2 horizontal-paned wood windows. Porch has concrete floor, new reeded metal columns. |
| First Avenue | | | | |
| 045 | c. 1946 | C | 026 | One-story frame, front-gabled early Post-World-War-II bungalow with brick veneer siding and wing added on west elevation. Facade is 3 bay (W2,D,W2). House extended to rear (S). Windows are new. Foundation is brick piers. |
| 045b | c.1945 | C | 027 | One-story, one-room, front-gabled, former Needham Ward's grist mill has double-leafed vertical tongue-and-groove doors, plain surrounds. Sheds have been added on both east and west sides. Siding is novelty board. |
| 045c | c.1901 | NC | 028 | (Structure) Two large pieces of one or more former brick kilns at site of Thomaston Brick Works, south end of Main Street. Now in Grady Cooper's side yard. |
| 047 | c.1905-25 | C | 029 | One-story, single-pen, hip-roofed Calaboose/jail made of stacked 2x4s has one door in south side, openings cut into east and west sides. Door is nail-studded stacked boards, "windows" barred with iron. |
| 085 | p. 1950 | NC | 030 | Wood, metal and plastic trailer with wooden entry deck. |
| 100 | p. 1950 | NC | 031 | One-story, frame, brick-veneered, side-gabled modern house with 6-bay facade (W,W,D,W,W,Chimney) has 9/6 DH aluminum windows, concrete slab foundation. |
| 115 | p. 1950 | NC | 032 | Wood, metal, and plastic trailer with shed-roofed wooden entry porch. |
| 116 | p. 1950 | NC | 033 | One-story, side-gabled, brick-veneered ranch house with 4-bay facade (W,W,D,W3). Windows are 2/2 DH horizontal wood. Carport enclosed on east has sheet siding. |
| 177 | c. 1916-30 | C | 034 | One-story frame, side-gabled, saddlebag form house with 4-bay facade (W,D,D,W) and full-width porch on 1/2-length wood posts and brick piers. Foundation piers are brick. Windows are 4/4 DH. |
| 180 | p. 1950 | NC | 035 | (Structure) Outdoor swimming pool built and operated for "Club" use. Fenced with chain link. |
| Railroad Tracks
1900-01 | | C | 036 | (Structure) Louisville and Nashville Railroad. The railroad runs in an east-west direction and forms the southern boundary of the district. Undoubtedly, over the years, individual components of the track have been replaced in-kind as a part of routine maintenance. The |

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
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Section 7 Page 6

Thomaston Central Historic District

Marengo County, Alabama

				main line, however, is still intact on its original road bed. The portion of the railroad included with boundaries extends from Chestnut Street to one block east of Church Street.
Fourth Avenue				
251	c. 1916-30	C	037	One-story frame, side-gable-roofed, vaguely bungalow style house, altered, with full-length porch on battered posts. Facade is 4 bay (W,D,D,W). Windows are 4/4 DH.
261	c. 1916-30	C	038	One-story frame, double-gable-front bungalow, rectangularly massed, has projecting gabled porch with knee braces, square wooden columns, 3-bay facade (W2,D,W2). Windows are 6/1 DH.
311	c. 1901-15	C	039	One-story frame, hip-roofed, former bungalow on brick piers, with wrap porch, additions at west, south, and east. Facade is 5 bay (W,D,D,W,W). Main windows are 6/6 DH. Wrap porch is enclosed at west end.
330	c. 1916-30	C	040	One-story, irregularly-massed, multiple-gabled frame bungalow on brick piers has good remaining Craftsman details. Knee braces survive on dormer, gabled porch. Windows are multi-light/1 DH. Doors are multi-light.
355	p. 1950	NC	041	One-story, rectangularly-massed, brick-veneered, former cafeteria building for fire-destroyed Thomaston Grammar School. Concrete block addition at east has horizontal-paned aluminum windows. Main building has multi-light steel windows with opening panels. Interior steel roof trusses are visible. Walls are plastered, painted. This lot was once home to the Thomaston grammar school.
450	p. 1950	NC	042	One-story frame, brick-veneered, side-gabled, ranch house has few decorative details on 4-bay facade (W,W,D,W3). Windows are 2/2 DH aluminum and tripartite.
516	c. 1916-30	C	043	One-story frame, rectangularly-massed bungalow/Craftsman with double-gabled front and large side-gabled porch. Facade is 3 bay (W,D,W2) with 3/3 DH windows.
554	c. 1901-15	C	044	One-story frame house on brick piers has gable-on-hip roof, projecting front gable wrap porch on turned posts. Irregularly massed, house has 3-bay facade (W2,D+,W2). Windows are 1/1 DH. One-light carved door is in surround with overlights, sidelights.
581	p. 1950	NC	045	Wood, metal, and plastic trailer with wooden entry deck.
582	p. 1950	NC	046	One-story, side-gabled, brick-veneered ranch house with 4-bay facade (W,W2,D,W2). Windows are 2/2 DH horizontal aluminum.
Lake Circle				
122	p. 1950	NC	047	One-story frame house with 3 gabled wings faces west onto Thomaston pond and park. Partly inset porch on square columns fits between west and south wings. Foundation is continuous brick. Windows are mix and match.

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Thomaston Central Historic District

Marengo County, Alabama

Main Street

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|-----|------------|----|-----|---|
| 041 | c. 1905 | C | 048 | Two-story brick and frame house, formerly the O.D. Carlton store has added frame second story, added gabled wing on south. Facade is 4 bay (W,D,D,W). Windows are 2/2 DH on first story, have segmental brick arched hoods. Doors are 4-panel with 1-light transoms. |
| 101 | c. 1901-15 | C | 049 | One-story, one-room, thick-walled brick former ice house with single entry door facing east. Brick work vents. Building was used as Town Hall in the 1930s, 40s. |
| 111 | p. 1950 | NC | 050 | One-story, rectangularly-massed, concrete block building is side-gabled, has 2-bay facade (W,D). Window at left is 1-light. Three-light "ribbon" windows above main openings are wood-framed. Foundation is concrete slab. |
| 126 | c. 1901-10 | C | 051 | One-story frame, irregularly-massed, hip-and-gable roofed house with wrap porch on turned posts has cut work trim. Facade is 3 bay (W, D+, Bay). Windows are 2/2 DH. Door is 1-light, in altered surround. Built by or for W.W. Allen, perhaps by T.E. Clancy. |
| 197 | c. 1921 | C | 052 | Two-story brick Greek-cross form church with projecting gables on central hipped roof, classical entrance details including pedimented gable, round-arched door openings with stained glass fanlights. Recessed entry has "in-antis" columns between brick ante-rooms. Numerous additions on rear. |
| 227 | p. 1950 | NC | 053 | One-story frame, front-gabled former Craftsman style house has been re-sided with wide cedar weatherboards, has 2-bay facade (W, W2), with entry door in side of projecting gable. New porch on box columns and garage to south. |
| 234 | c. 1960 | NC | 054 | One-story, hip-roofed, ranch style house has 4-bay facade (Ws,D,Plate & Casements, Casements). Windows are steel-framed. Door is new, with "Moroccan" lights. Recessed entry has one fluted, round support pillar, tile-covered floor and steps. One interior chimney survives. Exterior is brick-veneered, with "belt line" at base of first story, basement on north. Large garage to north has roof solar array. |
| 255 | c. 1901-15 | C | 055 | One-story frame, "T" shaped house on brick piers has 3-bay facade (W,D,W2) with 2/2 DH windows. Door is in surround with transom. Shed-roofed porch beside projecting northern ell has carport extension at south. |
| 280 | c. 1931-45 | C | 056 | One-story frame, vinyl-sided, double-front-gabled bungalow has 4-bay facade (W,D,D,W). Windows are new 2/2 aluminum and glass. Doors are 5-panel (L), and 4-panel (R). Porch on hollow square columns has wood floor. |
| 281 | c. 1931-45 | C | 057 | One-story frame, "L" - shaped house (shotgun with addition?), has 3-bay facade (D,W,W2). Windows are 4/4 DH. Full-width shallow porch is supported on 4" by 4" posts, has wood floor (new). Foundation is brick piers. |
| 305 | p. 1950 | NC | 058 | One-story, side-gabled, brick-veneered ranch house has 7-bay facade (W2,W2,D,W,W,W,Cpt). Windows are 2/2 DH horizontal aluminum. Front-gabled shallow entry porch is centered, supported on round classical columns. |

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Marengo County, Alabama

306	p. 1950	NC	059	One-story frame, side-gabled board-and-batten covered modern house, is rectangularly massed. Facade is 4 bay (Ws,D,W,W). Windows are 6/6 DH anodized aluminum. Full-width, shed-roofed porch is supported on 4" by 4" posts, has wood floor, becomes deck on north end.
Range Road				
20134	1900-01	C	060	One-story frame, rectangularly-massed, side-gabled, former L&N Depot, has 1-bay facade (freight door) on south, 1-bay western elevation (passenger entry). Wide roof overhang on cutwork brackets was shelter. Building was moved north from tracks approximately 60 feet in c.1991 to save from demolition. It was reoriented in the same way on its new site.
21046	p. 1950	NC	061	One-story, side-gabled, cinder-block laundromat has 3 plate lights flanking central 2-leafed aluminum and glass doors. Concrete slab for parking fronts building.
21047	c. 1916-30	NC	062	Completely altered, one-story frame house now has concrete block foundation, sheet siding exterior. All openings altered. New composition shingle roof.
21072	p. 1950	NC	063	Rectangularly-massed, one-story, metal-clad and roofed auto parts store on concrete slab. Facade is 2 bay (WDW,D). Windows are plates.
21091	p. 1950	NC	064	One-story frame, vinyl-covered, rectangularly-massed frame house on concrete block foundation has centered, shed-roofed porch on 4" by 4" posts. Roof is v-seam metal. Facade is 5-bay (W2,W,D,W2,W2).
21111	p. 1950	NC	065	Modern metal, pre-fab shed used as office for D & E Auto Sales.
21122	c. 1901-10	C	066	One-story frame, "L" shaped house with former kitchen added at south. Facade is 4 bay (W,D,W,W). Windows are 2/2 and 2/1 DH. Porch in ell has shed roof. Decorative shingles face gable ends. Other exterior details include vertical board kitchen exterior. Diagonal beadboard in parlor.
			067	This resource was destroyed by storm during project and excluded from inventory. Originally was a 1930s frame gas station.
21195	c.1994	NC	068	One-story concrete block, rectangularly massed modern Conoco gas station with clipped entry corner and pumps facing intersection of State Highways 25 and 28, on site of Thomaston Hotel. Glass and aluminum facade.
21214	c. 1960	NC	069	One-story, brick-veneered, flat-roofed, concrete block telephone exchange for Southland Phone Company. Few details on exterior. Slab foundation.
21230	c. 1970	NC	070	One-story concrete-block, rectangularly-massed C & C gas station on concrete slab. Facade is 4 bay (Plates 2,D+, garage door, D). Windows are aluminum and glass.
21233	c. 1901-10	C	071	One-story brick, free-standing gable-front, rectangularly-massed former (Buck's) livery stable and present county barn with central entry and segmental-arched window facing Range Road. A row of low "feeding" windows for horses range across north and south elevations.

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Thomaston Central Historic District

Marengo County, Alabama

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|-------|------------|----|------|---|
| 21259 | c. 1901-15 | C | 072 | One-story frame, hip-and-gable roofed, rectangularly-massed house with cutwork trim on wrap porch has 4-bay facade (W,D+,W,W). Windows are 2/2 DH. Door is 1-light, in surround with overlights and sidelights. Integrity of trim and massing good, including rear porch. Foundation is brick piers. Known as Ernest Eaton house. |
| 21260 | c. 1925 | C | 073 | One-and-a-half story Thomaston Methodist church with central front gable, crenelated tower to right, entry porch under second front gable. Facade at street level is 3 bay (W2,D+,W2), on upper level 2 bay (W2,Belfry). Windows on ground floor are 1/1 DH with frosted bottom lights. Main entry surround has concrete hood, multiple-light overlights. Entry is in wide gabled porch with segmental-arched opening. |
| 21280 | c. 1955 | NC | 074 | One-and-a-half story frame, Post World War II, rectangularly massed house. Facade is 4 bay (W2,W2,D,W2). Windows are 6/6 DH. Door is recessed. Built and used as Methodist parsonage. |
| 21300 | c. 1960 | NC | 075 | One-story, brick-veneered, side-gabled ranch style house with shallow "porch" recessed on left 2/3 of facade. Windows are 2/2 DH horizontal. |
| 21301 | c. 1905 | C | 076 | One-story frame, irregularly-massed, eclectic-Victorian/Colonial Revival style house with extensive wrap porch on half-length, paneled box columns, brick piers. Facade is 6 bay (Sun porch,D,W,W,D+,Bay). Windows are 9/1 DH. Doors are multi-light. Entry has multiple overlights, sidelights. Dr. Harrell's house after T.A. Lowery, early merchant. |
| 21401 | c. 1901-15 | C | 077 | One-and-a-half story frame with numerous alterations, wrap porch on east and south with turned posts. Facade is 3 bay (W2,D+,W). Windows are new, Door is 4-panel in surround with overlights, sidelights. Tripled casement windows in gable ends. Shed-roofed dormers added at east, west. Known as Hollis/Nunnelee house. |
| 21411 | c. 1931-45 | C | 078 | One-story frame, gable-front, Post World-War II bungalow/Colonial house with gabled entry, northern screened porch. Facade is 4 bay including porch at right (W2,D,W2,Porch). Windows are 6/6 DH. Known as Parker house. |
| 21414 | c. 1906 | C | 079 | One-story frame, asbestos-shingle-covered, Colonial Revival style house with "classical" entry door, surround. Resident King and Buck families call the house "Breeze Hill." Facade is 5 bay (W,W,D+,W,W). Windows are 3/1 DH. Door is 1-light, in classical surround with overlights, sidelights, broken pediment. |
| 21440 | c. 1931-45 | C | 080 | One-story frame, multiple-gable-roofed Tudor Revival style house with screened porch under front gable to left of facade. Built by Frank Thomas, nephew of C.B. Thomas in the Depression. Facade is 4 bay (Screened porch,D,W,W). Round-arched windows and doors, massing, and roofline are typical of Tudor Revival style. |
| 21461 | 1908-09 | C | 081a | Two-story brick, Neo-Classical/Craftsman hip-roofed Marengo County High School with slightly projecting end bays, centered, one-story, flat-roofed entry porch on square, hollow columns. Auditorium to rear (west) centered, extended. Facade has 15 openings in 3 main bays. Other buildings on school property are 1949 brick-veneered, gym with failing roof, one-story, brick-veneered home economics building, two-story concrete block firehouse. A pivotal feature of the Central Thomaston District. |

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21461	c. 1949	C	081b	One-and-a-half story, mid-20th century, rectangularly-massed, brick-veneered gymnasium built for county school. Framing is metal and concrete, including curving, metal-covered (failing) roof. Windows are multi-paned, metal framed, many broken. Doors are wood and metal. Concrete slab foundation.
24461	c. 1950	C	081c	One-story, L-shaped, brick-veneer-covered concrete block building constructed c. 1950 as Home Economics/Shop building for county high school. Windows are metal-framed casements with overlights. Doors are wood with 4 lights and metal. Concrete slab foundation. In use currently (1986-2000) as Thomaston's Rural Heritage Center.
21461	c. 1975	NC	081d	Two-story, rectangularly-massed, gable-roofed, concrete block, city fire station. Building faces north onto Sixth Avenue, has metal and glass 2/2 windows in second floor residential quarters, 3 metal rolling garage doors on first. Foundation is concrete slab.
Second Avenue				
6223	c. 1925	C	082	One-story frame, rectangularly-massed, vaguely Colonial Revival house on brick piers has 4-bay facade (W,D,D,W), full-width porch on box columns. Windows are 2/2 DH.
6227	c. 1950	C	083	Two-story frame, side-gabled Neo-Colonial Revival style house has 5-bay facade (W3,D,W3/W2,W2). Central entry stoop on main section is under gabled detail. Foundation is continuous brick. Built for C.C. Pritchett Jr., banker.
6230	c. 1917	C	084	One-story frame, hip-roofed Colonial Revival/Craftsman house, irregularly massed, has 5 bays on main mass (W,W,D+,W,W). Windows are 2/2 DH. Door is 1-light, in surround with overlights, sidelights. Hip-roofed porch wraps main house and sun room extension to east, continues across rear elevation, has 1/2-length battered wooden posts on brick piers. Aluminum siding covers. Original house bought from Emmett Ward by C.C. Pritchett, Sr., c. 1914.
6260	c. 1950-70	NC	085	One-story frame, brick-veneered ranch house on brick foundation has 3-bay facade under hipped roof with integral carport at left. (W2,D,W).
6261	c. 1950-70	NC	086	One-story frame, brick-veneered modern house with side-gabled roof, 6-bay facade with recessed entry. (W,W/W2,W3,D,W) Built and used as Baptist pastorium.
6276	c. 1950-70	NC	087	One-story frame, brick-veneered ranch house on brick foundation with 3-bay facade (W2,D,W), gable-roofed entry.
6300	c. 1901-15	C	088	One-story frame, irregularly-massed house with cutwork and molding detailing on porch, windows, vents. Facade is 4 bay (D,W,D+,W). Windows are 2/2 DH. Door is carved 1-light in surround with overlights, sidelights. Porch wraps from southern ell to western ell, is supported on turned posts. Built by and for T.E. Clancy, it was later owned by John King and Dr. Stallworth.
6301	c. 1901-15	C	089	One-story frame, hipped and multiple-gabled roof eclectic house has Craftsman era wrap porch from central projecting ell to west. Facade is 4 bay, with 1/1 and 6/1 DH windows. Door is multi-light, in surround with 1-light transom. House built for L.S. Fox, early town

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				merchant.
6326	c. 1901-15	C	090	One-story brick, altered building in commercial block, rectangularly massed, now placed under common metal roof with #92, 93. Round-arched window openings have new aluminum and glass fittings. Originally building was John Buck's Drug Store, had doctor's office on second floor that burned, was removed.
6327	c. 1930	C	091	One-story brick, rectangularly-massed free-standing commercial building (former bank) has metal windows, new aluminum and glass door (W,W,D). Eastern elevation has doorway with segmental arch, stepped roofline. Parapet fronting shed roof is covered with vinyl.
6336a	c. 1915	NC	092	One-story brick, rectangularly-massed commercial building, facade altered to eliminate entry, new window installed. Was part of 2-story Buck complex originally.
6336b	c. 1920-40	NC	093	One-story brick, much-altered, rectangular commercial block building attached to #90, 92 under common metal roof. Complete new facade eliminates remaining historic fabric.
6337a	c. 1901-1915	C	094	One-story frame, free-standing, gable-front early 20th century store building with intact double-leafed beadboard door and shuttered windows, shed-roofed canopy over sidewalk. Facade is 3 bay (W,D,W). Known early as the Thomaston Dispensary, it sold wine and other spirits among other merchandise.
6337b	c. 1901-15	C	095	One-story frame, free-standing, gable-front board-and-batten storage warehouse behind #94. Facade has plank door of vertical boards, Interior is floored but unwallled.
6346	c. 1916	C	096	One-story brick, rectangularly-massed commercial block building with 1-light plates in wooden frames filling segmental-arched openings, 7-panel, double-leafed doors. (Plate,D2,Plate) Parapet has decorative brickwork cornice, recessed panels. Now Moseley's Feed, historically it was the L.S. Fox General Merchandise store.
6343	c. 1960-80	NC	097	One-story concrete block rectangularly-massed Linden Wood Co, building with side-gabled roof has brick-veneered 3-bay facade, canopy on square brick piers.
6347	c. 1901-15	C	098	One-story frame, free-standing gable-front early 20th century commercial building, rectangularly massed has 3-bay facade with 4-light plates flanking recessed double entry doors. Details of entry and gable end are covered by asphalt siding. Remembered as Mason's Café, then Anderson's, it is now used for storage and an apartment.
6352	c. 1916-30	C	099	One-story brick, rectangularly-massed commercial block building with original wood and glass 3-bay storefront (Plate,D2,Plate) with some infill around entry. Parapet with corbeled brick cornice has recessed panels. Old v-seam metal canopy shelters sidewalk.
6356	c. 1915-16	C	100	Two-story brick, rectangularly-massed, commercial building (Moseley's) with original storefront, 3 bay facade (Plates,D2.Plates). Doors are double, beveled wood, paneled, have matching screens. Segmental arches on 2nd floor windows lit Masonic Hall used for a while as school rooms. Parapet has corbeled cornice, dentils, recessed panels. Built as Hollis Brothers General Merchandise in 1916, it was later E.T. Hale's store.

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Thomaston Central Historic District

Marengo County, Alabama

6366	c. 1916-30	C	101	One-story brick, rectangularly-massed commercial building with clipped eastern facade corner, pent roof on facade and east elevation, Craftsman details in doors, windows. Built by E.H. Bailey in late 1920s as pharmacy (shop) and Dr. Stallworth's office (rear).
6367	c. 1960	NC	102	One-story concrete block, free-standing rectangularly-massed commercial building with brick veneer on 3-bay facade (Plate,D2,Plate).
6370	c. 1931	C	103	One-story, rectangularly-massed, brick commercial building faced with yellow brick veneer. Leaded Luxfor glass "Quality Store" sign gives Art Deco detail. Storefront altered. Building has served as Thomaston Post Office.
6375	c. 1950-70	NC	104	One-story, free-standing rectangularly-massed, concrete block, former gas station with pumps removed, garage bay filled in for seating.
6376	c. 1926-45	C	105	One-story brick, rectangularly-massed, commercial building with mid-20th century Craftsman/Deco details in windows, doors, on signage area with original lighting. Built for W. Lauren Skinner in the late 1920s or early 30s, it is believed to have been the first Studebaker dealership in Marengo County. Skinner's, the Quality Store, and Dr. Stallworth's buildings, facing Second Avenue, replaced the large brick Thomaston Mercantile Company here, which originally faced Range Road and the New Thomaston Hotel at the main town intersection.
6401	c. 1930/80	NC	106	One-story brick and concrete block, much altered gas station/store. No original surfaces showing. Brick veneer exterior. Was originally Etheridge Grocery/Gas/Café.
6435	c. 1905-20	C	107	One-story frame, irregularly-massed house on brick piers, with numerous gabled additions, extensive Craftsman-style wrap porch on north, east. Facade is 4 bay (W,D+,W,W). Windows are 1/1. Door is 1-light, in surround with overlights and sidelights. Known as "King Cottage", it is believed to be an early home.
6510	p. 1950	NC	108	Modern, rectangularly-massed, flat-roofed, free-standing commercial building (Planter's Bank and Trust) has divided plates in 3 sections west of double entry, two sections east. Signage area over entry is vinyl sided. Exterior is brick veneer. Concrete block construction.
Short Street				
058	c. 1905-10	C	109	One-story frame, Colonial Revival, belcast hip-roofed house with extensive wrap porch on western 4-bay facade (W,D,D,W), northern and eastern ends. Porch is integral under flared eaves, supported on battered columns. Spring house survives near kitchen ell.
110	c. 1905-20	C	110	One-story frame, hip-roofed house, with central-gable feature on Craftsman porch which wraps entry, screened porch at south end. Facade is 4 bay (W, WD,WW,Screened porch). Windows are 2/2 DH. Known as home of "Hub" Mahrony.
110b	c. 1910-30	C	111	One-room, front-gabled frame "cook's" house expanded by addition of second gabled room at rear. Original cabin has exterior fireplace on west, shed-roofed, unfloored front porch. Facade is one bay (WDW). Windows are fixed 4-panes. Flush tongue-and-groove interior walls.

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195	1916-30	C	112	One-story frame, gable-front bungalow with hip-roofed porch on Craftsman posts, gabled extension at rear. Facade is 3 bay (W2,D,W2). Foundation is brick piers. Sixth Avenue
015	c. 1886	C	113	One-story frame with vinyl, "L" shaped house with projecting front gable; gable has diamond-shaped shingles, diamond-shaped louvered vent, and cut-and-spindle bargeboard; 5 bay facade (W,W,D,W2,W); hip roof porch with wood columns; original turned posts on rear elevation; additional rear addition; replacement windows and front door, original front door now on rear. Built by W.G. Nixon, later home/office of town founder Dr. Thomas.
055	c. 1931-45	C	114	One-story frame bungalow on brick foundation with side-gabled roof, gabled entry, multi-light door. Range Road facade is 5 bay (W,W,D,W2,W). Screened porch to north now serves as entry. Third Avenue
203	c. 1901-15	C	115	One-story frame house has side-gabled roof with gable-front entry, new wrap porch with concrete floor, new posts. Entry surround intact. Facade is 3 bay (W2,D+,W2). Windows are 2/2 DH. Door is 1-light in surround with overlights and sidelights.
214	c. 1946	C	116	One-story frame, front-gabled bungalow has 4-bay facade (W2,W2,D,Screened Porch). Windows are 6/6 DH in frames with drip cap. Gable-front entry porch (on metal posts) and main gable vent are demi-lune-shaped. Foundation is continuous brick at front, brick piers at rear.
250	c. 1901-15	C	117	One-story frame with vinyl, "L" shaped house with gable roof; projecting front gable is attached to hip roof porch supported by turned posts with cutwork brackets; brick piers; replacement windows; original door surround; three bay facade (W2,D+,W2).
251	p. 1950	NC	118	One-story frame, early ranch style house with recessed porch to right of projecting shallow front gable. Porch is supported on metal posts, has concrete floor. Windows are 3/1 and plate. Foundation is concrete block.
271	c. 1901-15	C	119	Two-story frame, asphalt-shingle covered, rectangularly-massed house with one-story full-width front and rear porches. Facade is 3 bay (W,D,W on first, W,W,W on second). Modest but intact wood detail. Good interior staircase. Early boarding house for teachers.
345	c. 1960	NC	120	One-story, side-gabled, concrete block town hall has slab foundation, composition shingle roof. Facade is 5 bay (D,W,W,W,W). Recessed door is wood and glass. Windows are 5 horizontal lights, in recessed panels. Post office facade on Main Street has door to left of multiple horizontal-paned window panels.
350	c. 1910-20	C	121	One-and-a-half story frame, gable-front house, rectangularly massed, with screened porch to east and porte cochere on west creating "T" shape. Unusually wide gable front has some Colonial Revival details. Facade is 4 bay (Porte cochere,W2,D2,W2,Screened porch) Windows are 2/2 DH. Built for T. J. Day by local contractor Thad Way.
367	p. 1946	NC	122	One-story, side-gabled, concrete block vehicle and maintenance barn for town of Thomaston has no style details, poured concrete slab foundation, metal rolling garage doors. Side and rear windows are multi-light metal and glass.

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466	c. 1901-15	NC	123	One-story frame, gable-on-hip roofed house with altered 4-bay facade (W,D,W,W2), aluminum siding. Foundation is brick piers.
467	c. 1901-15	C	124	One-story frame, hip-and-multiple-gabled house with wrap porch on turned posts with cutwork brackets. Porch runs east from projecting gable-front ell on northern facade, continues on east elevation. Good remaining wood detail. Facade is 3 bay (W2,D+,W2). Windows are 2/2 DH. Door surround has overlights, sidelights. Carriage house (#1) at rear.
495	p. 1950	NC	125	One-story frame, side-gabled, Post-World-War-II Colonial style bungalow on continuous foundation has 3-bay facade (W2,D,W2). Windows are 6/6 DH aluminum. Front-gabled entry porch with concrete floor is supported on classical columns. End chimney is brick.
535	p. 1950	NC	126	One-story, side-gabled, brick-veneered ranch house has shallow porch roof on decorative metal posts to east, carport to west. Foundation is not visible. Windows are 2/2 DH horizontal aluminum. Door has "wagon wheel" lights.
535b	c. 1920-45	C	127	One-story, one-room, side-gabled cabin behind house on southeast corner of Third & Chestnut (#126). One window on east end. Plank doors facing north and south. Exterior end chimney on west.
536	c. 1901-15	C	128	One-story frame, irregularly-massed house with good surviving wood detail in porch to right of front-gabled ell. Facade is 3 bay (W,D,W). Windows are 2/2 DH. Door is carved 1-light in surround with 1-light transom. Gabled additions added on rear. History says T.E. Clancy built the house for his parents, Mr. & Mrs. J.O. Clancy.

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Criterion A: Community Planning/Development and Social History:

The Thomaston Central Historic District in Marengo County, Alabama, is eligible for the National Register under Criterion A for Community Planning/Development and for Social History as an excellent example of one man's early 20th-century efforts to create a "New South" town in rural Alabama. Its founder, Dr. Charles B. Thomas, along with a chosen group of investors and business people, planned, platted, and promoted Thomaston in 1901 as a potential railroad, agricultural, and industrial hub. Based on the "New South" philosophy of industrialization, diversified agriculture, modernization, and immigration, Thomaston was envisioned to enrich its citizens with services and opportunities not guaranteed in traditional southern towns. In a flurry of early development corresponding with the L&N railroad extending a new line through what would become Thomaston, the town gained many residences, commercial buildings, industrial interests, schools, and civic resources. This growth soon stalled and the town has stayed virtually the same throughout the 20th century. Although Thomaston never fulfilled Dr. Thomas's dream, the town plan, the narrow lanes, the large residential yards, school, churches, pond and park, business district, and industrial area survive as the remaining extant references to Thomaston's early idealistic beginnings. As such, Thomaston Central Historic District encompasses the historic elements of plan, standing structures, and social philosophy of an increasingly threatened resource in Alabama: small, rural early-20th-century towns.

Criterion C: Architecture

The Thomaston Central Historic District is also eligible under Criterion C for its good examples of early-to-mid-20th-century residential, commercial, and religious architecture. This is reflected in its fine collection of vernacular residential forms such as L- and T-Cottage, central hall, and single-pen houses, its early 20th-century commercial structures, and its public and semi-public structures such as schools and churches. A few outstanding examples exist of vernacular forms of popular styles of the period including Queen Anne, Craftsman, Classical Revival, and Colonial Revival. Thomaston's commercial buildings are typically one- or two-story brick commercial blocks, but there are one-story, free-standing, gable-front frame buildings remaining as well. The Colonial and Classical Revival and Craftsman stylistic influence can also be seen in the two churches and the Marengo County High School building.

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HISTORY OF THOMASTON

Early Settlement Period

Thomaston shares a common history with other interior Marengo County towns. As part of the borderlands between the Mississippi Choctaws and the Alabama Creeks, the territory that became Marengo County was not the site of permanent Native American settlement, but served as a hunting and seasonal camping area. A more detailed discussion of the Native American occupation of the area is found in the "History" section of the 1992 Demopolis and Linden Historic Resource Surveys.

More similar to Linden than to Demopolis because of its distance from the Tombigbee River, the site of Thomaston was settled in the early years after the Creek land cession by farmers and plantation owners like Allen Glover and Richard Wooten. These planters arrived from Virginia and the Carolinas to begin cotton production on new lands. None of the French refugees who made Demopolis's early history so exotic seem to have settled here, and the "borderlands" nature of the Indian presence eliminated the likelihood of resident Native Americans.

The earliest surviving evidence of occupation by settlers of European stock is graveyards, most of which are abandoned. One such cemetery and community, known as White Hall, was located one mile east of Thomaston, extending north and south of the present Highway 28. The 1895 Marengo County Map shows White Hall as a community, but local histories say the site was abandoned in the late 1830s, after a yellow fever epidemic. ("Early Settlers and Settlement" N.P., N.D., Thomaston Town Hall) A few remaining headstones survive on a tree-studded ridge north of the highway. The most accessible headstones here are those of General John Bowie "Born in Abbeville (S.C.?) 27th A...", "Julie Bowie, Died 16th October, 1811, 1 year, 6 months," and "Miss E. Wooten, died July 20, 1844, aged 36 years." The site of this cemetery may prove to be valuable archaeologically, given the early death dates and the possibility of evidence of early buildings or encampments.

Three other "lost" cemeteries were noted by local residents: a family plot at the site of the John Wesley Buck Plantation just east of Cemetery Road (newly renamed Persimmon Place); another group of unmarked graves west from the southern end of Chestnut Street (behind a now-vacant commercial building); and two remaining marked gravestones on the eastern slope of the town lake at the end of First Avenue, one of which is a joint grave for two children of early settler Allen Fritts.

Scattered references to the area's early inhabitants are found in U.S. Census reports from the 1840s, 1850s, and 1860s. Alabama's Agricultural and Industrial Index for 1860 lists some of the familiar names from later accounts of early settlers -- Buck, Fritts, Eli Boozer, Buckannon (or Buchannon), Hollis, and Wooten. Those listed are generally credited with the common types of livestock (milk cows, other cattle, horses, some oxen, some mules, pigs) and the expected crops (cotton, Indian corn, sweet and Irish potatoes, oats, peas, and beans.)

Thomaston's "Early Settlers" history says that William G. Nixon moved to the area in 1861 from Mississippi, bought the Fritts plantation, and opened a store near where the former L & N tracks cross Range Road today. This may well have been near the home site on the Fritts plantation, as the grave of two Fritts children is slightly north and east. Gertrude Pearson, in her 1976 "History of Thomaston," says Nixon opened a store on the site of the present Billy Stokes house on the west side of Range Road just north of the tracks in 1869. Her history says the first post office was opened at this location in 1871 and given the name "Nixonville." It was apparently closed in 1873, and re-opened in 1878, according to the unpublished "History of the Thomaston Post Office" available at the City Hall.

Deed records at The Marengo County Courthouse show a W.G. Nixon as "Grantee" in several Marengo County property transactions in Deed Books V, W, X, and Z, as listed in the 1820-1880 Reverse/Direct Index to Deeds. In Deed Book Z, on page 140, is recorded Nixon's purchase of about 16 acres from J.W. and W.M. Bush. This was the plot where Nixon built a house that was later purchased by Charles B. Thomas. It had "tenements including one steam engine and boiler of 25 horsepower, also a grist mill and gin and belting and appurtenances." This was most likely the Bush Store referred to in the histories. The purchase of this property took place on Dec. 31, 1886. Oral history says Nixon moved his store to this northern location. It was this piece of property, along with several others, that Dr. Charles B. Thomas bought in 1893.

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Early 20th-Century Development

Deed records show that Thomas bought this 16-acre property where his house and office were in 1893. (Book AA, pg. 560) Although this house (# 113) is described as Nixon's "Plantation House," stylistically, it is a late 19th century building, a fact which fits with Nixon's 1886 purchase of the land. This probably means that the Nixon-Thomas house was built in the late 1880s -- it would still be one of the earliest surviving homes in the area if so. Dr. Thomas used the house as both home and office, and kept a nearby store and post office that had been Nixon's. Following the change in ownership, the community was renamed Thomaston. It was this version of the town that was recorded on J.B. Little's 1895 "Map of Marengo County."

Thomas was a man attuned to his era. He was inspired by the progressivism and promise of the post-Reconstruction development of the South's natural resources. He was also familiar with the rhetoric and the methodology of late 19th century "New South" development philosophy. No family papers or records have been donated to libraries or located among surviving members of the Thomas family, so tracing his ideas and plans can only be done by interpreting his subsequent actions and the efforts he made to promote his plans. Thomas was one of many men taken with "development fever" in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The successful founding and development of Birmingham following the Civil War had created an industrial and financial sensation, and entrepreneurs like Thomas came to believe that railroads and modern merchandising methods could be combined to repeat, or at least benefit from, that city's phenomenal success. (Reference in Demopolis Times Industrial edition story on Thomas, Thomaston.)

Dr. Thomas claimed in early newspaper articles that he had the backing of Philadelphia merchant and innovator John Wanamaker. Wanamaker was serving as President Benjamin Harrison's Postmaster General at the time Dr. Thomas took over Nixon's store and post office. Although no documented links between Thomas and Wanamaker could be found, it is possible that Thomas contacted the merchandising "prince" and social reformer about his development plans. It is certain that he included unusual emphasis on providing social services such as good schools, parks, and other modern town services in his entry into venture capitalism.

The Town of Thomaston was incorporated November 15, 1901 and "filed for record" on the 30th. (Marengo County Deed Book DD, pg. 360) Interestingly, the railroad was completed through Thomaston November 21, 1901. The Louisville and Nashville Railroad's Selma to Myrtlewood Branch was apart of a larger expansion to connect Selma to New Orleans. The town's plat map surveyed the railroad line as well, and it was reported that "In 1900...the Nixon family had moved from the locality and Dr. C.B. Thomas had bought their interest; and the Buck, Hollis, Thomas, and Walke families were all that lived in the locality." The surveyor, a Mr. Jones, said Thomas employed him to survey and lay out the town "after the railroad was surveyed, and under construction." (Jones, Joel D. "Old Times" 1942 column reprinted in the Democrat Reporter on Nov. 17, 1988.)

The plat map Jones drew up shows the L & N Railroad as the southern edge of the town. The western edge is three lots west of Chestnut Street, the northern edge is the southern side of Seventh Avenue, and the eastern edge is the western side of Short Street (Short Street is not drawn on the map.) Thomas's planned town shows his own properties in "Block 34" marked with "T." As planned, the town had large residential lots, 12 to 14 per block, from the north side of Fourth Avenue to Seventh. Blocks between Cherry and Church south of Fourth were laid off in small commercial lots all the way south to the tracks. A "private" lake and park were shown between Chestnut and Cherry Streets, south of Second Avenue. The L&N Depot was located east of Range Road at the tracks. Its outline shows the passenger shelter extending west from the Depot. (See attached 1901 plat map.)

In typical early-20th century development form, Thomas put a lot of faith in advertising. Promotional ads for Thomaston lots, plots, and acreage appeared in local papers throughout 1904-11. The ads appeared in the Linden and Demopolis papers, and possibly in Selma and beyond. Thomaston had its own newspaper, the Thomaston Post, from 1905-1910. Although J.P. Anderson edited the paper, Dr. Thomas was its founder and its chief financier. A copy of Vol. 1, No. 1, from Sept 28, 1905, was made at the State Archives to illustrate the type of information carried. A map centered on the front page shows Thomaston's location relative to other county towns, to the L&N Railroad, and to "building" and "projected" additional railroads and public roads. The map is labeled "THOMASTON, ALA. WITH ITS ARTERIES OF PUBLIC THOROUGHFARES PENETRATING EVERY SECTION." At the four outer corners of the page are photographs of prominent buildings -- the Presbyterian and Baptist churches, the new school building, and the Thomaston Gin and Warehouse Co. The text of the main front-page article describes and promotes the new city. Unfortunately, none of these early buildings

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have survived.

Other issues of the paper viewed on microfilm at the Archives and at the Planters' Bank in Thomaston have similar promotional articles and maps, along with ads for local and county businesses, and the usual state, national, and international tidbits common in early 20th-century newspapers. A large and detailed article on Thomaston was carried in the "Industrial Edition" of the Demopolis Times in 1910. The article is headlined "Marengo's Modern City," with two decks of subheads extolling the town's "magic growth" and the wisdom of its founder. The article might have been written by Dr. Thomas himself, or his editor J.P. Anderson (the writer is un-named), because its form and substance closely follow the early article in the Thomaston Post. The same map of town is used as appeared in several Post articles.

Between 1905 and 1911, most of the town's major businesses appear to have been established, the town's original built fabric was constructed, and the promotion of the thoroughly modern, progressive town was carried out. As early as 1905, a Board of Trustees was established to bid for the Marengo County High School, and Thomas donated land for the purpose. In 1902, the Improvement Company sold land for the establishment of the Thomaston Colored Institute. The public park and lake shown on the plat map were established, and a "bored well" dug to supply town water. The depot was in place, as well as the two-story frame New Thomaston Hotel located at the main intersection to accommodate visitors and railroad travelers arriving at the depot one block to the south. Only two of the commercial buildings from that earliest period survive in place today, the Dispensary and Mason's Store, on the south side of Second Avenue. Early frame buildings on the north side of Second apparently burned in 1909, and were replaced over the next 20 years with most of the buildings still surviving. (Pearson. "History," pg. 8.)

Newspaper records reveal what was not happening as well as what was. 1910 papers seem to be advertising the same 3,000 acres in lots and acreage parcels ("On easy terms") that were offered in 1905. And in a Linden Democrat Reporter issue from 1911, a large ad proclaims "The Opportunity of a Life Time," the "Auction Sale of All Business Lots and Residence Lots," in Thomaston Tuesday June 20, 1911. The lots are to be sold at auction "regardless of price," and, as a further inducement to potential buyers, a balloon ascension by "Madame DeNorda, the Daredevil of the Universe," is scheduled for entertainment and enlightenment. (Copy of ad found in M.C.H.S album at Town Hall) No feature or follow-up articles on the sale were located in Reporter or Times issues following the sale. The Post was no longer produced by this time.

By 1911, there had been important changes in the way Thomaston looked, and the way it was organized. The "Marengo Improvement Company" was the corporation Thomas and several supporters had set up to sell available lands, lots, and services. In addition to the company itself, several businesses and projects were incorporated -- given "boards of directors," stock holders, and capital for operations -- according to business-regulating legislation written in a state law enacted in 1903. Records of these incorporations are recorded in the first "Corporation Record Book" at the Marengo County Courthouse. Listed among early corporate efforts are the Thomaston Brickworks, Thomaston Mercantile Company, Bank of Thomaston, Telephone Company, Marengo County High School, and Colored Institute. By 1907, in the same record book, most of these corporations were disbanded.

Thomaston was "between banks" when the 1911 listing was made by R.G. Dun in his Mercantile Agency Reference Book. Dun, later to become half of Dun & Bradstreet, rated 13 of the 15 businesses he listed in Thomaston. None of the businesses received his highest ratings, probably reserved for large, urban businesses. He rated T.L. Lowery's General Merchandise store at 3, the highest in town. At 3 1/2 were T.E. Clancy, general contractor and operator of the gin and warehouse; Cunningham & Co., General Merchandise; and Thomaston Brick Co. Those rated at the lowest numerical rating (4) were: T.J. Boozer & Son, Livery; W.K. Chapman, General Merchandise; W.H. Dixon, New Thomaston Hotel; Hollis-McNeil Mercantile Co.; Parker Brothers' General Merchandise; R.M. Reynold, blacksmith and welder; the Thomaston Drug Co.; the Thomaston Gin & Warehouse Co.; and the Thomaston Mercantile Co. Those listed but not ranked were: G.W. Buck, general merchandise; Clancy Lumber Co. (not including the sawmill); Charles Lion, dry goods; and F.M. Smart, grocery and meat. Dun recorded the banking town as Linden and the population as 427. Thomas and fellow promoters had incorporated a bank in 1905, but they closed it in 1908. Local banking resumed in 1914, with the opening of Planters' Bank and Trust.

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Although several of the important buildings shown on the 1925 Sanborn no longer exist, a limited number of modern replacements have taken their places, giving the town a fairly credible early 20th-century appearance. Missing from today's town are: all the industrial buildings, including the two early cotton gins and warehouses; the Presbyterian Church; the newspaper office, telephone exchange, and two-story brick store on the east side of Range Road near Second; the several frame one-story stores and the one-story frame bank on the south side of Second; and the "T"-shaped, frame public school on the block surrounded by Main, Fourth, Church, and Third. After the historic resources survey was completed, Skinner's Nash dealership (#105) was heavily damaged in a storm. Of all the lots laid out for commercial purposes, only the ones on the south and west sides of Block 36, the main downtown block between Second and Third, Range and Main, and Block 42, between Second and First Avenues, have much commercial development. There are several small wooden stores on Range between Second and the railroad track. On residential blocks of 8, 10, 12, or 14 planned lots, commonly one to four homes have been built. Many of the homes include multiple outbuildings of the sort common in rural towns of the time -- cooks' houses, barns, animal sheds, and storage buildings. So instead of becoming a rural metropolis, Thomaston has become a typical early 20th century rural southern town. It is this town, with a few historical changes and several recent ones, that serves as an architectural and historical document today.

Thomaston's Ties to the "New South" Philosophy

In the years just preceding and during the development years of the Town of Thomaston, the South and the Nation were enjoying an era of growth that was changing every aspect of life. By the 1890s, the southern version of the Civil-War-delayed American Industrial Revolution was underway. The mechanization of transportation, industry, and manufacturing was changing the relationships of people to their communities, communities to their counties and states, and states to their regions and the nation as a whole.

Increasing prosperity created money which was available for "improvements" ranging from social to scientific. Of particular importance to the development of Thomaston and similar southern communities were the expansion of the railroad systems, the development of industries to harvest the region's natural resources, and the expansion of commercial interests.

These national events meshed perfectly with Southern efforts to overcome the effects of the Civil War. A progressive campaign called the "New South" movement was begun in the region's modest to large sized cities. Business and industrial entrepreneurs, politicians, and powerful newspaper interests nurtured and promoted New South ideas. The basic principles of the movement "emphasized industrialization, diversified agriculture, immigration, and attempts to obtain outside capital." (Larsen, The Rise of the Urban South, pg. 11.)

Southern proponents of the campaign told northerners that "The section offered unparalleled opportunities to those who would help it become economically integrated." They told southerners that the South had been exploited by northern business interests, and that "To achieve independence, Southerners needed to build factories and develop transportation systems" with the raw materials and black laborers already available in the South. (Ibid., pg. 15)

New South spokesmen waged their campaign in print, like Henry Grady of the Atlanta Constitution, who shamelessly bragged about Atlanta's resources and potentials. They fought for it in state legislatures first by establishing development incentives like land donations for railroad development and later by passing laws to regulate exorbitant railroad rates. And they traveled north and east to convince bankers and industrialists that great profits awaited investors in the development of the South's "untapped" natural resources. (Ibid. pg. 11)

In Alabama, recovery from defeat and the indignities of the Reconstruction era created a local version of the movement. With it came a form of politics which abandoned the traditional Democratic base dominated by agrarian forces led by Black Belt plantation owners. (Hackney, Populism to Progressivism, pp. 122, 123) An interlude of "Populism" as an antidote to Reconstruction politics endorsed the "free silver" campaign and governmental management of corrupt railroads. Populism united a disparate group of special interests representing formerly unrepresented voters such as small-scale farmers and merchants. By the turn of the century, Populism evolved into a "Progressive" campaign that united big business and governmental interests. Progressivism switched power back into the

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hands of the elite, but the elite were now the business interests, rather than the planter-aristocrats. (Ibid., p. 126) Progressives were associated with the "New South" boosterism which advocated business and industrial development with governmental involvement.

Dr. Thomas was among those caught up in the development spirit. At the end of the 19th century, Thomas, a planter and practicing physician, was contemplating how best to use the substantial acreage he was purchasing east of the county seat, Linden, and south of the established towns of Dayton and Faunsdale. Thomas, born in 1858, had lived through the shutdown of his plantation society and the hard years of Reconstruction in the South. He had witnessed the emergence of new social and economic systems and the success of industrialization in places like the new and prosperous steel-and-rail city of Birmingham, just to the north. He realized that railroads, repaired following the Civil War and expanding to serve agricultural and industrial markets, were the keys to economic development.

Thomas bought land in Township 15, in Section 18 of Range 4 and the contiguous section 23 of Range 5 beginning in 1893 and added acreage in those and adjacent sections into the early 1900s. At their largest, his holdings appear to have totaled some 4,000 acres. (Deed Books AA through JJ Marengo County Courthouse) From the opening of the former Indian lands in the 1830s until his development program, the land was planted with cotton, sweet and Irish potatoes, corn, sorghum and other grains. (Agricultural records 1850, 1860, 1870) It lay on the northern edge of the vast forests of yellow pine that stretched south to the Gulf Coast. It was also good cattle land, as noted by author B.F. Riley in his late 19th century book Alabama As It Is, a running commentary on Alabama history and geography. "A finer grazing region was never seen than this flatwoods section, which sweeps without interruption from the Tombigbee to the Alabama River." (pg. 151) Two substantial cattle operations operated near Thomaston during its formative years, one run by store owners Hollis & McNeil, one by Thomas's nephew E.G. Thomas and C. S. Golden.

Unlike developers along many expanding railroad lines such as those described by historian John Reps in The Making of Urban America, Thomas devised a plan based on local geographical features and incorporating zoning and public spaces that were actually built and used. Because he lived in the community and actually believed in the principles of the New South movement, he subsequently dedicated several lots and even entire residential or commercial blocks on his original plat map for educational or religious purposes to insure the solidity of his enterprise.

Also unlike many of Reps' urban speculators, Thomas began newspaper promotion of his new community after key elements for its support and development were in place. Early issues of the Thomaston Post carry photos of a newly-constructed public school, a new Presbyterian Church, and the plant of the Thomaston Gin & Warehouse Company. The Post's first issue mentions "15 business houses..., a handsome and well-kept hotel..., two large improved system ginneries... (with a capacity of 150 bales a day), and a building and machinery for a hardwood sawmill and cooperage..."

Aside from records filed at the county courthouse (deeds, town plat map, incorporation papers, etc.), and early city board minutes, the best indicators of Dr. Thomas's intentions and plans for the town are early issues of the Post, established in 1905 and operational until 1910. The first issue, dated September 28, 1905, devotes its front page entirely to an explanation of Dr. Thomas's reasons for establishing a town. It is a model of the local application of the New South philosophy. His plans for town growth and development and his concerns about the kind of place it will be are well-detailed, as shown in the following excerpts:

At an altitude of about 300 feet above sea level and nearly seventy feet above the lowlands, on a level plateau of rich, sandy loam soil, rests the promising new town of Thomaston. There is a sense of harmony that confronts the visitor from its various approaches. Nature seems to have been lavish in portraying the beautiful for an ideal city; and although these natural adornments are in such profusion, yet its wealth of resources is pre-eminent.

...The soil itself is of such a character that it is capable of development far beyond the conception of a casual observer, for, happily, nature has so favored it that underlying the naturally rich and productive soil there is an inexhaustible supply of impervious clay, full of mineral elements requisite to feed and improve the land for ages, only requiring proper sub-soiling, or turning of the clay, and submitting to the action of the atmosphere to make soluble and ready for plant food this storehouse of nature.

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The Post suggests that the new town is the "home of the market gardener and fruit grower, and needs only the touch of the skilled and experienced trucker to vivify it." Thomas subsequently advertises 20- to 40- acre plots to allow small-scale agricultural development. He encourages the planting of pecan trees in yards and groves throughout the town. His newspaper carries articles on local, regional, and even national agricultural problems and practices.

Reliance on railroad commerce is a subject of early and continuous importance in the Post. From the same first volume, first issue, first page story as the above quotes on agriculture come these:

...Thomaston claims the proud distinction of being the logical, objective point of the several railroads projected through this section of Alabama. ...The route of the proposed Memphis and Pensacola road has already been surveyed within a few miles of Thomaston...the north and south road which has already been graded between Faunsdale and Dayton, six miles north of us (may be reorganized and may be extended to) its ultimate southern terminus somewhere on the Gulf Coast. ...A fulfillment of the prophecy that Thomaston might be the gateway of the several roads projected from the Gulf direct into the great coal fields of North Alabama, seems soon to be recognized.

In the best "New South" fashion, Thomas claimed the support of northern financiers and developers in the first few issues of his newspaper. However, only one written connection has been found between Dr. Thomas and these out-of-state "backers," among them Philadelphia Merchant John Wanamaker and "Ex-Gov." (William A.) Stone of Pennsylvania. B.N. McCoy, apparently a Pennsylvania businessman, does appear on 1902 deed book documents as "President" of the Marengo Improvement Company. A Joel D. Jones column from 1932 mentions that "Ex. Gov. Stone" of Pennsylvania was among backers of an oft-surveyed, even graded, but never-completed rail line between Faunsdale and Dayton which was expected to extend to Thomaston.

In subsequent issues of the Post, in Linden's Democrat Reporter and in the Demopolis Times, feature stories about Thomaston and paid advertisements from Thomaston's merchants mention the town's accessibility by railroad. The Marengo County High School, solicited and won by Thomaston's early city fathers, mentions railroad accessibility in its constant announcements of class availability and quality. (Newspaper clipping collection, Thomaston Town Hall)

At the time of the first Post edition, the town had just completed a \$4,000.00, two-story, wooden school building "capable of accommodating several hundred students." As an inducement to potential town residents, the article announced "The municipality has an available fund by which it is enabled to guarantee a full nine months session absolutely free to all children who reside within the school district." It prophesied increased enrollment "as soon as boarding facilities for non-residents can be secured." For the school and its grounds, Thomas deeded over one square block of his commercially zoned area. Students were subsequently boarded in several Thomaston homes, according to oral history.

Soon after the first school opened the city fathers began working to win the bid for the county high school. The Alabama State Legislature voted to set aside money for the establishment of a consolidated, 16th-section-land-funded school in each county in 1907. Corporation records from 1905 show Dr. Thomas preparing for such an eventuality by donating land for the establishment of a county school. A Board of Trustees was appointed to promote the Thomaston site and oversee the successful completion and operation of the school. (Corporation Records, Vol. 1, pg. 127, Marengo County Courthouse) With the election in 1907 of pro-public-education Governor Braxton Bragg Comer, the legislation was adopted and the campaign to win the school began in earnest. Thomaston's efforts won the bid in 1908, an indication of the small town's successful campaign to overcome the common practice of locating such schools at the county seat. The school opened in the fall of 1909. (Pearson, "History...", pg. 4)

For African American school-aged children, on land sold to the West Alabama Primitive Baptist Association by The Marengo Improvement Company in 1902, a two-story brick school was built through the efforts of a coalition of African American church groups. Incorporation papers for the "Thomaston Colored Institute" filed in late August, 1909, named Trustees and set out the purposes and powers of the corporation. Ten men are registered as incorporators and six of those named as Trustees: C.H. Davis, Robert Fritts, and Preston Jones of Thomaston, C.C. Kennedy and J.E. Eldridge of Prentice, AL, and K.W. Walker of McKinley, AL. Other incorporators are S.S. Franklin of Golson, AL, C.C. Adisdter (sic) of Corley's, AL, E.B. Robinson of Eleanor, AL.

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and C.J. Webster of Yellow Bluff, AL. (Marengo County Probate Records)

The school building on the northwest corner of town, on the main Linden to Cahaba Road, has survived as the most substantial evidence of the African-American community's constant presence in Thomaston and as proof of pride and belief in education as a means to equality. Thomaston apparently had very few African-American-owned businesses (a blacksmith and store owner in the early-to-mid 20th century, a barber and a café owner in the mid 20th) and only the ruins of one, a café, survive, on the west end of Third Avenue. Almost all of the African-American enterprises were outside of the original town limits.

The Institute is perhaps also indicative of the good intentions but ultimate failings of Dr. Thomas and his early group of town backers. Built as a showpiece in the progressive city that Thomas envisioned on his former farm, the school was apparently ignored, once established. Outside the gridded street plan for the incorporated town, it was also outside the continuing consideration about the course of the community's development. The sawmill, cotton gins, brickyard, and railroad services originally promoted as adjuncts to agricultural superiority for the town and area, were lost over time. With them went the jobs for the substantial African-American population at the edges of the town.

Toward the Mid-20th Century

Most references to Thomaston in the Democrat Reporter and Demopolis Times in the first third of the 20th century involve activities at the Marengo County High School. Following the closure of the Thomaston Post, Thomaston's identity was much more closely linked with the high school than with either agricultural development or transportation. (Clippings, Thomaston Town Hall)

Annual agricultural reports on crops printed in the Alabama Markets Journal and other publications (including census figures) treat counties as single entities, so it is difficult to learn which crops flourished in which sections. Charts and tables in the Journal for the years 1917-1920 show Marengo as a prime producer of cattle, hay, and milk. Modest crops of corn, wheat, and oats are reported. Cotton production is recorded as low in 1919 -- 9,000 bales as compared to 40,000 bales for Madison County. (Journal, Vol. 3, No. 1, pgs. 6-10) A table on Boll Weevil Damage in the January, 1920 issue indicates that Marengo was first infested in 1912 and shared a sharp drop in production with many other counties between 1915 and 1919. The level of the boll weevil's impact on the Thomaston area is not recorded, but the Sanborn Insurance Company Map from 1925 indicates that only the former Thomaston Gin and Warehouse, by then known as the Fox and Buck Gin and Warehouse, was still operating.

As early as the 1911 land sale, the early notion of a bustling railroad transfer point for minerals from the coal fields and local agricultural products had been replaced with the recognition that "while there has never been a boom, Thomaston has always had a steady and substantial growth." (Clipping file, Thomaston Town Hall) Thomaston was hardly alone in its early overconfidence about potential railroads. An 1880's map of potential railroads and connections for the really new and bustling city of Birmingham shows several lines and connections that were never built. (Alabama State Archives, "Map of Birmingham and the Railroads Serving It," 1880) To make matters worse, the development of an improved road system following the establishment of the Alabama State Highway Department in 1911 and Alabama's "Good Roads" campaign in the late 'teens and early 20s did not substantially affect Thomaston. The town's connections to Linden and Demopolis to the west and to Uniontown and Selma to the east remained secondary dirt roads until after World War II. (Alabama State Highway Maps 1914-1950)

So Thomaston's early hopes to become an interior transportation hub were defeated first by the railroad companies' and entrepreneurs' overabundant and ephemeral expansion plans, second by the increasing importance of internal-combustion vehicles and farm-to-market roads, and third, by the lack of development of a market area active enough to demand good roads. Thomaston's slower-than-anticipated growth continued beyond Dr. Thomas's death. The 1920 U.S. Census shows a population of 372; 1930, 377. By 1940, the population had receded to 345. The corporate limits of Thomaston remained at the original locations until an annexation of surrounding lands in 1949, when the population "jumped" to over 1,000. By the 1990 U.S. Census, the population had fallen back to 497. (U.S. Census Records)

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Thomaston Central Historic District

Marengo County, Alabama

Dr. Thomas died on Jan. 20, 1919. Linden's Democrat Reporter for Thursday, Jan. 23 published a brief death notice calling his death "a serious loss not only to his home town but to the whole county." The notice said "Dr. Thomas was a man of progressive ideas and while his chief efforts were directed toward the development of the Thomaston section, he took an interest in the welfare of the entire county which accounted greatly in the great strides forward it has made in the last decade." No details of Dr. Thomas's land holdings at his death are available at the Marengo County Tax Assessor's Office. A review of probate records between his death and the deaths of his wife, Maggie, and his nephew, E.G. Thomas in the 1930s did not find a detailed accounting of his estate. The only indication of Dr. Thomas's holdings is in a Marengo County Land and Lot Book from the years 1916-1918. This document detailing the ownership of town lots indicates that, of the 32 recorded blocks in Thomaston, Dr. Thomas owns one or more lots on 23 blocks. Considering that he donated entire blocks for two schools, the block for the Town Park, and lots for at least 3 churches, he was still in control of a large proportion of town property when he died. (Marengo County Tax Assessor's Records, 1916-18) No record of his land holdings outside the town limits was found.

The few changes in Thomaston's commercial area that took place after Dr. Thomas's death included the loss of several buildings at the west end of Second Avenue and of smaller frame buildings along Second and north and south on Range Road. The large brick one-story building that had served as the original Thomaston Mercantile Co. was lost in a fire between 1925 and 1930. (Sanborn Insurance Co. Map, 1925) Its replacements, Skinner Motors, the Quality Store, and Dr. Stallworth's drug store and office, faced Second Avenue rather than Range Road. They were built by Charles Bailey, according to long-time Thomaston resident Earl Boozer. (Boozer interview) All are versions of mid-20th century commercial styles. Skinner's and the Quality store have minimal Art Deco details, the drug store/doctor's office has Craftsman details in doors, windows, and bracketed pent roofs. Other mid-20th century additions were gas stations on the southern corners of the main intersection and the conversion of livery stables to other uses.

Wood-frame, one-story stores on the southeast and southwest corners of the intersection of Range Road and Second Avenue were either altered, as was the current brick-veneered Elk Store, or removed and replaced, as were the shop and post office by the concrete block gas station that now serves as the town café. The two-story frame hotel mentioned in the Thomaston Post's early issues survived in its location on the northwest corner of Range and Second into the early 1990s, when it was moved up Range Road to the northern edge of town. A new Conoco Quick Stop now occupies the hotel site.

Dwellings constructed between Dr. Thomas's death and World War II represent a continuation of the original common housing types. Similar in their modest scale and their locations in large yards, the 1919-42 dwellings rely on mid-20th century vernacular clad in wood exterior siding. About 15 percent of the current historic houses are classified as Craftsman. The best examples of Craftsman houses in Thomaston are the Edwin Hale house (#20) on the east end of Fifth Avenue at the intersection with Short Street, and the Pat Farrish House (#129) at the intersection of East Street and Fourth Avenue. Both have the multiple-gabled roofs, extensive porches, massing, window and door placement, and roof and facade details listed as determinants of the Craftsman style. Both have substantial surviving interior woodwork. Both historic churches in the district date from this secondary period of development. The brick Thomaston Baptist Church was built in Neo-Classical/Craftsman style in 1921. The brick Thomaston Methodist Church was built in 1923.

Thomaston's narrow residential streets have been blacktopped, but remain essentially "country lanes" connecting widely-spaced houses. These streets and the plentiful pecan and other yard trees planted in the town's early years give the town a rural character no longer available to communities with modern, standardized street systems. The scale and setbacks for the mid-20th century houses copied the original residential details. Most sit back from streets in deep yards. Several use 20th century landscaping practices such as foundation plantings, in addition to more traditional ones such as formal or geometrical planting areas and ribbons of plantings along walkways.

Newspaper articles clipped from 1920s, '30s and '40s papers and held in a file at the Thomaston Town Hall indicate that the town continued its civic activities, but settled into acceptance of reduced expectations during these decades. City business included improvements in light, water, and telephone systems. Federal Funds were won for improvements by the Works Progress Administration funds in streets, sewers, drainage and for building repairs to the Marengo County High School and the county industrial school. A community house was built at the west edge of the town pond, but has since been replaced by a concrete block structure. (Archives, Thomaston Town Hall)

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Thomaston Central Historic District

Marengo County, Alabama

By the time the United States entered World War II, Thomaston had lost all of its original agricultural/industrial operations. It had evolved into a traditional crossroads town, with intersecting farm-to-market roads serving local agricultural interests. Passenger service on its one railroad line was limited, and the town was arguing for increased service. Thomaston had become a typical, rural, interior railroad and highway town, with commercial and professional services tailored to the cattle-raising and crop-related interests of its citizens. While it had not become the prosperous city envisioned by its founder, it had retained the physical pattern he made for it and the local tendency of its citizens to think of it in terms of its great potential.

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Thomaston Central Historic District

Marengo County, Alabama

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GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

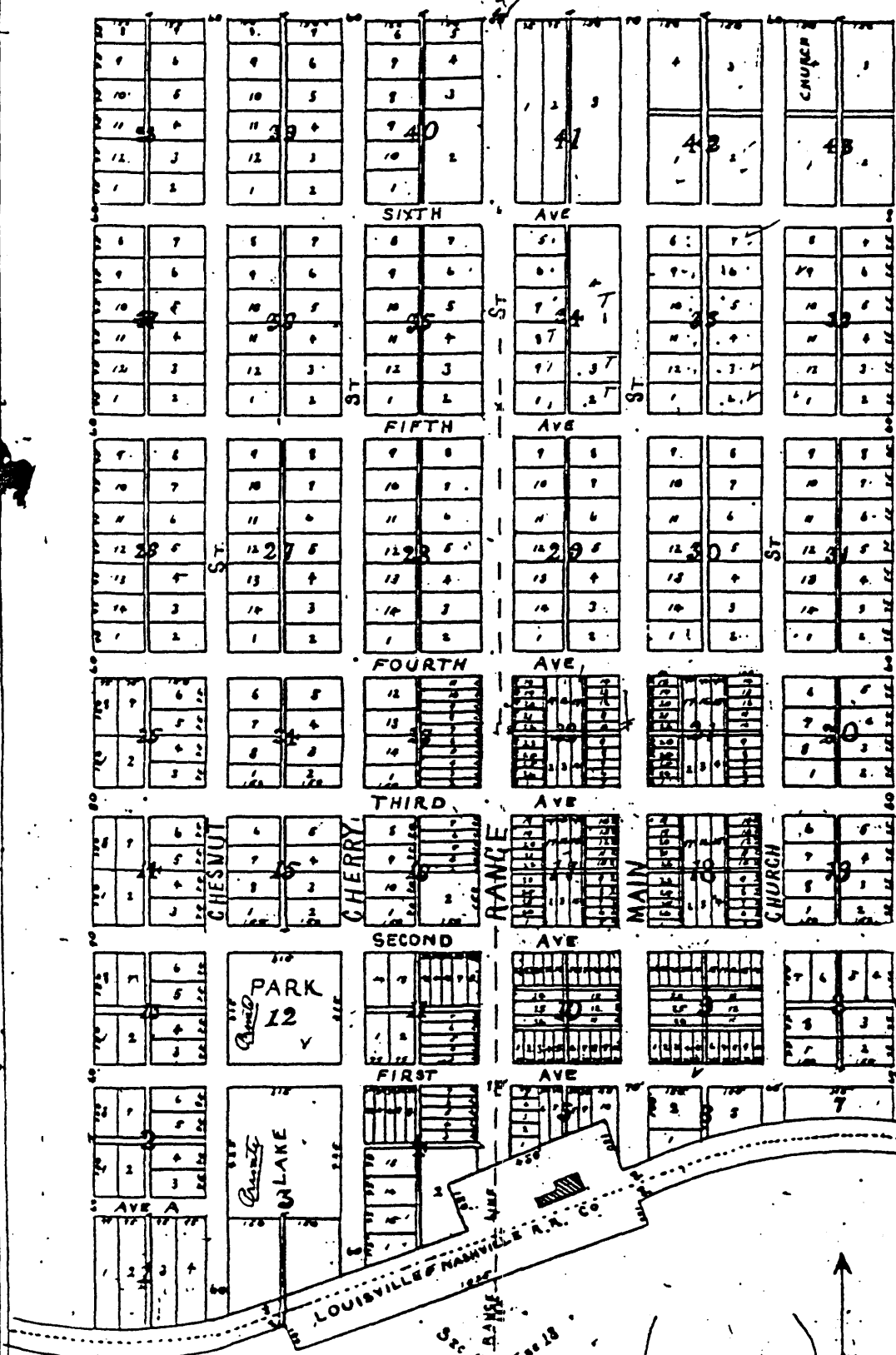
Verbal Boundary Description: The boundary is defined by the attached, scaled map (1 in. = 150 ft.) of the proposed historic district.

Boundary Justification: The Thomaston Central Historic District in Marengo County, Alabama, was drawn to closely follow the incorporated town limits established by an act of the State Legislature in 1901 and to include as many contributing and exclude as many non-contributing resources as possible.

THOMASTON

NOV 45 1901

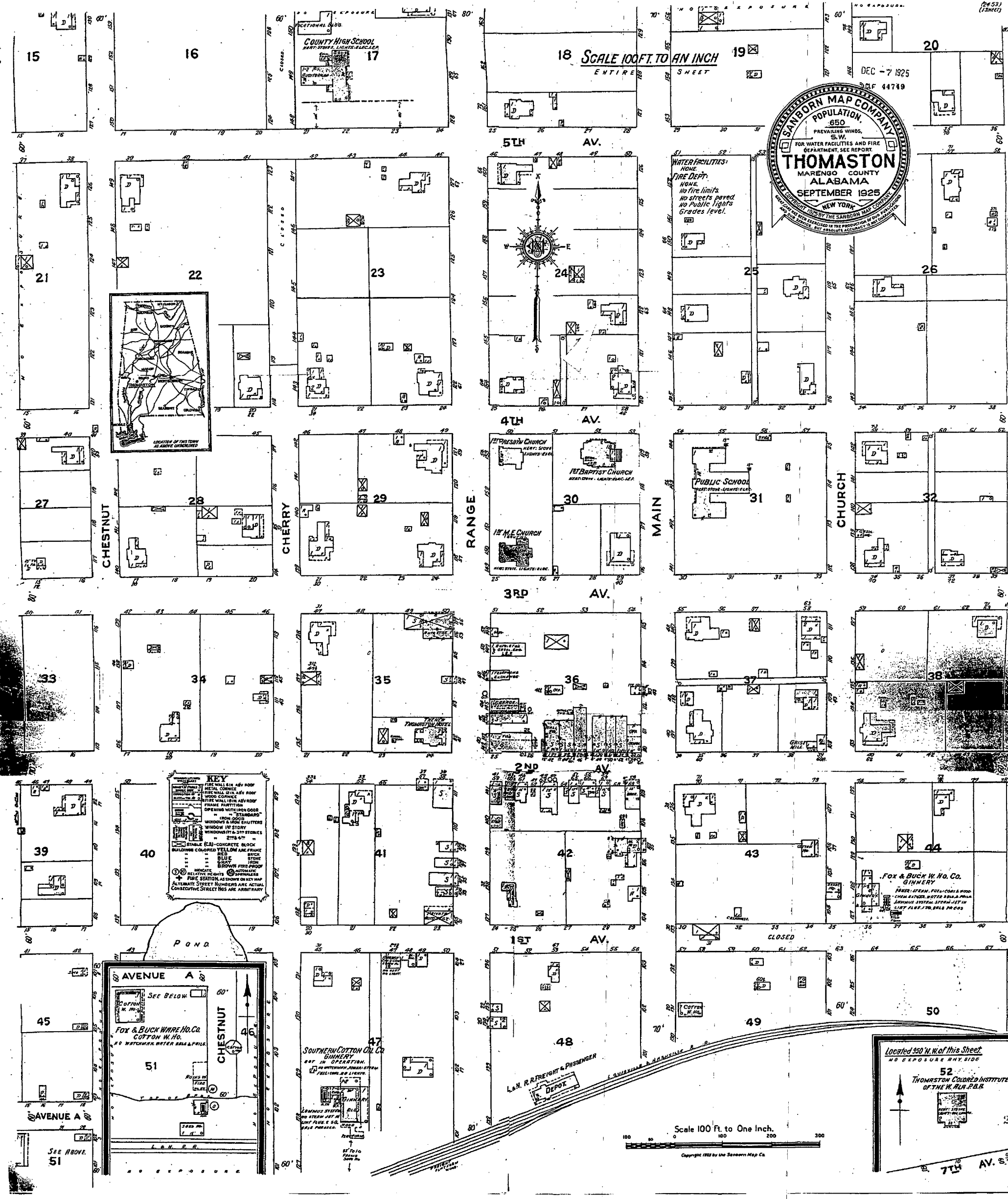
The following is a list of the names of the owners of the lots in the town of Thomaston, Ga. as of the 1st day of November, 1901. The names are given in the order in which they appear on the map. The names are given in the order in which they appear on the map. The names are given in the order in which they appear on the map.



T15 R.4 E T15 R.5 E

Sec 24 Sec 18
Sec 25 Sec 19

J. J. Jones Surveyor



1925 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map for Thomaston, AL - not to scale -