

MAR 26 1992

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM

1. Name of Property

historic name: Earl, Thomas, House

other name/site number: N/A

2. Location

street & number: 1721 Seminary Street

not for publication: N/A

city/town: Napa

vicinity: N/A

state: CA county: Napa

code: 055

zip code: 94559

3. Classification

Ownership of Property: private

Category of Property: building

Number of Resources within Property:

Contributing	Noncontributing
<u>1</u>	<u>1</u> buildings
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u> sites
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u> structures
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u> objects
<u>1</u>	<u>1</u> Total

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

Name of related multiple property listing:
N/A

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this x nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property x meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. See continuation sheet.

Stacy R. Craze
Signature of certifying official

June 24, 1992
Date

California Office of Historic Preservation
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
 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): _____

Albert J. [Signature]

8/18/92

Signature of Keeper Date of Action

6. Function or Use

Historic: Domestic

Sub: single dwelling

Current : Domestic

Sub: single dwelling

7. Description

Architectural Classification:

Late Victorian: Italianate

Other Description: N/A

Materials: foundation stone roof other
walls weatherboard other _____

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

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties: at the local level.

Applicable National Register Criteria: B

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) : N/A

Areas of Significance: Social History

Period(s) of Significance: 1861-1893

Significant Dates : 1861

Significant Person(s): Earl, Thomas

Cultural Affiliation: N/A

Architect/Builder: unknown

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

9. Major Bibliographical References

See continuation sheet.

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

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

Primary Location of Additional Data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other state agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other -- Specify Repository: City of Napa Cultural Heritage Commission

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property: less than one acre

UTM References: Zone Easting Northing Zone Easting Northing

A	<u>10</u>	<u>562080</u>	<u>4239060</u>	B	___	_____	_____
C	___	_____	_____	D	___	_____	_____

___ See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description: ___ See continuation sheet.
 Napa County Assessor's parcel 003-152-13

Boundary Justification: ___ See continuation sheet.
 The boundary includes the full assessor's parcel that has been associated with the resource since 1910.

11. Form Prepared By

Name/Title: Donald S. Napoli

Organization: _____ Date: March 25, 1992

Street & Number: 1614 26th Street Telephone: (916) 455-4541

City or Town: Sacramento State: CA ZIP: 95816

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Description

The Thomas Earl House is a two-story concrete structure with a shallow hipped roof, horizontal board siding, and a full-width front porch. The shape of the building is almost square. The design of the main facade is nearly symmetrical. Beneath the porch two slanted bay windows flank the main entrance. A frame addition on the rear runs half the width of the building. Behind it is a recently constructed garage that does not contribute to the significance of the property. The building is set well back from the sidewalk, is surrounded by shrubs and small trees, and is approached by a circular driveway. The building, which has not been essentially altered since 1893, retains a high level of architectural integrity.

The roof, which is covered in tar and gravel, has a projecting eave supported by scrolled brackets. Between the brackets are plain panels. A simple band forms the architrave. The placement of the brackets at regular intervals across the main elevation points up the slight asymmetricality of the design, for the middle bracket is not quite centered on the window and door below. The frieze and architrave bend back slightly just north of the central bracket, giving a sense that they have been placed over parts of a wall that do not quite form a flat surface.

The second-story windows are narrow, four-over-four, and double-hung. They are placed in wide casings and topped with shallow cornice window heads. The window reveals, finished in plain board, are a foot deep. They give a clear indication that the walls of the building are not wood-frame. The windows open on a rectangular balcony formed by the top of the porch below. Surrounding the balcony is a short railing with curved handrail, square posts, and turned, closely spaced balusters.

The porch is the main feature of the first story. It runs the width of the front (east) and south elevations and wraps around a few feet on the north. Its eave is supported by turned brackets like those below the main cornice, although the porch brackets are more widely spaced. Beneath each bracket is a post that supports the roof. The posts are slender and square with well defined but undecorated capitals. Opening on the center of the porch is the front door, which is deeply set, paneled, and surrounded by rectangular glass panes and wide, banded architrave. On each side of the door is a slanted three-sided bay window containing one-over-one double-hung windows. The porch is raised about a foot from ground level by the lime-and-gravel concrete foundation and is approached by a short stairway.

The north and south facades are similar to one another. The north features two narrow four-over-four double-hung windows with deep reveals, identical

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to those on the front, on both stories. It also has a shorter double-hung window on the second story and a side door on the first. The south elevation has two narrow windows on the second story and one on the first. Near the back on first story is a three-sided bay window like those in front.

On the back (west) of the house is a 15-foot frame addition that runs about half the width of the building. The addition, which may date to a remodeling in the 1880s, has horizontal board siding, tall two-over-two windows on each story, and a door with transom on the north. In the rear is a flight of stairs leading to a second-story doorway. Behind the house, at the end of a driveway that runs by the north side, is a small garage with a flat roof and horizontal board siding.

The interior of the building has five rooms on each floor. The doors, many with ceramic knobs, and windows have simple detailing. More ornate is the main staircase, with newell posts and balustrade similar to the porch railing. Floors are painted wood. The kitchen and bathroom, in the addition, have been modernized since first installed. Otherwise, the interior maintains a nineteenth-century appearance.

The building sits well back on its large, 120-by-130 foot lot. In addition to a substantial front lawn, the landscaping includes several small trees and shrubs and a semi-circular driveway that leads to the front steps. Some of the plantings may date from the nineteenth century. The lot itself once covered half a city block, extending to Calistoga and Polk Streets on the east and west and stretching back another 120 feet on the north. The present lot resulted from the subdivision of the original parcel, a process that began before 1890 and was complete by 1910.

The house evolved into its present appearance over a period of 30 years. The original part (1861), with ground dimensions of 32-by-34 feet, had a scored stucco exterior over the lime-and-gravel concrete walls. In 1878 a stud wall was added to the exterior and horizontal board siding applied. The current porch treatment, bay windows, and rear addition, which were in place by 1886, may have been an even later modification. Since then, changes to the property have been minimal. The porch, which once circled most of the building, was shortened sometime after 1941. The small garage in the rear was constructed around 1950. The condition of the house has begun to deteriorate. The concrete core is starting to crumble, creating bowing walls and moisture problems. Nevertheless, the appearance of the building has not been substantially altered in the past century.

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Earl, Thomas, House Page #3

Significance

The Thomas Earl House is significant in the social history of Napa for its association with Thomas Earl, one of the town's leading citizens for four decades. Earl played an important role in the social and economic welfare of the community through his activities in construction, commerce, and government service. The house, which he erected in 1861 and modified later, is the only building in Napa with clear associations to Earl. Despite alterations, the house retains enough original design elements to represent Earl's entire career after its construction.

Like many of the men who influenced the growth of Napa, Earl made his name in business and real estate. He was born in Canada in 1825, orphaned at six, and taught the harness and saddlery trade as a youth. He moved to the United States in 1840 and opened his own business in Missouri in 1849. The next year Earl headed to California to try his luck in the gold fields. He soon decided that commerce would be his route to success and in 1851 opened a saddlery business in Napa. The town then had about 200 residents and only a few permanent buildings. Earl saw bright prospects for the place, however. In 1853 he bought an 85-acre tract, which later became an addition to the city, and purchased a lot downtown for the town's first brick building. Despite the doubts of some of his associates, Earl completed the structure in 1856. The following year he erected another brick building that had the first iron front north of San Francisco. The upper floor, used as a public auditorium, was called Earl Hall. Two years later he added another iron front building next door. These substantial buildings gave Napa's commercial district a sense of permanence it had not had before. That, in turn, allayed concerns of other developers and stimulated more investment in the city, thereby creating jobs and improving social services. By 1861 Earl's real estate projects had become so profitable that he was able to sell the saddlery business and turn his attention to other activities.

From 1861 on, Earl promoted the general welfare in Napa through a series of endeavors. As County Administrator for two terms (1861-65), he oversaw local government in Napa (which was then still unincorporated) and throughout the county. He was rewarded for his work by election to a third term, but he declined to serve. Earl remained active in business. He encouraged new enterprises in Napa, in part by becoming a stockholder and director of the town's wollen mill and one of its early banks. He also owned substantial holdings around his house, which he rented and subdivided over the years. Earl still took an interest in public service. He led the campaign to purchase a toll bridge across the Napa River for free public use. He also strove, unsuccessfully as it turned out, to obtain the state normal school and Oddfellows home for Napa. After the city incorporated,

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Earl returned to local government in 1874 as marshal, a position to which he was elected for three terms. He was not much in the public eye during the 1880s, though apparently he was still well respected. He died in 1893.

Earl ranks as one of Napa's "founding fathers" and among the six or ten most influential people in the formation and growth of the city. He saw himself as someone who believed deeply in the future of Napa. While he was making a successful business career for himself, he was also investing money and effort in the betterment of his home town.

The house, constructed in 1861, dates from the middle part of Earl's career. No building directly represents the earlier years, however. His first brick structure still stands in greatly altered form--only the original floors remain intact--and that is the only existing building connected to Earl's pre-1861 career. The house itself has lost some of its early associations, primarily because board siding covers the original scored plaster finish. That change does not constitute a loss of integrity because the Italianate design, some of the features, especially the windows and front door, and the setting are much as they were originally. The deep window reveals, which indicate that the building is not of frame construction, and the four-over-four pattern of the windows, which had largely been abandoned in California by 1870, both give a sense that the house is older than the 1878 siding. In addition, all of the important changes--the front porch and bay windows, as well as the siding--were done on Earl's instructions and thus do not diminish his association with the building. A comparison of the current appearance of the Earl House with that of other residences from the period of American settlement in Napa (1850-1865) justifies a lower than normal level of architectural integrity. Of the hundreds of other houses constructed in town during the period, only one still exists--and it has been altered much more severely. So the Earl House represents Earl's career during the entire period he lived there, from the time of its construction to the time of his death.

The Earl House remains largely unchanged from the days when Thomas Earl lived in it. It thus retains its historic associations with the career of Thomas Earl, one of the early leaders in promoting the development of Napa and the welfare of its citizens.

NPS Form 10-900-a
(8-86)

OMB Approval No. 1024-0018

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Major Bibliographical References

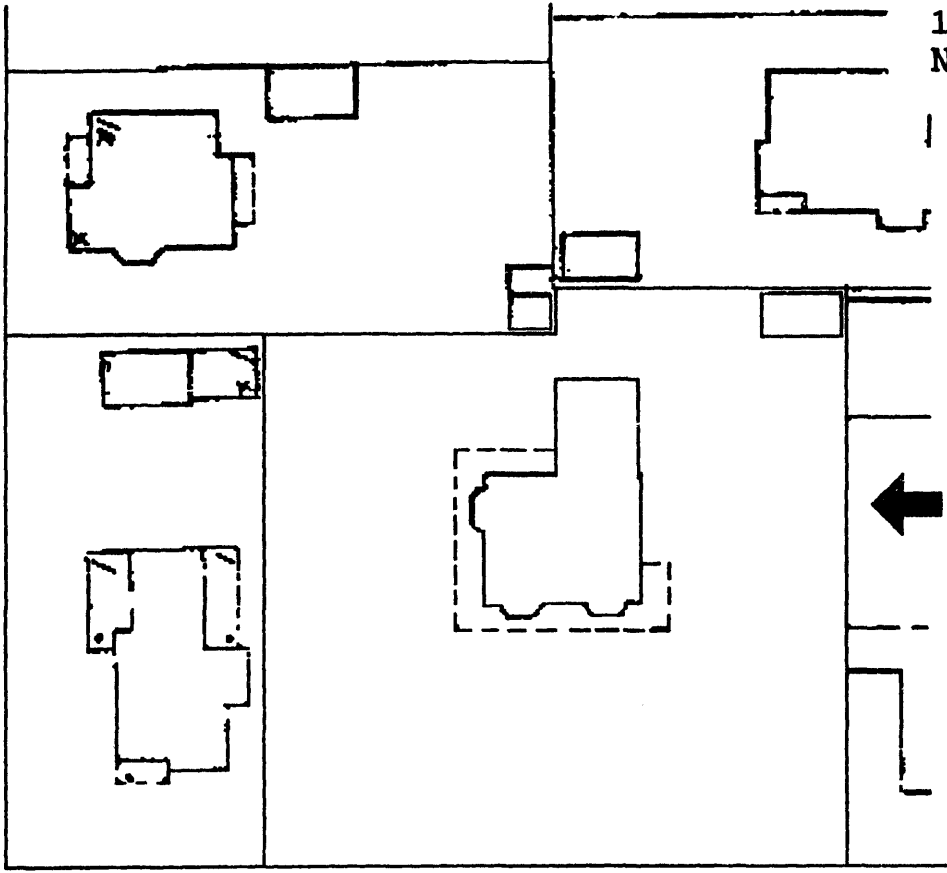
Menafee, C. A. Historical and Descriptive Sketchbook of Napa, Sonoma, Lake and Mendocino Counties. Napa City: Reporter Publishing House, 1879.

Napa, California. Fire Insurance Maps. New York: Sanborn Map and Publishing Co., 1886, 1891, 1901, 1910, 1924, 1941.

Napa County Recorder, 19 November 1878.

Sacramento, California. State Department of Parks and Recreation. Napa Historic Resources Inventory, 1978.

POLK STREET



SEMINARY STREET

Earl, Thomas, House
1721 Seminary Street
Napa, California

Napa County

50'



EARL HOUSE
(Garage in Rear)

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Additional Documentation

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Photographs

All photographs have the following information in common:

3. Thomas Schardt, Photographer
4. July, 1991
5. Napa City Planning Department
1600 First Street
Napa, CA 94559

Photo No. 1

6. View from the Southwest

Photo No. 2

6. View from the West

Photo No. 3

6. View from the Northwest

Photo No. 4

6. View from the East

Photo No. 5

6. View from the South

Photo No. 6

6. Porch Detail

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11/16/92

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Earl, Thomas, House Napa County, CALIFORNIA

ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTATION APPROVAL

Delores Byrum 11/27/92

NPS Form 10-900-a
(86-86)

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Earl, Thomas, House

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AMENDMENT

Earl, Thomas, House
Napa, California
Napa County

The correct street address for the Earl, Thomas, House in Napa,
California is:

1221 Seminary Street
Napa, California 94559

Stade Craigo
Stade Craigo, AIA, Acting
State Historic Preservation Officer

November 11, 1992
Date