

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service  
NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES REGISTRATION FORM

1. Name of Property

historic name: Brown, Colonel Thomas, House  
other name/site number: N/A

2. Location

street & number: County Rt. 92/4 (Dogtown Rd.) not for publication:       
city/town: Reedsville vicinity: X  
state: WV code: WV county: Preston code: 077 zip code: 26547

3. 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. I recommend that this property be considered significant      nationally      statewide X locally.  
(     See continuation sheet.)

William C. Lamar Signature of Certifying Official 2.4.94 Date

     State or Federal agency and bureau      Date

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

     Signature of Certifying Official/Title      Date

     State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this property is:	Signature of Keeper	Date of Action
<u>    </u> entered in the National Register <u>    </u> See continuation sheet.	<u>    </u>	<u>    </u>
<u>    </u> determined eligible for the National Register <u>    </u> See continuation sheet.	<u>    </u>	<u>    </u>
<u>    </u> determined not eligible for the National Register	<u>    </u>	<u>    </u>
<u>    </u> removed from the National Register	<u>    </u>	<u>    </u>
<u>    </u> other (explain): <u>    </u>	<u>    </u>	<u>    </u>
<u>    </u>	<u>    </u>	<u>    </u>

Brown, Colonel Thomas House  
Name of Property

Preston County, WV  
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property:  
(Check as many boxes as apply)

Category of Property  
(Check only one box)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

- building(s)       object
- district
- site
- structure

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	0	buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
1	0	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 National Register None

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions  
(Enter categories from instructions)

Current Functions  
(Enter categories from instructions)

Domestic/single dwelling  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Domestic/single dwelling  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

7. Description

Architectural Classification:  
(Enter categories from instructions)

Materials  
(Enter categories from instructions)

Early Republic/Federal  
\_\_\_\_\_

Foundation Stone  
Walls Cut stone

Roof Fiberglass shingles  
Other \_\_\_\_\_

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

Enclosed

Brown, Colonel Thomas, House  
Name of Property

Preston County, WV  
County and State

**Significant Dates**

\_\_\_\_\_  
1837  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Person**  
(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

**Cultural Affiliation**

\_\_\_\_\_  
N/A  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Architect/Builder**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Not known  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Narrative Statement of Significance**

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

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**9. Major Bibliographical References**

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**Bibliography**

(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: N\A

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of Repository: \_\_\_\_\_

Brown, Colonel Thomas, House  
Name of Property

Preston County, WV  
County and State

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**10. Geographical Data**  
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Acreage of Property: Less than one acre

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

1	<u>17</u>	<u>602201</u>	<u>4369980</u>	2	<u>    </u>	<u>    </u>	<u>    </u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
3	<u>    </u>	<u>    </u>	<u>    </u>	4	<u>    </u>	<u>    </u>	<u>    </u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing

     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.)

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**11. Form Prepared By**  
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Name/Title: Robert L. and Ann Decker

Organization: N/A Date: October 7, 1993

Street & Number: Route #2, Box 105 Telephone: (304) 864-6682

City or Town: Reedsville State: WV ZIP: 26547

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**Additional Documentation**  
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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)

Brown, Colonel Brown, House  
Name of Property

Preston County, WV  
County and State

=====  
**Property Owner**  
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(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

Name: Robert L. and Ann Decker

Street & Number: Route #2, Box 105 Telephone: (304) 864-6682

City or Town: Reedsville State: WV Zip: 26547

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**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Brown, Colonel Thomas, House, Preston Co., WV

Section number 7 Page 1

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The owners of the Colonel Thomas Brown House expended a considerable amount of time restoring their Federal style, 2-story stone residence. Measuring 40 feet along the front and 20 feet at the ends, the single-pile structure features one of Preston County's first and best preserved examples of native stone construction. Laid in regular courses, the masonry is smooth and distinctive. A pattern, consisting of alternating long and short blocks, is similar in spirit to Flemish bonding examples found in area brick masonry houses of the period.

The stone walls are two feet thick. The outer wall is of smooth, handcut sandstone, of regular height and varying widths, and is about 12 inches thick. An inner wall is constructed of irregular, uncut stones in mud-mortar clay. The surface of the inner wall is covered with original sand-hair plaster. The foundation is a continuation of the walls to a depth of six to eight feet into the ground.

The floors are supported by poplar, hand-hewn beams. The beams which support the first floor are of logs 12 to 16 inches in diameter placed on 36 centers. Those over the first and second floors have been squared while those over the basement (though deteriorated due to moisture) still have bark in place.

The beams supporting the second floor are about eight inches high and six inches wide, are roughly squared, and are on 24-inch centers. These are uncovered.

The beams supporting the attic floor are slightly smaller than those of the second floor and are on 24-inch centers. The ceilings of the second floor are plastered, mostly over the original lath. The floor in the attic (rough planks) is apparently the original.

The roof is supported by the original rafters which are of logs 5 to 7 inches in diameter on 24-inch centers. These have not been squared. They have a finished, hand-rubbed appearance said to have been produced by slaves who were confined to the attic as punishment. The present roof is of simulated wood shingles made of fiberglass. The present owners chose this to replace the deteriorated tin roof which was, of course, not original material. The use of wood was out of the question for reasons of safety.

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Brown, Colonel Thomas, House, Preston Co., WV

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The present owners felt that the front of the house (facing west) and the two ends of the building, North and South, have their original appearance. The last owners of the house had built a dormer on the roof, cut a diamond-shaped window about three feet on a side near the front door, moved the window frames and sashes about 18 inches inward from the outer walls, and inserted three-over-one pane double-hung windows. Corrections were made and restoration of the original design was accomplished.

The original broad-plank poplar floors are in place on the second floor and are in virtually perfect condition. These were sanded, sealed and waxed by the present owners. Unfortunately the planks on the first floor had deteriorated and were covered with flooring. The present owners removed this and replaced it with broad plank poplar flooring to match the upstairs.

When the present owners purchased the house the top three feet of the original chimney on the north side of the house had been replaced by brick and was in poor condition. This has since been restored by the use of cut flag stone which matches very well the original stone used in the wall (minus the chisel marks).

A single-story ell with basement was added, apparently about 1918. This now includes a kitchen with a utility room in the basement. The addition was originally clapboard and was off-center against the eastern wall of the building. It was unattractive and in poor repair. The present owners had the structure centered, replaced the tin roof with fiberglass shingles and covered the clapboard with redwood siding.

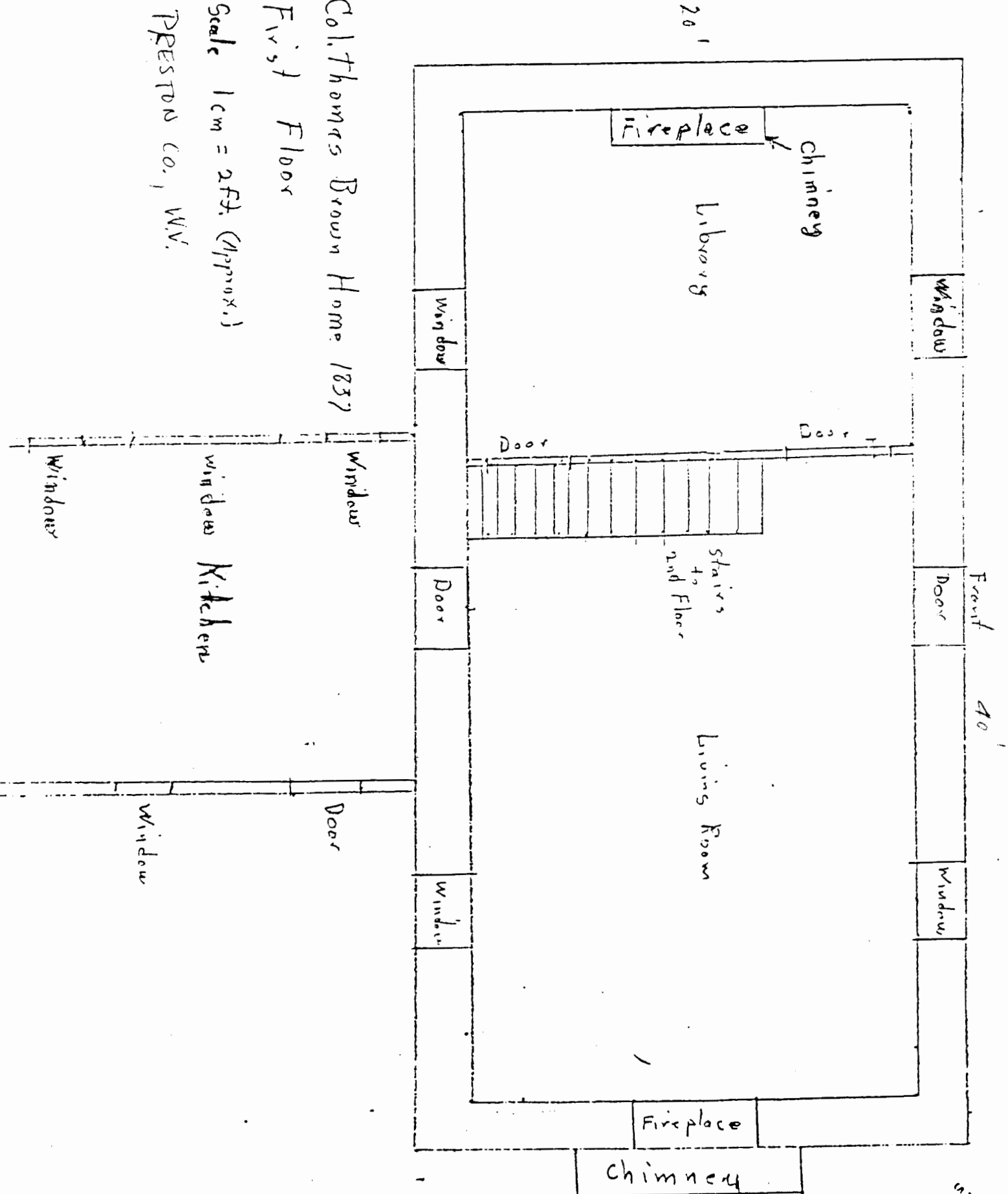
Solid plumb walls, finely dressed lintels and sills, and handsome exterior end chimneys are major structural elements of the well-preserved Colonel Thomas Brown House. Its dignified yet modest dimensions endow the house with permanence in the rural setting it has occupied for over one-and-a-half centuries.

Col. Thomas Brown Home 1837

First Floor

Scale 1cm = 2ft. (Approx.)

PRESTON CO., W.V.



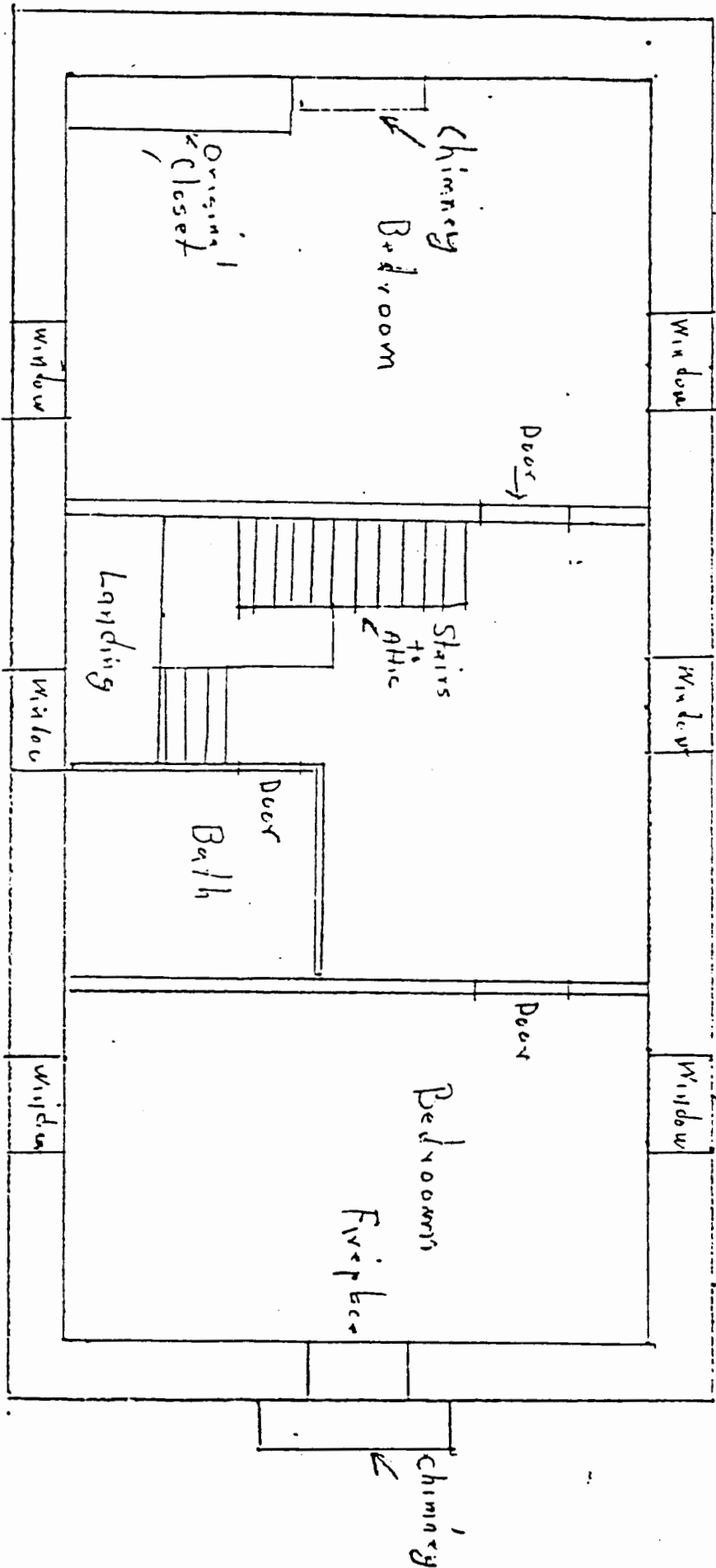
20'

Front 40'





20'



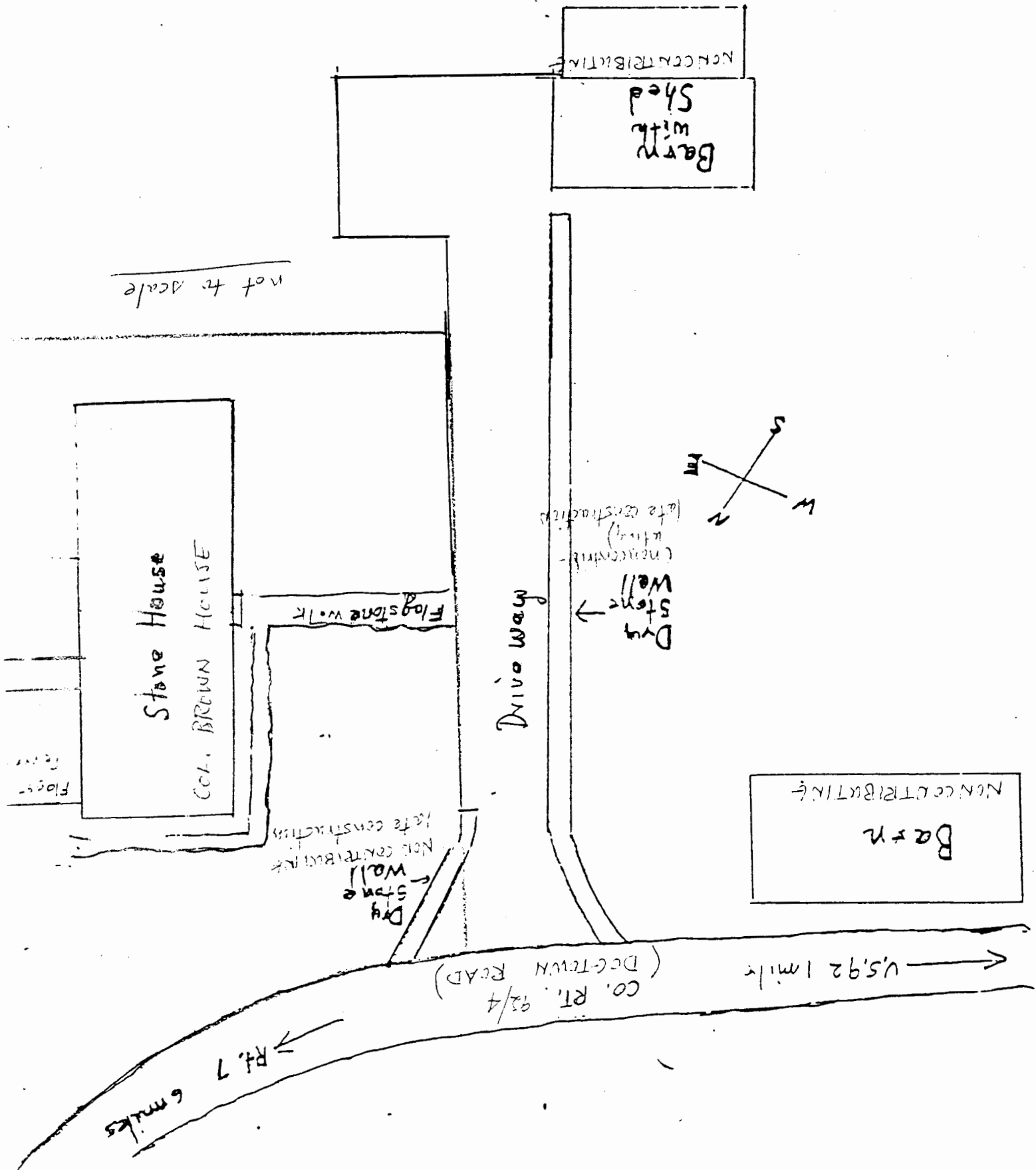
40'

Col. Thomas Brown Home 1837

2nd Floor

Scale 1 cm = 2 Ft. (approx.)

PRESTON CO., W.V.



Col. Thomas Brown Home  
PRESTON CO., WVA.

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National Park Service

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Brown, Colonel Thomas, House, Preston Co., WV

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Significance

The Colonel Thomas Brown House is significant under Criterion C as a rare, well-preserved example of Federal-style stone construction in rural Preston County. Although not a large house, its splendid smooth masonry walls, fine proportions, and elegant gable end chimneys provide evidence of the work of an unknown master builder.

Along County Route 92/4, known locally as the Dogtown Road, and between U.S. 92 and Route 7, there is not another stone house of Federal design. Indeed, stone houses are uncommon in Preston County. The Colonel Thomas Brown House survives as the only known example of its type in the Brown's Mill section of the county, south of Arthurdale.

Significant to the architectural character of the house is the survival of the regularly coursed stone ashlar. The smooth, large blocks form a rhythmic pattern along the facade, with long blocks alternating with squared smaller blocks. Symmetry and simplicity is the intent of design as the solid walls frame windows with deep reveals. Smoothly dressed lintels and sills add to the solidarity and permanence of the structure. The Browns, who owned slaves, quarried local sandstone for their construction needs.

Other significant fabrics survive in the house. Among these the original second floor broad-plank poplar floors and original roof rafters stand out. It is the presence of numerous well-preserved elements, such as the original window and door casings, that endow the settlement-period farmhouse with significance. The solidarity of stonework, and trueness of lines attest to the enduring quality of pre-Civil War house construction in Preston County.

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Brown, Colonel Thomas, House, Preston Co., WV

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Historical Background

Thomas Brown was born into a prominent Virginia family whose neighbors included General George Washington, Chief Justice John Marshall, the Fairfaxes, the Buckners, and others whose names are well-known in early American history. He served in the Revolutionary War and received a pension for this service.

In 1805, after serving with Greene in the Revolutionary War, Brown moved his family to land he had purchased through Colonel John Fairfax and upon which the Stone House now stands. His neighbors included families such as the Zinns, The Fairfaxes, the Fortneys, the Pells and others who are prominent and historically important to Preston County. His children and grand-children became known and productive citizens of the County and State.

The stone House, built in 1837 by slave labor, is an excellent example of the sturdy construction of its period. The exterior walls are 24 inches thick and in excellent condition. Much of the interior, including original plaster and broad-plank poplar floors are intact. The present owners, Ann and Robert Decker, purchased the house in 1955 from Donald Zinn. This is the first time that it has not been owned or occupied by a direct descendant of Thomas Brown. Payton Brown, from whom Donald Zinn acquired the house, was a great-grandson of Thomas Brown and lived in the home and farmed the property until the late 1940's.

Thomas Brown was born to William Brown and Elizabeth (Buckner) Brown in Prince William County, Virginia, in 1760. He enlisted in 1780, at the age of 20, in Captain John Britt's Company under Colonel William Lucas of the Virginia troops. They marched south and joined General Green's army in South Carolina. He fought in the battle of Cowpens, South Carolina, on January 17, 1781. He was awarded a pension for this service.

Through Colonel John Fairfax, Brown purchased in 1802 the 578-acre tract of land from William McCleery of Morgantown on which the Stone House was built. In 1805 he moved his family and possessions to this part of the country.

In 1807 father, William Brown, died. Thomas returned to the family estate in Virginia leaving his sons to take care of the new lands. The children were Elizabeth, John Buckner, George, Lydia, Samuel Byrne, William, Mary Ann and Thomas Francis. By 1817 Thomas Brown sold the family estate in Virginia and moved back to Preston County. Brown was granted a pension in 1832 by Act of Congress in recognition of his service in the Revolutionary War.

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Payton Brown, born in 1878, lived in the house and farmed the property until his retirement in the late 1940's. It was then acquired by Donald Zinn. The present owners, Ann and Robert Decker, purchased the property from him in 1955.

Thomas Brown's son, William, began construction of the Stone House in 1837. Harry B. Stevens, a grandson by his daughter Elizabeth, did the carving and other fine work in the house. Thomas Brown died at the age of 83. The house and farm were left to sons William and Samuel Byrne.

An important legendary association with the house is that of Private Thornburg Bailey Brown. A descendant of Thomas Brown, Private Brown is believed to have been born in the house. He became the first Union soldier to be killed in the Civil War by a Confederate. Brown's body was moved to the Grafton National Cemetery, Taylor County, in 1900.

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Brown, Colonel Thomas, House, Preston Co., WV  
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Major Bibliographical References

Willey, S.T. History of Preston County. The Journal Printing  
House, Kingwood, WV, 1882.

Brown, James Edgar. Genealogy of The Brown Family. Shenandoah  
Publishing House. Strasburg, Virginia, 1930.

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Brown, Colonel Thomas, House, Preston Co., WV

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Geographical Data

Verbal Boundary Descriptions

Beginning at the south edge of County Route 92/4 (Dogtown Road) the boundary runs southeast in a straight line 200 feet; thence southwest in a straight line 200 feet; thence northwest in a straight line 200 feet; thence along the south edge of County Route 92/4 to the point of beginning. The house stands in the center of this square. The house is the only resources within the boundary.

Justification

The nominated property constitutes the site historically associated with the Colonel Thomas Brown House.

STATE OF WEST VIRGINIA  
REPRESENTED BY THE  
STATE OF WEST VIRGINIA GEOLOGICAL SURVEY  
AND OTHER STATE AGENCIES

00 50'

01

5063 III SE  
(MASON TOWN) REEDSVILLE 1 MI

47'30"

