

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Name of Property _____

County and State _____

Name of multiple property listing (if applicable) _____

Section number _____ Page _____

SUPPLEMENTARY LISTING RECORD

RECEIVED**OCT 14 2010****WV SHPO**

NRIS Reference Number: 09001195

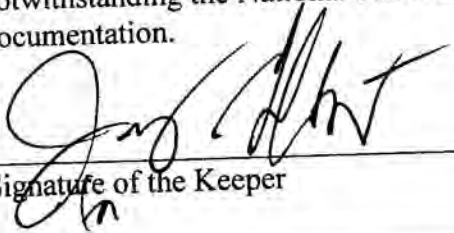
Date Listed: 7/15/2010

Property Name: Meyer, Herman August, House

County: Tucker County

State: WV

This property is listed in the National Register of Historic Places in accordance with the attached nomination documentation subject to the following exceptions, exclusions, or amendments, notwithstanding the National Park Service certification included in the nomination documentation.


Signature of the Keeper7/15/2010
Date of Action

Amended Items in Nomination:

Section 8: Commerce is deleted as an area of significance

The nomination does not fully demonstrate that Meyer was a significant person in the area of Commerce; instead he seemed to be involved as a secondary player in many of his activities. Also, there is no discussion of any of the other properties to which he might have been commercially associated.

Meyer did seem to have some level of importance in early education in the area, and although there is not a great deal of contextual information regarding his "lending library," the cumulative impact of his educational activities in the local school system and his willingness to share his library with the public out of his house meets the minimal threshold to include the house under Criteria A and B with Education as an area of significance under both criteria.

The West Virginia State Historic Preservation Office was notified of this amendment.

DISTRIBUTION:

National Register property file

Nominating Authority (without nomination attachment)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word process, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Meyer, Herman August, House

other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number 287 Thomas Avenue ☐ not for publication

city or town Davis ☐ vicinity

state West Virginia code WV county Tucker code 093 zip code 26260

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, 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 procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property ☒ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant ☐ nationally ☐ statewide ☒ locally. (☐ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

State Historic Preservation Officer Date

West Virginia Division of Culture and History
State or Federal Agency or Tribal government

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

Signature of commenting official/Title Date

State or Federal agency or bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

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

Meyer, Herman August, House
Name of Property

Tucker County, WV
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply)	Category of Property (Check only one box)	Number of Resources within Property (Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	Contributing	Noncontributing
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district	2	
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site		buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure		sites
	<input type="checkbox"/> object		structures
			objects
		2	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**

N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)	Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)
DOMESTIC/single dwelling	COMMERCE/TRADE/business

7. Description

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)	Materials (Enter categories from instructions)
LATE VICTORIAN/Italianate	foundation STONE/limestone
	walls WOOD/Weatherboard; ASBESTOS
	roof ASPHALT
	other STONE/limestone; WOOD

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

Meyer, Herman August, House
Name of Property

Tucker County, WV
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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.)

Property is:

- ☐ A
- owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- ☐ B
- removed from its original location.
- ☐ C
- a birthplace or 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.

Narrative Statement of Significance

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

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

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

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
- ☐ designed a National Historic Landmark
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

COMMERCE

EDUCATION

Period of Significance

1898-1919

Significant Dates

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

Meyer, Herman August

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Unknown

Primary location of additional data:

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

Name of repository:

Meyer, Herman August, House
Name of Property

Tucker County, WV
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property Less than one acre

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

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☐ 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 David L. Taylor, Principal

organization Taylor & Taylor Associates, Inc. date July, 2009

street & number 9 Walnut Street telephone 814-849-4900

city or town Brookville state Pennsylvania zip code 15825

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 SHPO or FPO.)

name Cynthia Lynn Robeson

street & number Post Office Box 773 telephone 304-259-5451

city or town Davis state WV zip code 26260

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.*). A federal agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number.

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the 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 Keeper, National Register of Historic Places, 1849 "C" Street, N.W., Washington, DC 20240.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
Continuation Sheet

Meyer, Herman August, House
Tucker County, WV

Section 7 Page 1

7. Description

Introduction

This nomination encompasses the Herman August Meyer House and its associated contributing dependency. The property is located in a residential area of the City of Davis, which is located in Tucker County, in northeastern West Virginia, approximately 16 miles east of the county seat of Parsons and approximately 175 miles northeast of the state capitol at Charleston. The property is located on a flat corner lot one block north of the central business district; Third Street runs north-south immediately west of the property, Thomas Street runs east-west to the north, an unnamed alley marks the rear property line to the south, and another house is east of the subject property. The Meyer House has a lawn on all sides, some foundation plantings, and mature deciduous trees nearby.

Two resources are associated with this nomination, and their relative location is depicted on the site map prepared in conjunction with the nomination. The numbering refers to the site map.

1. Herman August Meyer House, residential

Date: c. 1891

1 contributing building

Description:

Exterior The Herman August Meyer House (Photos 1-14) is a 2½-story, 5-bay central-passage I-house of wood construction, built as a single-family residence, and converted for use as a bed-and-breakfast inn. "T"-shaped in plan, the house rests on a foundation of coursed rubble stone, is finished in asbestos shingles, which clad the original German siding, with an intersecting gable roof system clad in asphalt shingles. A historic photo (Fig. 1) indicates that the house originally had a roof of standing-seam metal and that the lot was enclosed within a wood picket fence. A pair of interior gables penetrates the roof at attic level on the façade (Photos 1, 2). A 1-story hip-roofed front porch extends outward c. 8 feet from the façade and is enclosed with operable double-hung sash. A non-historic stoop with a handrail accesses the porch. One historic photo (Fig. 1) indicates that this porch was originally open, with characteristic late-nineteenth-century sawn and turned trim. Another early photo (Fig. 2), likely dating from the 1930s, indicates that the porch was enclosed with operable sash at an early date. Most

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fenestration is flat-topped, with one-over-one replacement sash which match the original window openings. The original molded surrounds and window heads have been retained. The historic sash on the first story of the façade, along with the original German siding, have been retained, with French windows and exterior louvered shutters. The pediments of the two gables on the facade are penetrated by a semi-circular window, each of which retains original shutter hardware. No other windows suggest the earlier presence of exterior shutters, since the windows on the first and second floors have interior shutters. A single undersized hexagonal window has been inserted on the rear (south) elevation (Photo 3). On each of the east and west gable ends is a 2-story bay window which opens into front livingrooms on the first story and bedrooms above (Photos 1, 2, 7, 12). *Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps* for Davis (Fig. 3 and 4) suggest that these bay windows were added between 1894 and 1899. A wood deck extends along a portion of the southeast elevation and is accessed from an enclosed side porch (Photo 3).

Interior The interior plan is that of a central-passage I-house, 2½ stories in height, with a basement, a finished attic, and a rearward-projecting original "T" wing (Photos 4-14).

Most areas have exposed wood floors, finished naturally (Photos 4, 5, 8, 11); a small amount of wall-to-wall carpeting is present but most has been removed in the course of converting the house to a bed-and-breakfast inn. Trim features include original wood baseboards and window and door surrounds. All interior walls and most ceilings are finished in plaster or drywall; in only a few areas is acoustical tile remaining on the ceilings. Original louvered interior shutters are at most windows (Photos 6, 7, 9, 12). Original volumes are present in most areas; over the years, some ceilings were dropped but most have been restored to their original height.

The first story (Photos 4-10) incorporates the central hallway with an open-string, double-run stair which retains the original newel post, balustrade, and handrail (Photos 4, 5). A closet accessed by double doors is under the stair. On either side of the hallway are rooms (Photo 7) which feature a bay window and a fireplace with the original wood mantle (Photos 6, 8). Double French doors open from the hall into the western front room, which has been retained as common area and retains an original built-in wood bookcase on the south side of the fireplace (Photo 6). The eastern front room was formerly the library from

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Continuation Sheet

Meyer, Herman August, House
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which Herman Meyer lent books to the community, and has been converted for use as one of the bed-and-breakfast lodgings, served by a bathroom inserted into a portion of the former side porch.

The diningroom (Photos 9, 10) is accessed from the south end of the central hallway and runs east-west. The diningroom includes an original ornamental pressed metal ceiling (Photo 10) and built-in china closet with glass doors. The kitchen is accessed from the diningroom and also retains a pressed metal ceiling along with cabinets and cupboards and access to an enclosed stair leading to the former servants' quarters on the second floor. The side porch, now enclosed with windows, is accessed from the kitchen.

The main stair leads to the second story (Photos 4, 5, 11), with additional steps on the landing accessing the rearward-projecting "T" wing. Two bedrooms are located on the front (north) side of the second story, each with the upper portion of the aforementioned bay window (Photo 12). Bathrooms and closets serving these bedrooms have been inserted into portions of the adjoining rear wing. Part of the rear wing, along with a second-story addition over the side porch, has been converted into a bed-and-breakfast lodging suite (Photo 13) containing a bedroom and sitting room.

The attic (Photo 14) is accessed from the rear wing, via an enclosed straight-run stair. The attic consists of a large finished room lacking notable ornament, with the round-arched windows from the gables providing natural light.

2. Dependency, domestic dependency

Date: c. 1891

1 contributing building

Description:

1- and 1½-story L-shaped dependency of wood frame construction (Photo 15) which is shown on historic *Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps* and retains integrity. It may have begun as a barn or carriage house and currently functions as a garage. The building is finished in asphalt shingle siding with an intersecting gable roof clad in asphalt roofing shingles. Fenestration is flat-topped with operable 2/2 sash as well as fixed multi-light window panels. An overhead garage door is on the south elevation, opening onto an unnamed alley which runs east-west behind the house.

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES Continuation Sheet

Meyer, Herman August, House
Tucker County, WV

Section 8 Page 4

8. Significance

Introduction

The Herman August Meyer House is locally significant and meets National Register Criteria A and B. With respect to Criterion A, the building is significant under *education* as it served as the first and only lending library in the community's history when owner Herman A. Meyer made his personal library available to the community. Criterion B significance under *commerce* derives from the role played by Herman A. Meyer in the commercial life of the community, including banking, real estate, insurance, and general merchandising. The Criterion B significance of the property is vested in its long association with Meyer, an important community leader in Davis' commercial history from the 1890s until his death in 1919; he lived here from 1898 until his death, years which correspond to the majority of his active, productive life as a leading community businessman. The 1898-1919 Period of Significance of the Meyer house is established by the date H. A. Meyer acquired the property and terminates with his date of death.

Brief History of Davis, West Virginia

Davis lies in what was once known as the Great Wilderness because of its unbroken acres of heavy forest. The first exploration of the area by non-natives occurred with the incursion by fur traders in the mid-eighteenth century. The region was sparsely populated until the arrival of the lumber industry late in the nineteenth century. The first railroad, the West Virginia Central & Pittsburg, entered the region in 1884 and the first permanent non-native resident of the area that would become Davis was Robert Eastham, a native of Rappahannock County, Virginia, who arrived here about 1885 and built the first house.

The town of Davis was named for Henry Gassaway Davis (1823-1911), a leader in the development of the railroad and the exploration of natural resources, including timber and lumber, in West Virginia.¹ In 1884 the new town bearing Davis' name was laid out along the Blackwater River.

¹ Charles Melville Pepper, **The Life and Times of Henry Gassaway Davis**

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Meyer, Herman August, House
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Although it was located on acreage owned by Davis, Davis never resided there. The town encompassed a rectangular tract that measured 2,800' x 1,600' platted in a grid of streets and alleys. The WVC&P Railroad entered Davis from the northwest and ran south of William Street serving the diverse industries which streets, including the main street, William, as well as Henry and Thomas, bearing the names of H. G. Davis himself and his brothers and business partners.² Passenger and freight depots (not extant) were erected along the tracks. The settlement was originally nicknamed "Stumptown," since it was said that one could traverse the entire town by stepping from stump to stump. It soon developed into a burgeoning new town, "which within a year had become the center of important mining and lumber industries."³ The community was incorporated in 1889 and recorded a population at that time of 909. By the turn of the century the population had swelled to 2,319, testimony to the substantial industrial growth which occurred here in the 1890s.⁴

The community, built from the fortunes of lumber and coal, was – and continues to be – nearly exclusively of wood construction. Likewise, the industrial initiatives which developed in Davis were nearly all lumber-driven. These included the Blackwater Lumber Company, the Beaver Creek Lumber Company, the U. S. Leather Company, the West Virginia Pulp and Paper Company and the Davis Coal and Coke Company, which was among the largest coal companies in the world. All of these industrial operations were located along the Blackwater River and Beaver Creek, south and west of the center of town.

By the waning days of the nineteenth century, Davis included a bottling works and several hotels, including the Virginia House, the Blackwater Hotel, and the Hotel Howard, which stood diagonally across

² Davis was apparently fond of using family names for his operations, since one of his Maryland mines was known as the "Henry Mine," and two distinct coal beds were referred to by the a 1909 report by the Maryland Geological Survey as the Henry and the Thomas beds. In addition, the town of Gassaway (Davis' middle name) is in Braxton County and was established in 1904 to serve the Coal and Coke Company's railroad operations.

³ Pepper, **Op. Cit.**, 102.

⁴ Cynthia A. Phillips, **Tucker County**, Images of America series (Portsmouth, New Hampshire: Arcadia Publishing, 2005), p. 73.

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Meyer, Herman August, House
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Thomas Street from the Meyer House.⁵ A brick public school, later the Davis High School, was at the corner of Kent and Fifth Streets and Catholic and Methodist Episcopal churches joined the Presbyterian Church which has appeared in the early 1890s.

The Meyer House

The Davis Coal and Coke Company built the nominated property c. 1891 as the home for its superintendent, Charles Coburn, who had come to Davis from Pittsburgh. His stay was short-lived, since one of his eight children died, and in 1895 the house was sold to Thomas Burger, the owner of the Rumbarger lumber mill on nearby Pendelton Creek. In 1898 the property was acquired by Herman A. Meyer, beginning its long association with the Meyer family.

Writing in **Behold! Than Land of Canaan**, Herman August Meyer's great-granddaughter, Susan Meyer chronicles:

The explosive growth of the town of Davis in the 1880s changed a clearing in the woods into a bustling community of more than a thousand people in a few short years. They all came to share in the economic boom of coal and lumber. Among those who came to Davis to enjoy its prosperity were the Meyer and Hivick families, who had emigrated to America from Germany . . .⁶

Herman August Meyer (1856-1919) was born in Wellersburg, Pennsylvania and as a young man became committed to public education, a passion which lasted all of his life. He first taught in Hampshire County, West Virginia and in 1880 married Mary Jackson Powell (1863-1931), native of Bloomery, Hampshire County. The Meyers came to Davis in 1886 and Herman Meyer found employment as a clerk in several business houses including the H. G. Davis Coal and Coke Company. Upon his arrival in Davis, he immediately took an active role in the community and when the first public educational program in Davis was inaugurated, he was at the forefront. Pearle Mott, writing in 1972, reprinted an 1895 account from the *Tucker County Republican*:

⁵ *Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps, Davis, West Virginia*. (New York: Sanborn Map Company, 1894, 1899, 1904, 1909).

⁶ Susan Meyer, "The Legacy of the Meyer Family of Davis, West Virginia," **Behold! The Land of Canaan** (Davis: Tucker County Highlands History and Education Project, 2009), p. 14.

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Meyer, Herman August, House
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The citizens of Davis were fortunate in while yet the town was in its infancy they succeeded in electing to its board of education two progressive men. . . . A building of a single room was erected in Davis in 1886. H. A. Meyer was elected to be the first teacher, a position he held for three consecutive terms.⁷

Herman and Mary Meyer's family grew to include four children. It is not known where the Meyers lived during their early years in Davis, but by the late 1890s Herman Meyer had become financially settled and was able to purchase the nominated property in 1898. He lived the rest of his life here and, as was the custom of the day, was buried from this house following his death at the age of 73. His 1919 obituary eulogized him as a "foremost citizen" and recorded that he was the first Principal of the Davis Public Shool, although the term "teacher" and "principal" may have been interchangeable.⁸ The 1894 *Sanborn Fire Insurance Map* for Davis shows the school on Henry Street, west of Fifth Street. The aforementioned 1895 newspaper article also mentions that after teaching for the first three terms of school in Davis, H. A. Meyer was elected to the Board of Education and served as its secretary.

Meyer's commitment to education lasted far beyond his years as a schoolteacher. His obituary noted, "It was characteristic of Mr. Meyer that he retained throughout his entire life this early interest in schools and in the best training of the young people of the community."⁹ Meyer displayed this commitment by maintaining a substantial personal library in his home which he opened to Davis citizens. Meyer's great-granddaughter, Susan Meyer, confirmed this, stating, "The library, although personal, was open to anyone in the town who wanted to use it. It was located in what became a bedroom [on the first floor]."¹⁰ Much of the collection stayed in the family after Meyer's death, and many of his books were sold at auction in 1988 when the property left the original family. Susan Meyer continued, "We have found a few books from great granddad Meyer's library. They have bookplates with numbers in them so

⁷ *Tucker County Republican*, August 9, 1895, quoted in Pearle G. Mott, *History of Davis and Canaan Valley*, (Parsons, West Virginia: McLain Publishing, 1972), p. 304.

⁸ *Davis News*, September 22, 1919.

⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰ E-mail correspondence from Susan Meyer to Cynthia Phillips, Tucker County Landmarks Commission, 2010.

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Meyer, Herman August, House
Tucker County, WV

Section 8 Page 8

you can tell it was a lending library.”¹¹ The size of the collection is not known, nor has any inventory of the collection been found. Neither is it known whether the library kept regular hours. What is known conclusively is that in the Meyer House was the community’s first lending library, in one of the downstairs front rooms (Photo No. 8) which retains integrity.

Some of the books remaining in Susan Meyer’s possession are illustrative of the broad array of titles in Herman Meyer’s library, ranging from history to children’s literature, indicating that Meyer’s library served the general adult public as well as Davis’ youth: a series entitled J. G. Wood’s lavishly illustrated **Natural History** (1869), **Pollyanna** (1912) and its 1913 sequel, **Pollyanna Grows Up** (1915), from the series focusing upon the young heroine by the same name in the novels by Eleanor Hodgman Porter (1868-1920), the best-selling 1894 novel, **Trilby**, the work of George DuMaurier, **Whitney’s German Grammar** (1869), **A Child’s Story of the Bible**, and Mary Johnson’s 1912 **Cease Firing**, a novel of the Civil War published in 1912 with illustrations by N. C. Wyeth. Each of these retain Herman Meyer’s hand-numbered bookplates.¹²

Other than Meyer’s library located in his home, the community never had a public lending library. Davis is presently served by the Mountain Top Library in Thomas. The National Register Criterion A significance of the Meyer House for education is based upon its service as the community’s first and only lending library, in that H. A. Meyer made his personal collection available as a free library for the community.

The Criterion B significance of the Meyer House derives from the irrefutable association of the property with H. A. Meyer who became one of the local giants in business and commerce in Davis and the immediate region while living in the nominated property. Meyer was associated with Davis-area real estate developer Fairfax S. Landstreet and was variously bookkeeper, auditor, and general manager of all of the company stores of the Buxton and Landstreet Company. This company represented the retail

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² E-mail correspondence from Susan Meyer to David Leshner, Tucker County Historic Landmarks Commission, 2010.

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Meyer, Herman August, House
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general merchandise arm of H. G. Davis' extensive local operations, and was likely the "company store" of the Davis Coal and Coke Company.¹³

Meyer founded and was director of the Meyer Insurance Agency, which remained in operation in Davis into the 1980s. He was also, at the time of his death, president of the National Bank of Davis, whose imposing stone bank building remains on William Street in the heart of the downtown.¹⁴ In the town of Thomas, a nearby H.G. Davis-founded community established in 1892 and named for the same Thomas Davis, Herman Meyer was a director of the Miners and Merchants Bank of Thomas which was established in 1902. He was also president of the F.S. Johnson Drug Co., which operated drug stores in Davis, Parsons, and Elkins and owned a substantial share of the Durbin Mercantile Company, of Durban, West Virginia. He served as secretary of the Davis Electric Light Company and as secretary and treasurer of the Deep Run Big Vein Coal Company.¹⁵ He was a local religious leader as well, having been a charter member of the local Presbyterian Church. "Elected a member of the Board of Deacons upon the organization of the members, he served in this capacity until 1915 when he was elected ruling elder and became clerk of the Session, a position which he occupied faithfully and efficiently during the remainder of his life."¹⁶

The nominated property is clearly the best property in this community to reflect his importance to Davis' commercial history. While the bank in which he served is extant, the house better represents Meyer's significance to Davis as he was associated with various commercial enterprises. Meyer's home is clearly the obvious property to reflect his importance as a "foremost" community leader as he was eulogized in his obituary.

¹³ The Buxton and Landstreet store between Thomas and Coketon has been preserved as an outlet for West Virginia artisans and craftspeople.

¹⁴ The National Bank of Davis, established in 1892, was likely another of the offshoots of the Davis Coal and Coke Company, since Henry Gassaway Davis' brother, Thomas Beall Davis (1828-1911), was the first president.

¹⁵ Family history MS prepared by Susan Meyer, great-granddaughter of Herman A. Meyer, n. d., in the possession of the property owners.

¹⁶ Meyer obit, *op. cit.*

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With respect to other comparable community leaders during the growth of this village, while Henry Gassaway Davis was the founder of the town which bore his name, he never lived here. During his significant productive years he was a primarily a resident of Elkins, Randolph Country, West Virginia and Washington, DC. In this very small community in the early years of the twentieth century Herman August Meyer was indeed a foremost citizen, a significant individual within the context of the economic development of the town, and an active and an acknowledged local business leader.

Herman A. Meyer lived in this house until his death in 1919, occupying the property for an unbroken period of twenty-one years, corresponding to his active life as an undisputed community leader, during which he established and built up a variety of business interests, attained prominence in the community, and became a widely-respected regional business leader in the fields of finance, real estate, and insurance and in the management of the Davis' retail operations. The property remained in the ownership of his family for decades thereafter. Meyer's widow remained here until she died in 1931 and it was later the home of Meyer's grandson and his family. It was sold out of the family in the 1980s.

Integrity

Taken as a whole, the Meyer House retains integrity in the majority of its individual components. With reference to the National Register, integrity is defined as "the authenticity of a property's historic identify, evidenced by the survival of physical characteristics that existed during the property's prehistoric or historic period."¹⁷ While some changes occurred to the fabric of the house over the decades,¹⁸ its ongoing rehabilitation as a bed-and-breakfast inn has restored some altered interior elements and the modifications carried out in the course of the rehabilitation have not materially affected the property's ability to reflect its historically-significant past under National Register Criterion B. The exterior surfaces of asbestos shingles represent an early modification, since such materials were

¹⁷ National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register Registration Form* (Washington, D. C.: National Park Service, 1977; rev. 1997), p. 4.

¹⁸ This property's National Register eligibility falls under Criterion A for its significance as Davis' first and only lending library, and Criterion B for its association with Meyer. It is not eligible under Criterion C for architecture because of these changes.

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being promoted and used as early as the World War One era.¹⁹ Meyer's grandson made changes to the property in the 1940s; it is likely that this is when the asbestos shingles were installed.²⁰ The original German siding may be assumed to remain under the asbestos and has been retained on the first story, as part of the front porch. The enclosure of the front porch with operable sash is part of a tradition which began in the 1920s, as the popularity of the open porch somewhat waned. This treatment is seen in many locales, including elsewhere along Thomas Avenue in Davis, where several other nineteenth-century homes exhibit similar treatment. Many of the physical characteristics of the nominated property's historic period have survived and have been enhanced in the course of rehabilitation, and it retains integrity of location, design, setting, workmanship, and feeling. Integrity of association under Criterion B refers to "the direct link between an important historic event or person and a historic property."²¹ The history of this property is directly linked to the life and work of Herman August Meyer, a longtime community and business leader who occupied the property throughout much of his productive life in Davis. The test of integrity also poses the question, "If individuals from the historic period of the resource were to return, would they recognize the resource?" With respect to the Meyer House, the answer to this question is "yes."

Summary

Summarizing, the Herman A. Meyer House retains integrity and is significant for its close association with commercial and educational history of Davis, West Virginia, in that it was the home of Herman A. Meyer, a long-time business and community leader who made his own personal library available from this house as the first – and only – community lending library in Davis. Additionally, Meyer was involved with myriad business and community interests including general merchandising associated with the Davis Coal and Coke Company, banking, real estate, insurance, and the providing of public utilities to this community in rural Tucker County—in short, an unparalleled community leader during the

¹⁹"The Building Age," (June, 1915), p. 114.

²⁰ Susan Meyer e-mail, **Op. Cit.**

²¹**Op. Cit.**, National Register Bulletin, p. 45.

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formative years of the community of Davis, West Virginia during the last years of the nineteenth and the first two decades of the twentieth century.

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Continuation Sheet

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Tucker County, West Virginia

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Maps

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Meyer, Herman August, House
Tucker County, West Virginia

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The boundary for this nomination consists of that lot described in a deed recorded in the land records in the office of the Clerk of the Commission of Tucker County, West Virginia in Book 194, Page 614.

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The nominated property consists only of that tract historically associated with the H. A. Meyer house since the time of its construction and includes the house, its contributing dependency, and the associated lawns. It is bounded on the north by Thomas Avenue, on the south by an unnamed alley, on the west by Third Street, and on the west by another house lot.

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Meyer, Herman August, House
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PHOTO LOG

All Photos: **Meyer, Herman August, House**

Tucker County, WV

2009

David L. Taylor

Images filed with West Virginia SHPO and National Register

1. Northeast perspective looking southwest and showing overall form , fenestration, and finish of the property
2. Northwest perspective, looking southeast
3. South elevation, looking north
4. Interior, detail, looking south and showing central hall and balustrade
5. Interior, detail, central hallway, looking west and showing hardwood floors, newel, handrail, and balustrade
6. Interior, livingroom, looking southwest and showing fireplace mantle, and built-in bookcase.
7. Interior, livingroom, looking west into bay window and showing original window surrounds and interior shutters.
8. Interior, east front room (former lending library), looking west and showing oriignal fireplace mantle, overmantle, hardwood floor, etc.
9. Interior, diningroom, looking southeast and showing volume, finishes, interior shutters, etc.
10. Interior, diningroom, detail of pressed metal ceiling
11. Interior, view down main stairs from second-story landing, looking north and showing balustrade, handrail, newels, etc.
12. Interior, second story, northwest bedroom, looking into bay window
13. Interior, second story, south section, formerly servants' quarters, looking southeast.
14. Attic, typical view, looking south and showing characteristic finishes of this area.
15. Dependency, looking northwest, showing form and asphalt shingle finishes, with gables of house in background

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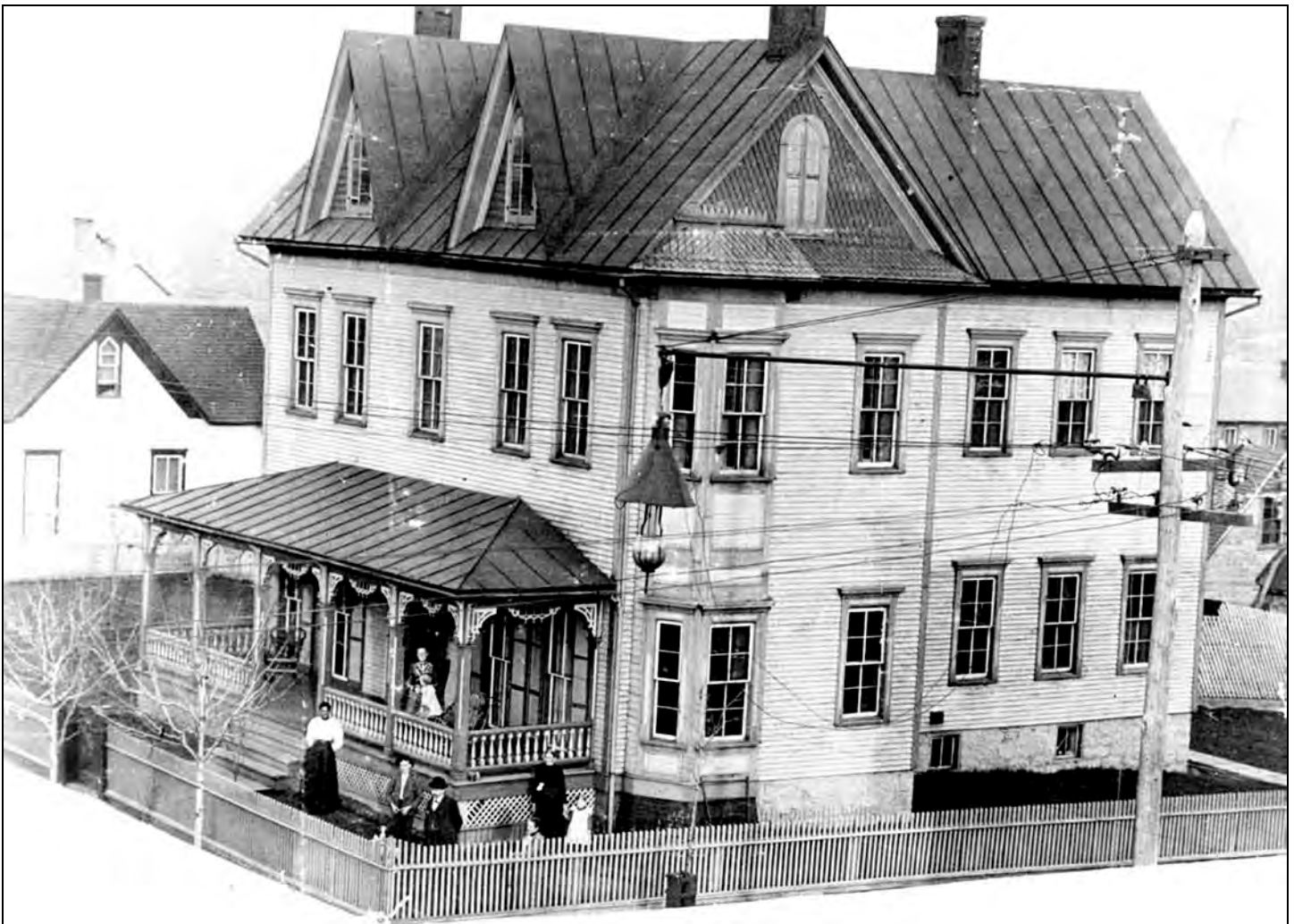


Figure 1 View of the subject property, likely taken from an upper story of the Hotel Howard (not extant), which stood diagonally across Thomas Street. Shown are the original finishes, including the front porch, polychrome paint scheme, etc. [from owner's collection]

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Meyer, Herman August, House
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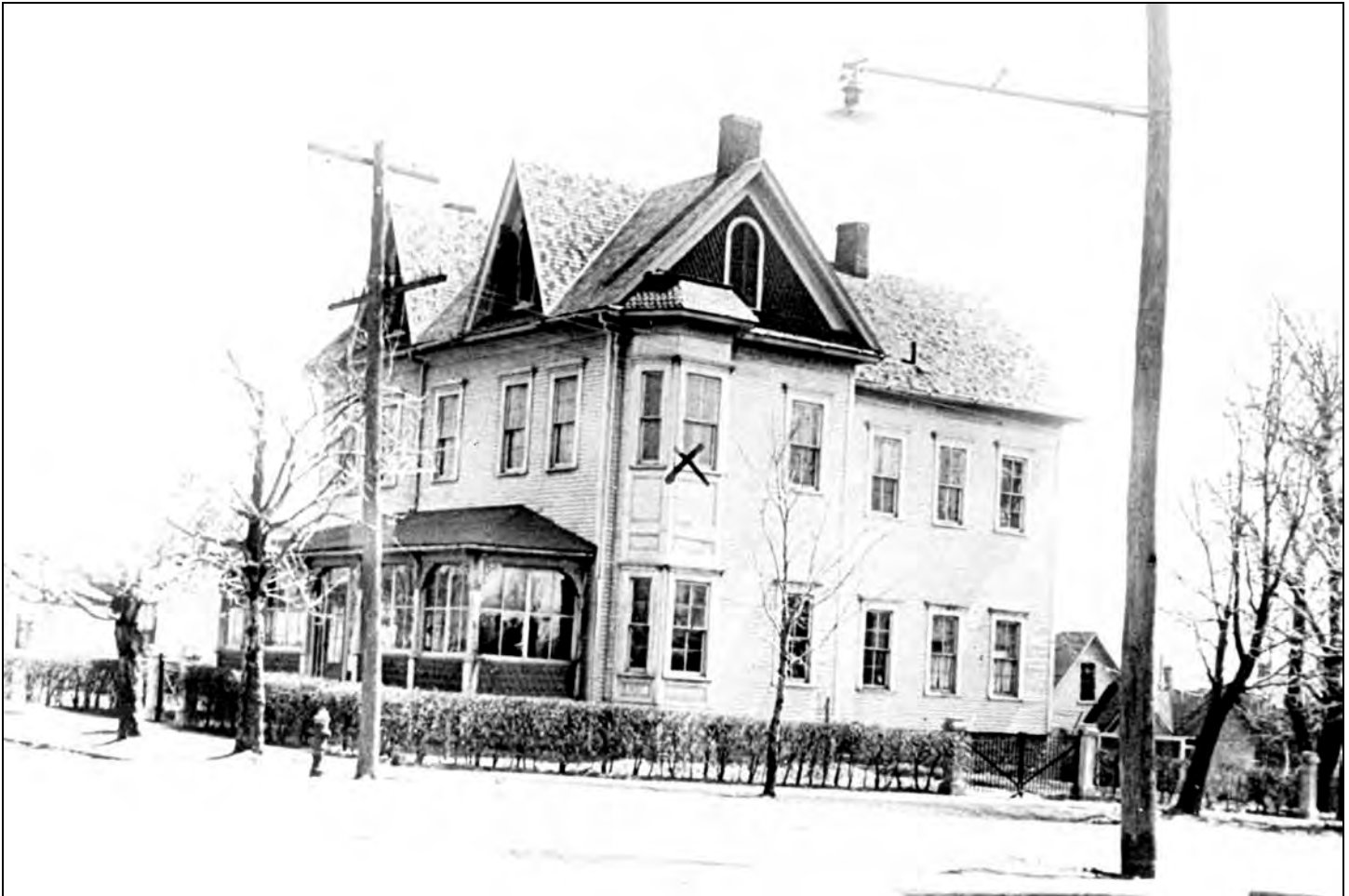


Figure 2 The Meyer House c. 1930, after the first enclosure of the front porch with operable sash. [from owner's collection]

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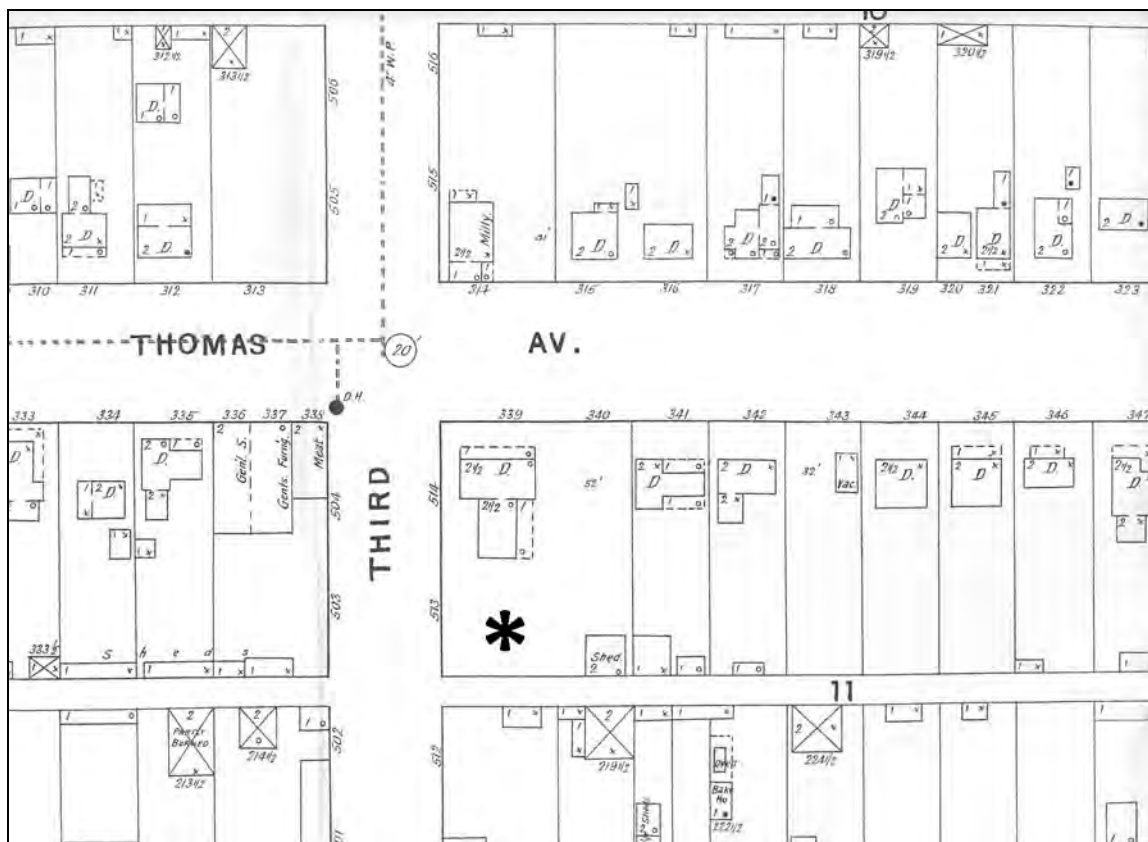


Figure 3 This segment from the 1892 *Sanborn Fire Insurance Map* shows the Meyer House, indicated by the superimposed asterisk, without the bay windows on the east and west elevations.

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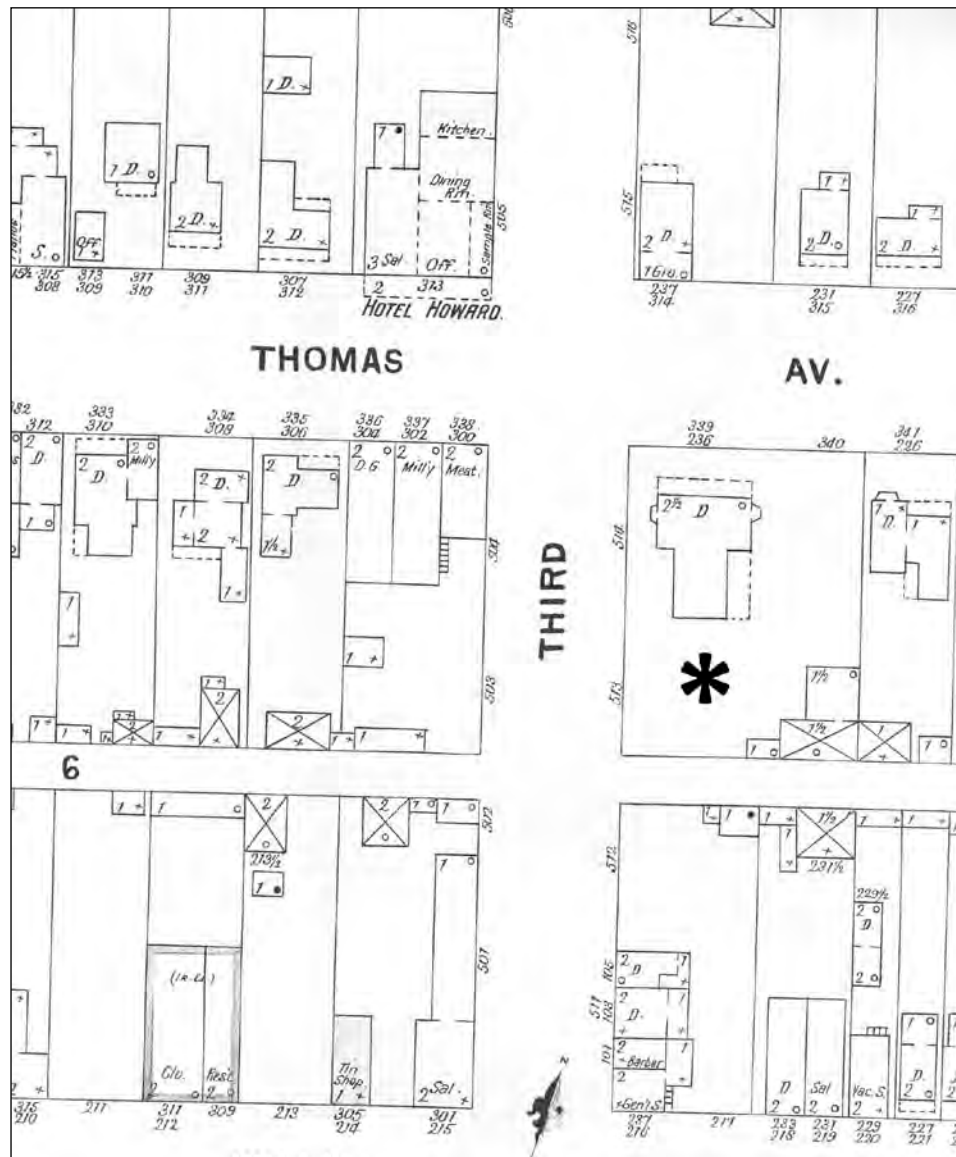
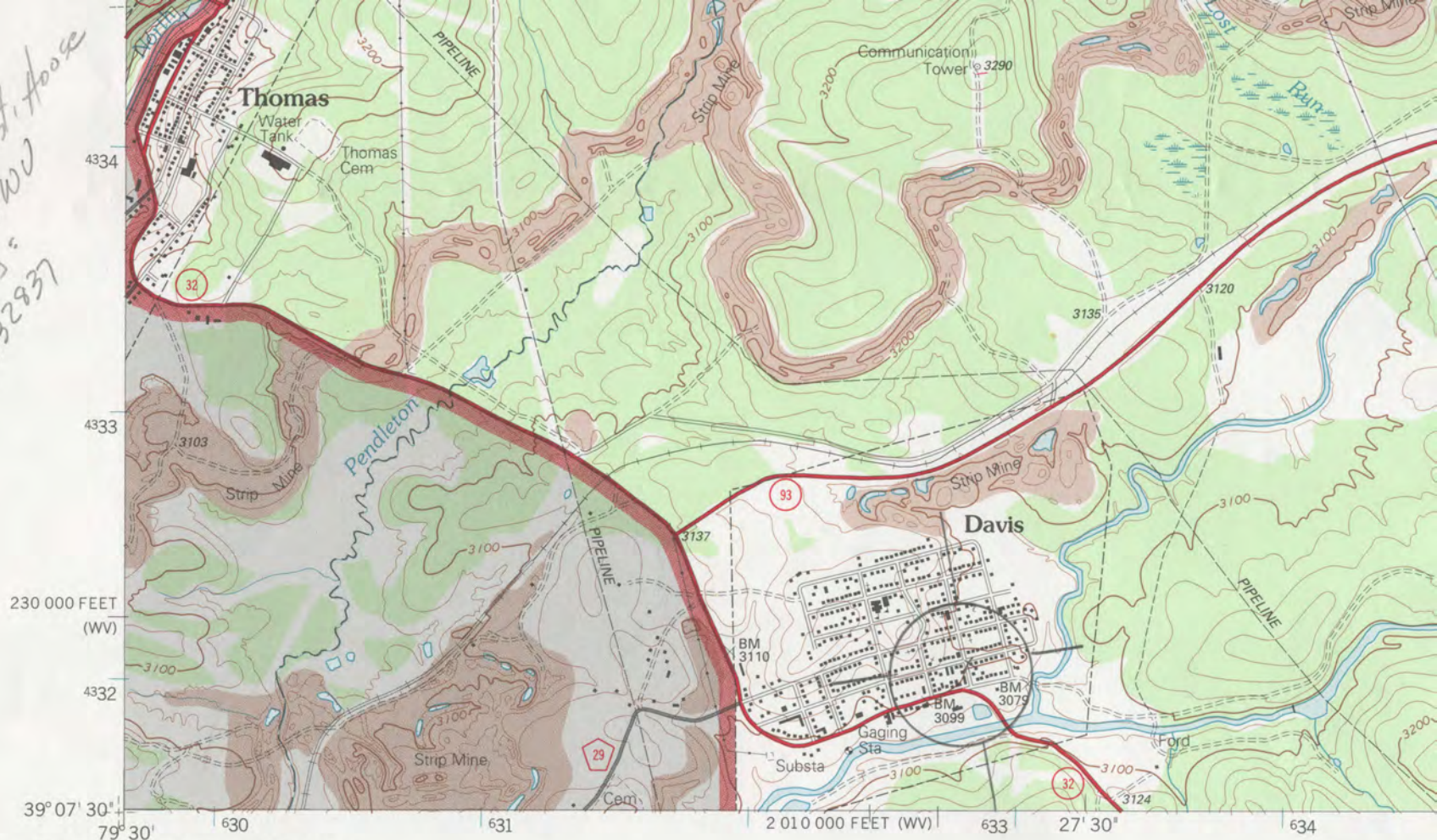


Figure 4 The house as it appeared on the 1897 *Sanborn Fire Insurance Map*, with the bay windows clearly shown, suggesting that they may have been a mid-1890s addition.

Meyer, Herman August, Hoose
 Davis, Tucker Co. WV
 UTM References:
 17/4332089/632937



**Produced by the U.S. Geological Survey
 Revised by the U.S. Forest Service**

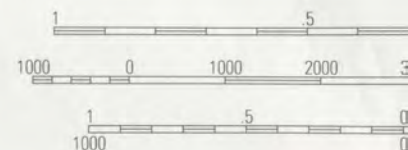
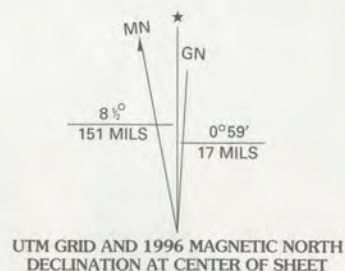
Areas outside the National Forest System lands may not have been revised
 Topography compiled 1966. Planimetry derived from imagery taken 1990
 Partial field check by U.S. Forest Service 1995

North American Datum of 1927 (NAD 27). Projection and 10 000-foot ticks:
 West Virginia coordinate system, north zone, and Maryland coordinate system
 (Lambert conformal conic). Blue 1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator ticks, zone 17

North American Datum of 1983 (NAD 83) is shown by dashed corner ticks
 The values of the shift between NAD 27 and NAD 83 for 7.5-minute
 intersections are obtainable from National Geodetic Survey NADCON software

Non-National Forest System lands within the National Forest
 Inholdings may exist in other National or State reservations

This map is not a legal land line or ownership document. Public lands are
 subject to change and leasing, and may have access restrictions; check
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 A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHY

MEYER, HERMAN AUGUST, HOUSE
Tucker County, West Virginia

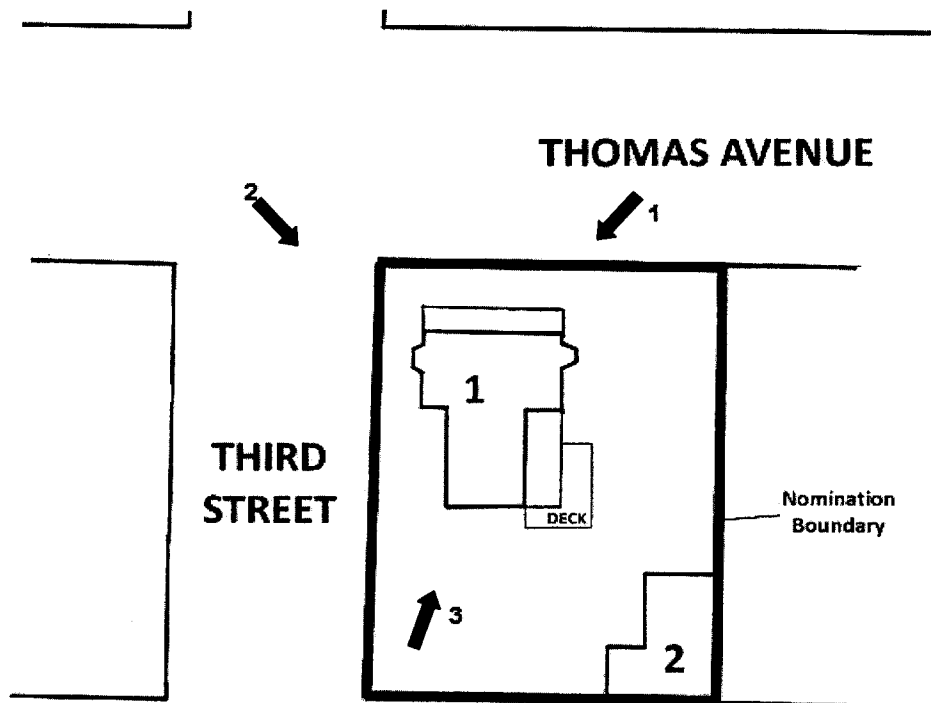
Site Plan

Legend:

- 1 Main House
- 2 Dependency



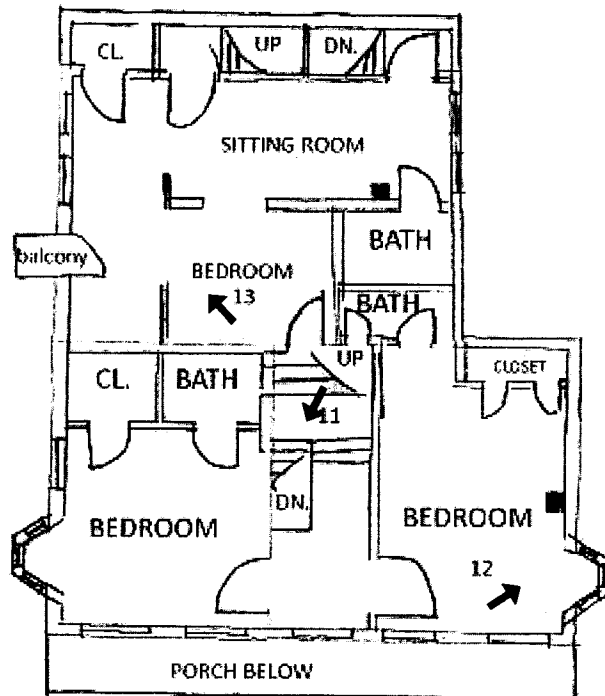
Not to scale



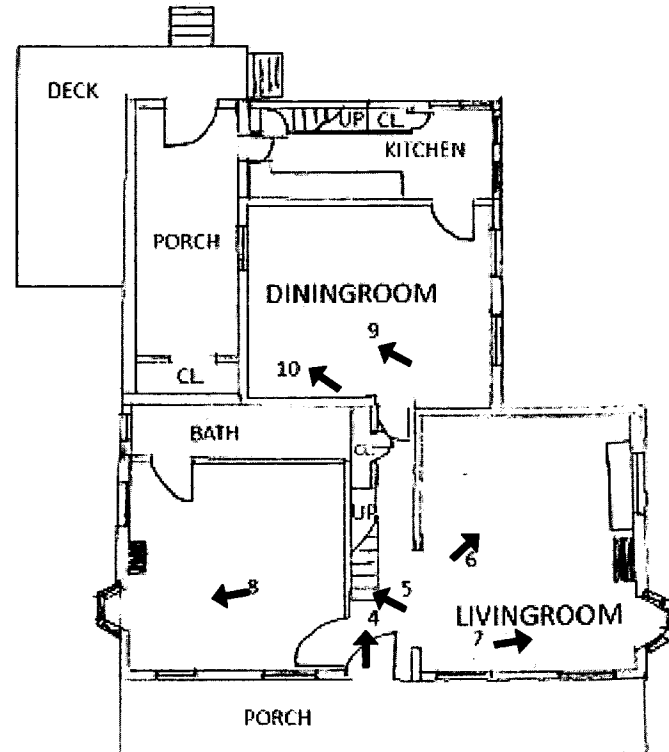
MEYER, HERMAN AUGUST, HOUSE

Davis, Tucker County, West Virginia

Photo Key--Interior



Second Story



First Story







304-259-5451



















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NEVER HEARD OF THIS