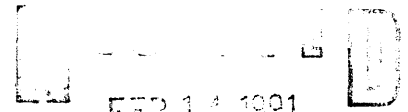


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service



National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

NATIONAL REGISTER

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name Thomas, John W., House
other names/site number N/A

2. Location

street & number 245 West Poplar Avenue N/A not for publication
city, town Collierville N/A vicinity
state Tennessee code TN county Shelby code 157 zip code 38017

3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	Contributing	Noncontributing
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district	<u>1</u>	<u> </u> buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	<u> </u>	<u> </u> sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<u> </u>	<u>2</u> structures
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	<u> </u>	<u> </u> objects
		<u>1</u>	<u>2</u> Total

Name of related multiple property listing: Arch. and Hist. Resources of Collierville, TN
Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register N/A

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this 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 meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.
Herbert L. Hoyer 2/7/91
Signature of certifying official Deputy SHPO, Tenn. Hist. Comm. Date
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.
Signature of commenting or other official _____ Date _____
State or Federal agency and bureau _____

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is: entered in the National Register
 entered in the National Register. 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:) _____
Herbert L. Hoyer 3/29/91
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/single dwelling

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/single dwelling
DOMESTIC/secondary structure

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(enter categories from instructions)

Colonial Revival

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation BRICK
walls WOOD/weatherboard

roof ASPHALT
other WOOD/porch columns

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

See Continuation Sheet

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetSection number 7 Page 2 Thomas, John W., House

The John W. Thomas House was built from 1918 to 1920 for John and Lena Thomas at 245 West Poplar Avenue in the Town of Collierville, Shelby County, Tennessee (pop. 7,839, 1980 Census). The structure was built in a vernacular form of the Colonial Revival style, with some sympathy to the Craftsman style in its basic form and interior detailing. The structure is situated atop a high land terrace overlooking the right of way of West Poplar Avenue (old Poplar Pike) near the western edge of the historical development of Collierville prior to 1940. Mature pecan trees compose the major planting element of the landscaping. To the east of the structure are flower and vegetable gardens, largely unchanged in location from their original development on the site.

The Thomas House is a single-story, frame structure of eight bays in width. A low hip roof extends over its deep porch, supported by columns with Doric capitals on Tuscan shafts. The main roof also features a low shed-roofed dormer with four single-light casements and a box cornice and frieze. The walls of the structure are covered with radius-edged weatherboard, manufactured with two narrow reveals planed on to a single board. The windows of the structure are one-over-one double hung sash lights. The center entrance contains a single-light door with a raised dentil molding below the light. The door is topped with a single-light transom.

The porch for the structure was originally built in an L-shaped plan that wrapped along the eastern side of the structure. Though this portion of the porch was enclosed in the 1960s to create additional living space, a small setback from the front (northern) facade remains to indicate its original position. A single-light, double-panel door provides an entrance to this space from the porch today. The enclosure of the porch has not altered the interior plan of the structure, other than the change of two exterior doors (dining room and master bedroom) to interior ones as a result of the construction. Exterior weatherboard siding remains to indicate the former use of the space as an exterior porch.

The interior of the structure retains most of the spaces, trim features and finishes from its original

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetSection number 7 Page 3

Thomas, John W., House

construction period of 1918 to 1920. A portion of its unusual floor plan is due to its construction in stages over time, though its trim and other finishes remained consistent throughout.

Inside of the main entrance door lies an informal double living room, made from the combination of two smaller rooms in the year following the beginning of construction. The rooms were originally divided by a partition wall; the partition wall was removed and replaced by a beamed opening. An Arts and Crafts treatment of tapered box columns set on glass-doored bookcases was constructed in its place to treat the combination of the new space. As in the entire house, the trim in these rooms consists of varnished pine and red gum, with Colonial Revival cornices above the windows and doors and simple radius-edged trim boards elsewhere (the exceptions are the mantelpieces, all of which were built of red oak). Doors throughout are five-paneled. At the western edge of the room is a mantel with mirrored over mantel, built in simplified Arts and Crafts lines.

To the west of the double living room is the original dining room, featuring an oak mantel with finely carved fluted Doric columns and applied decorations.

A transverse hall connects the front rooms of the structure with those of the back: the kitchen, pantry and back porch lie to the west; two bedrooms lie to its east. The first eastern bedroom contains a header beam that belies the point where the room was expanded to its present size in 1919-1920. The master bedroom lies to the south, also added in 1919-1920. The master bedroom features matchstick-paneled wall surfaces and retains door openings to the original eastern (side) porch and southern (rear) porch, now enclosed.

Attached to the rear of the house is a flat-roofed metal carport built in ca. 1965-70. Also associated with the house are two small outbuildings: the first a small shed with sheet metal roofing and vertical board siding; the second, a small barn with a gable roof and vertical board siding. Both structures appear to date from ca. 1920-25 and are quite deteriorated. Both structures do not contribute to the significance of the property.

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally statewide locally

Applicable National Register Criteria A B C D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) A B C D E F G N/A

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

Period of Significance

1918-1920

Significant Dates

1918

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

N/A

Architect/Builder

McGinnis, W. W., builder

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

See Continuation Sheet

See continuation sheet

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 2

Thomas, John W., House

The John W. Thomas House stands as a significant element of the historic architectural fabric of the Town of Collierville and is eligible for listing under National Register Criteria C for significance as a local example of the Colonial Revival style and for its association with the career of W. W. McGinnis (1876-1959), an important builder in Collierville and the eastern Shelby County area. Its design and detailing, specified by Mrs. Lennie Thomas (1877-1960), and its construction by McGinnis provides a reflection of the builder-client relationship that produced much of the architectural fabric of Collierville and other towns and neighborhoods throughout the nation in the early twentieth century.

The Thomas House was begun in 1918 for John W. (1862-1935) and Lennie Brown Thomas, a family with a long association in the mercantile environment of Collierville's Town Square. Though born in Arkansas, the family of John Thomas moved to Collierville when the elder Thomas was called into service with the Confederacy in 1862. Thomas' father was killed in action in December of 1864 during the Battle of Murfreesboro. John Thomas was educated in the primary schools of Collierville and entered the business world at age fourteen as a clerk at the dry goods store of J. K. Waddy, his uncle. Following a short stint as a traveling salesman with the Carruthers Shoe Company of St. Louis and later with the dry goods store of W. C. McCrary of Byhalia, Mississippi, Thomas returned to Collierville to work in the grocery and dry goods store of Hinton and Craig (later known as Hinton and Hutton). He remained with this firm until his retirement in the autumn of 1934.

In 1908, Thomas married Lennie Biggs Brown (1877-1960) of Collierville. The process and details leading to the construction of the Thomas House in 1918 were taken on by Mrs. Thomas, who worked with prominent local builder W. W. McGinnis (1876-1959) to see the project through. According to family tradition, it was Mrs. Thomas who designed the floor plan of the structure for McGinnis' treatment. The story is told that the plan was misinterpreted by McGinnis, resulting in unusually small original room sizes for this type of plan and its period of construction. The

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetSection number 8 Page 3 Thomas, John W., House

error was not realized until late in the process when little could be done to change the locations of foundations, walls or the roof plan. Physically and financially constrained, the project was finished out according to contract.

The cramped spaces of the house were too confining for the preferences of the family. Work was carried out in 1919-1920 to alter the original plan and to extend the house as a means of making its use more comfortable. Three major changes to the plan of the house are evident. The first was the combination of the living room and front bedroom into one double room through the removal of a partition wall and the installation of the bookcase and box column treatment existing today. The second was the extension of a back bedroom by double its original spatial volume, as evidenced by the boxed header beam in the room today. Finally, a large master bedroom was added to the rear, bringing the house largely to its present appearance.

While the floor plan for the structure was changed from its original concept in 1918, it remains in sympathy with vernacular floor plans of the period. Modification of the original floor plan presents an unusual insight to the builder/client relationship and the ability of the two parties to solve a problem without compromising the quality of the original structure.

Non-historic alterations to the Thomas House have occurred since the property reached its completed appearance in 1920. However, the alterations do not compromise the integrity of the original design and plan for the structure. The house has remained in the hands of the descendants of John and Lennie Thomas, carefully maintained and preserved in much of its early appearance to this day.

The John W. Thomas House meets the registration requirements set forth in the Multiple Property Documentation Form for the Historical and Architectural Resources of Collierville, Tennessee. It possesses an integrity of design, materials, setting and workmanship reflective of the Post-Bellum Development in Collierville during the period of ca. 1866 to 1920.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Collierville Herald, Vol. VII, No. 12, May 10, 1935, pg. 1. Obituary of John W. Thomas.

Harris, Elizabeth, Oral Interview with John Linn Hopkins, August 13, 1990; September 4, 1990.

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 # _____

See continuation sheet

Primary location of additional data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Specify repository: _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of property 1.4 acres

UTM References

A 16 256420 3881130
 Zone Easting Northing

C _____

B _____
 Zone Easting Northing

D _____

See continuation sheet

Collierville, TN 416SW

Verbal Boundary Description

Located in the Town of Collierville facing the right of way for West Poplar Avenue (State Highway 57), the property in nomination is also described as a part of Block 44L, Lot 308 as delineated on the enclosed Shelby County tax maps.

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The property in nomination contains only that part of the property historically associated with the John W. Thomas House still associated with the structure today.

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title John Linn Hopkins

organization Historic Preservation Consultant date September 8, 1990

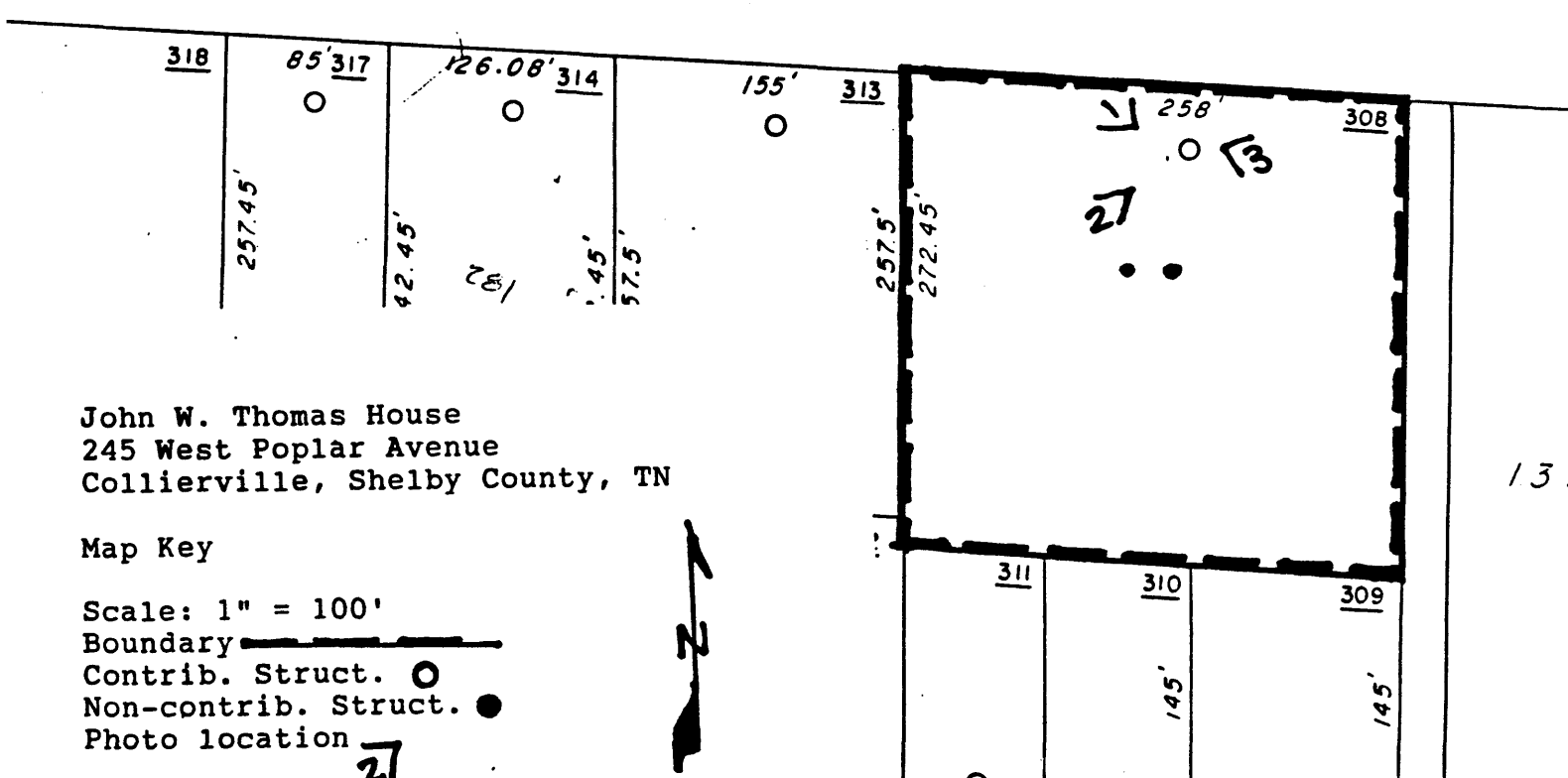
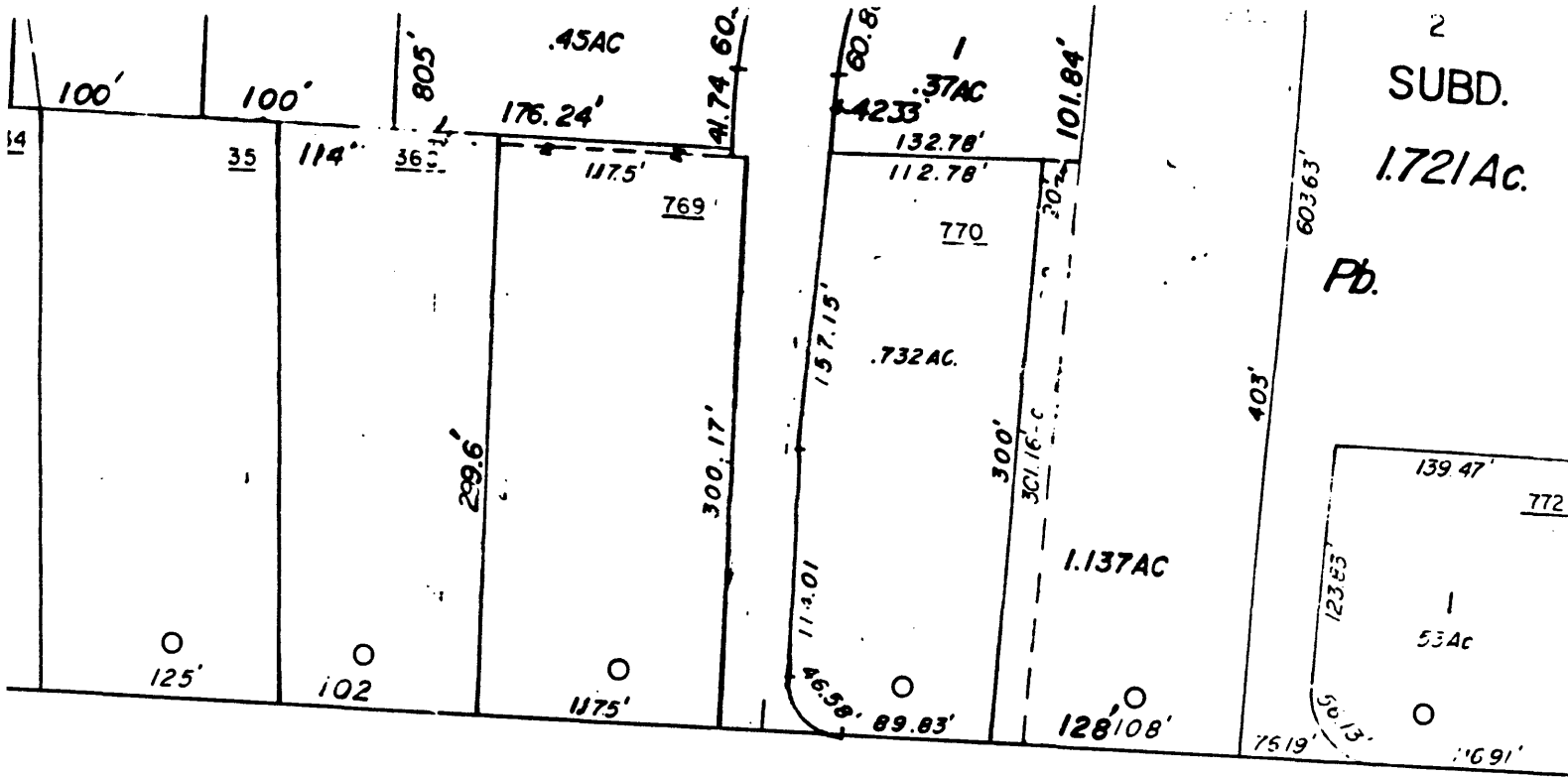
street & number 974 Philadelphia Street telephone (901) 278-5186

city or town Memphis state TN zip code 38104

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 10 Page 2 Thomas, John W., House



John W. Thomas House
245 West Poplar Avenue
Collierville, Shelby County, TN

Map Key

Scale: 1" = 100'

Boundary

Contrib. Struct.

Non-contrib. Struct.

Photo location

27



13.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number Photos Page 1

Thomas, John W., House

Photograph List
John W. Thomas House
245 West Poplar Avenue
Collierville, Shelby County, TN

Photographs by: Barry Heiflin
Date: August, 1990
Negs: Tennessee Historical Commission

View of the front (northern) facade and side (western) facade, facing generally southeast.
Photo 1 of 8

View of the side (western) facade and the rear (southern) facades, facing generally northeast.
Photo 2 of 8

View of the side (eastern) facade and rear (southern) facades, facing generally northwest.
Photo 3 of 8

View of the front living room and original parlor (now dining room), with the front door at left.
Photo 4 of 8

View of the front, original parlor.
Photo 5 of 8

View of the front living room and door to original dining room (now bedroom) to the left of the fireplace, from the original parlor.
Photo 6 of 8

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number Photos Page 2

Thomas, John W., House

View of the original dining room and its mantel piece,
with the door leading back to the living room at right.
Photo 7 of 8

View of the front (eastern) bedroom with the rear
master bedroom beyond. Note the beam overhead which
denotes the original exterior wall location before being
changed in 1919-1920.
Photo 8 of 8

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number _____ Page _____ Property Owner
Thomas, John W., House

Estate of Elizabeth Harris
% Mrs. Mary Alice Brock
373 West White Road
Collierville, TN 38017
(901) 853-7179