

CARR-536

JUDGE WILLIAM H. THOMAS HOUSE

1893

195 Willis Street, Westminster

Private

Judge Thomas was an attorney from St. Mary's County, Maryland, who moved to Westminster in 1886. He practiced law in Westminster and in 1889 he married the daughter of Judge Charles B. Roberts. In 1893, they had a house built on Willis Street, which was becoming a prominent residential area of Westminster. Their house was a substantial structure for Westminster and is constructed in the rural Queen Anne style. In 1901, Thomas was elected associate judge of the Fifth Judicial Circuit and became Chief Judge before his death in 1924.

Magi No.

DOE yes no

Maryland Historical Trust State Historic Sites Inventory Form

1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic Judge William H. Thomas House

and/or common

2. Location

street & number 195 Willis Street not for publicationcity, town Westminster vicinity of congressional district sixth

state Maryland county Carroll

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture <input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial <input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment <input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government <input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial <input type="checkbox"/> transportation
	<input type="checkbox"/> not applicable	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military <input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property (give names and mailing addresses of all owners)

name Ernest J. Howard, Jr. & R. Lucille Eaton

street & number 195 Willis Street telephone no.: 876-6686

city, town Westminster state and zip code Maryland 21157

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Carroll County Courthouse Annex liber 895

street & number 55 N. Court Street folio 995

city, town Westminster state Maryland

6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title none

date federal state county local

depository for survey records

city, town state

7. Description

Survey No. CARR-536

Condition		Check one	Check one	
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved	date of move _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed			

Prepare both a summary paragraph and a general description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

SUMMARY: Built in 1893, the Judge William H. Thomas house depicts the Victorian style influences on Westminster's architecture during the late 19th century. It was built on Willis Street, which at that time was becoming the fashionable residential district in Westminster. The building retains traditional characteristics, such as its symmetrical facade, but portrays the Victorian influences in the emphasis on the center bay with double doors and tower on the roof, and in the ornamentation of the porch and roof cornice.

DESCRIPTION: The house is located at 195 Willis Street directly north of the Carroll County Courthouse. The land that became Willis Street was owned by Col. John K. Longwell, who began selling tracts off in the late 1880's. It quickly became a fashionable residential district and the houses show influences of the Victorian period, not only through their style, but also through their siting (sited back on their lots to provide a small front lawn). The site across from the 1838 Carroll County Courthouse was also an impressive location for a Westminster attorney.

The brick house is a three-story, five-bay by ~~five~~^{three}-bay structure with a hipped roof. Architectural emphasis is placed on the main facade (faces south) at the central bay, which projects out slightly and forms a tower on the roof. There is a double door on the main story and a three-bay, one story porch with serpentine brackets, turned posts, and a patterned bannisters. The house has a bracket cornice that also runs along the dormer of the central tower. The hipped roof is covered in sheet metal.

The interior of the house also retains the features of the late Victorian era. It has a square-shaped plan with six rooms. There are four major rooms--two each on the east and west sides of the house. In the center of the house is a entrance foyer with staircase (on the south side) and a small storage room (converted to a powder room) and stairway to the basement and back stair to the second story (on the north side). Each of the four major rooms had an original fireplace, but the ones in the two northern rooms have been covered over. The front rooms contain mantelpieces that date from the period and the hardware throughout the house, including hinges and boxlocks, are original.

8. Significance

Survey No. CARR-536

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/ humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
spec. dates--1893				

Specific dates	Builder/Architect
check: Applicable Criteria: <input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> B <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> D	
and/or	
Applicable Exception: <input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> D <input type="checkbox"/> E <input type="checkbox"/> F <input type="checkbox"/> G	
Level of Significance: <input type="checkbox"/> national <input type="checkbox"/> state <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> local	

Prepare both a summary paragraph of significance and a general statement of history and support.

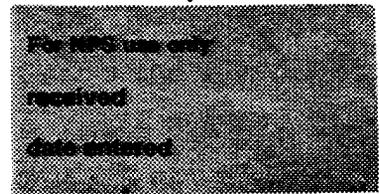
SUMMARY: The Judge William H. Thomas House displays the prominence of Willis Street architecture in Westminster during the late 19th century and was built by one of the area's most prominent attorneys and judges. Judge Thomas was an attorney from St. Mary's County, Maryland, who moved to Westminster in 1886. He practiced law in Westminster and, in 1889, he married the daughter of Judge Charles B. Roberts. In 1893, they had a house built on Willis Street, which was becoming a prominent residential area of Westminster. Their house was a substantial structure for Westminster and is constructed in the rural Queen Anne style. In 1901, Thomas was elected associate judge of the Fifth Judicial Circuit and became Chief Judge before his death in 1924.

HISTORY: Judge William Henry Thomas was the son of William Henry Thomas, of St. Mary's County, and Elanor Mackubin, of Annapolis. He was born in May 1861 at the family homestead, "Brambly", near Maddox. He attended Charlotte Hall and graduated from the Maryland Agricultural College in 1881 as valedictorian of his class. In 1884, he graduated from the University of Maryland Law School and began his legal practice with the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad Company's legal department and with attorney John H. Cowen.

In September 1886, Thomas moved to Westminster to establish a legal practice with ex-Judge James A. C. Bond. Soon thereafter, he started his own practice, which he continued until his elections as associate Judge of the Fifth Judicial Circuit in 1901. In 1889, he married a prominent Westminster native, Catherine Roberts, daughter of an influential attorney and judge Charles B. Roberts, who became a judge of the Court of Appeals. They had four children: Dr. Charles Roberts Thomas, who practiced medicine in Columbia, Miss., Mrs. Nancy Seamans, of Baltimore; Mrs. Catherine Schwartz, of Harrisburg; and Miss Eleanor M. Thomas, of Westminster.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form



Continuation sheet 1

Item number 8, CARR-536

Page

Judge Thomas was of a prominent Maryland family. His grandfather, Mr. Mackubin, of Annapolis, was the first State Treasurer of Maryland. His father, William Henry Thomas, served a number of terms in the Maryland legislature. Other relatives who were influential attorneys were John H. Thomas of Baltimore; James Mackubin and Judge Hammond of Howard County; Richard T. Merrick of Washington, D.C.; Judge George Brent, and Judge William M. Merrick.

The family of Judge Thomas was a member of Ascension Episcopal Church where he was a senior warden. He was also a charter member of the Westminster Rotary Club. His obituary, printed in the May 2, 1924 edition of the Democratic Advocate describes him as "a man of personal charm, and was distinguished for his courtesy and consideration to all, winning many close and devoted friends; and his learning, fairness, and ability were universal recognition; and impartiality and care in the disposition of his duties marked his conduct on the Bench".

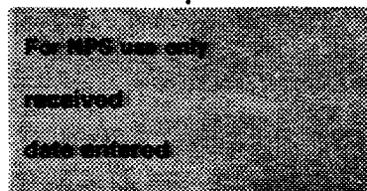
The property at 195 Willis Street was purchased by Judge Thomas in 1892. He purchased two separate parcels--one of 11,890 sq. ft. from Mary B. and William Kennard for \$350 (liber 75, folio 2680; and one of 9,504 sq. ft. from Hanson M. Drach for \$280 (liber 75, folio 267). The construction of his house is documented in two entries in the Democratic Advocate. The May 6, 1893 edition states: "Mr. William H. Thomas staked off this week the foundation for a large brick residence on Willis Street near the Courthouse. Jacob F. Elgin will do the work."

The July 8, 1893 edition of the Democratic Advocate records the following accident at the nearly completed house; "By the fall of a chimney on Wednesday afternoon at the dwelling of William H. Thomas, Esq., being erected on Willis Street, the building was considerably damaged. Some joists of the third, second, and first floors were broken and carried to the cellar, the roof and cornice were damaged, a section of the rear wall forced out and other injury to the wall done. William S. Shaeffer and John Byers, two carpenters, who were working the vicinity of the chimney, were carried along with the wreck. They were carried only to the second floor. Mr. Shaeffer was not much hurt, but Mr. Byers was bruised and jarred considerably."

After Judge Thomas' death in 1924, his estate was placed in trust for his wife (Carroll County Will Records, liber 13, folio 22). His wife lived in the house and also took in boarders and sold homemade preserves, jellies, pickles, marmalades and cakes. A brochure of her homemade goods is preserved in the verticle files of the Historical Society of Carroll County and partially reads as follows: "Delicacies From The South! Luscious Home-Made Jellies, Marmalades, Preserves and Pickles. Put up in that tasty southern way by a southern woman in her own kitchen. Only the choicest fruits and purest ingrediants used. Once you taste the goodness, the wholesomeness of these delicacies made from famous southern

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**



Continuation sheet 2

Item number 8, CARR-536

Page

receipes, you will want no other. Try a sample assortment order of a few dozen jars. Mrs. William H. Thomas, Westminster, Maryland."

The property stayed in the Thomas family ownership until 1952. when it was sold out of the trust (Equity \$6087). It was purchased by C. Ivan Seipp (liber 214, folio 37), and after his death, it was sold to A. LaRue Seipp (liber 539, folio 583). In 1985, it was sold to Ernest J. Howard and R. Lucille Eaton.



1. CARR-536 JUDGE WM H. THOMAS HOUSE
2. Carroll County, Md.
3. Joe Getty
4. November 1985
5. Md. Hist. Trust, Annapolis, Md.
6. South & east elev. (camera fac. nw)
7. 1/2



1. CARR-536 JUDGE WM B. THOMAS HOUSE
2. Carroll County, Md.
3. Joe Getty
4. November 1985
5. Md. Hist. Trust, Annapolis, Md.
6. South elev. --roof detail
7. 2/2