

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

For NPS use only
received _____
date entered _____

1. Name

historic Thurmond Historic District

and/or common Same

2. Location

street & number -- not for publication

city, town Thurmond vicinity of ~~Washington, D.C.~~

state West Virginia code 54 county Fayette code 019

3. Classification

| Category | Ownership | Status | Present Use |
|--|--|---|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> district | <input type="checkbox"/> public | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied | <input type="checkbox"/> agriculture |
| <input type="checkbox"/> building(s) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unoccupied | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commercial |
| <input type="checkbox"/> structure | <input type="checkbox"/> both | <input type="checkbox"/> work in progress | <input type="checkbox"/> educational |
| <input type="checkbox"/> site | Public Acquisition | Accessible | <input type="checkbox"/> entertainment |
| <input type="checkbox"/> object | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> in process R station | <input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted | <input type="checkbox"/> government |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> being considered | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted | <input type="checkbox"/> industrial |
| | | <input type="checkbox"/> no | <input type="checkbox"/> military |
| | | | <input type="checkbox"/> museum |
| | | | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> park |
| | | | <input type="checkbox"/> private residence |
| | | | <input type="checkbox"/> religious |
| | | | <input type="checkbox"/> scientific |
| | | | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> transportation |
| | | | <input type="checkbox"/> other: |

4. Owner of Property

name Multiple ownership

street & number --

city, town Thurmond vicinity of state West Virginia 25936

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Fayette County Court House

street & number --

city, town Fayetteville state West Virginia

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title New River Gorge National River has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 1981 federal state county local

depository for survey records National Parks Service Office

city, town Oakhill state West Virginia

7. Description

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

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The major factor affecting the physical appearance of Thurmond, West Virginia is geography. The town is located in the middle of the New River Gorge, a steep inaccessible valley cut through the mountains by the New River. The narrow flood plain of the river was broad enough at Thurmond--approximately 100-150 meters--to accommodate a railroad assembly yard, but the town had to be built into and upon the mountain side. River elevation at Thurmond is 1070 feet, and the mountainside upon which Thurmond was built rises to over 1800 feet.

A second factor affecting the appearance of Thurmond is the fact that it developed as an industrial town. Its structures were built for practical commercial or residential use and lack embellishments or significant stylistic features. Most of the residential structures were built by the town proprietor, W. D. Thurmond, and by coal baron, T. G. McKell, to house the local railroad workers. As a result, residential buildings come in a few simple, often repeated stylistic forms.

The physical plat of the town is very simple. It lies on a northwest/southeast axis along the New River just where the river enters a major "hairpin" turn back to the east southeast. The Chesapeake and Ohio Railroad yards occupy the flood plain and no street lies between the railroad and commercial buildings facing the railroad. The single road now in Thurmond enters across the railroad bridge, crosses the tracks at an angle proceeding almost due north, quickly makes a hairpin turn up the hillside toward the east, then makes another hairpin turn back to the northwest and parallels the railroad the length of the town at a height approximately 150 feet above the railroad level. At the west end of town, the road makes another hairpin turn back almost due south down the mountain and ends at the railroad level before reaching the commercial buildings. (Cars do drive on the sidewalk at the commercial buildings at times.) Nearly all Thurmond structures are located along this single roadway.

There are only three or four housing types in Thurmond. The most pervasive is a basic single story, four room house with a traffic pattern that simply circles inside the house from one room to the next. Over time, additions have been made by owners, particularly the installation of kitchen and indoor bathroom facilities. Some of the two story houses follow the same basic pattern and simply add a second floor. Other story and a half houses have a side entrance with three rooms and hall downstairs and two rooms upstairs. Because of the terrain, houses were often built on stilts or piles out over the hillside, some even intentionally a split level with four rooms over two. Most of these are gone. Over time, the open spaces under the houses have been closed in and used for storage or additional rooms. Many owners have also added asphalt shingles over the rough siding. A number of the houses are often called "jennylinds". The term refers more to a type of construction than to a style. Such houses were built of rough-sawn lumber used for board and batten exterior walls, for rough floors and for room partitions inside. Often built on stilts and having no insulation, they were a minimal kind of housing built throughout the coal fields for worker housing. (One explanation given for the name is that the wind whistled through the houses sounding like a bird, hence the Swedish nightingale name.) Other houses were more sturdy, particularly the two story houses with weatherboard siding and more stylistic detail, often built initially for railroad supervisory personnel.

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I. Pivotal Structures.

There are sixteen pivotal structures with extremely high historical integrity and of first importance to the historic district.

1. The Charles Wells House. (circa. 1900) This pivotal house is one of several similar houses built by W. D. Thurmond along the hillside in the west end of the town before his death in 1910. This is the best example of the 1½ story house and it is virtually as built. The house has weatherboard siding, a metal gable roof, center chimney and a second chimney serving the kitchen. It has 2 bay sides and a 2 bay front facade with simple 2 light over 2 light sash windows. The front facade contains a double window to the left and an entrance door to the right. A nicely detailed front porch with hip roof extends across most of the facade and is supported by 4 turned wooden posts decorated with cutwork bracketing at the capitals and two half post against the facade. The floor plan is approximately 26 x 30 feet, and a dining room and kitchen in the back. A bath has been located under the stairs in the front hall. Two bedrooms are on the second floor. Well cared for, the house is also significant as the home of Charles and Dorothy Wells, long-time Thurmond residents. Mr. Wells came to Thurmond in the early 20's, played with a local dance band in the Dun Glen Hotel, and has been a stalwart member and defender of Thurmond for many years.

2. The Billy McGuffin House. (circa. 1900) This second pivotal house is the best example of the 2 story houses in the eastern end of the town and it also retains virtually all of its historical integrity. The house has 2 bays on each facade, a gable roof, 2 over 2 windows with green shutters contrasting with white weatherboard. A small entrance porch with shed roof on the northwest corner enters the kitchen. A corner veranda curves around the southwest corner of the structure. The entrance door is at an angle to the two side walls. A chimney centers each roof facade and vents functioning fireplaces located in the partition walls. The 32 x 32 foot floor plan features four rooms down stairs and four and a bath upstairs. The house was built with an indoor bath which still contains the original fixtures. The house was originally built for a Mr. Cary, a railroad official, then a merchant, Leslie Thompson lived in the house and kept boarders. Next, Henry Carte, a blacksmith with a shop out over the hill on the road leading down to the station, lived in the house. Two families, the Keightly and Cole families, then shared the house, followed by a Mr. Morris who was the foreman of a C & O wreck crew. Billy McGuffin, the present owner, is a long time resident, having grown up in the town, and he has a number of photographs including a very important panorama view of the town in 1920 taken by the famous local photographer, Red Ribble.

3. John Dragon House. (circa. 1900) This is another of several larger 2 story houses built for railroad men on the hill in the eastern section of town on land of T. G. McKell, not Thurmond land. The house is approximately 30 x 30 feet, 2 story with basement and attic areas. Built originally as a duplex of frame construction, it is now covered with green asbestos shingles. This 5 foot foundation is coursed rubble or field stone. The gable roof is covered with tarpaper as is the gable roof covering a small one story addition to the rear of the house. A full length porch with shed roof and plain wooden posts extends across the full front of the building. (The house is positioned to face the side yard with the road toward its left and the mountain on the right.) The basic facade pattern of 2 bays on each side is broken on the front porch by two doors, one at each end, as well as two windows. The window treatment is 6 over 6 sash windows. The

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house is in good condition, and is the residence of the owner of Wildwater Unlimited, the well-known white water rafting outfit located across the river on the site of the old Dun Glen Hotel.

4. John Dragon Staff House. (circa. 1900) This is another of the 2 story houses, approximately 30 x 32 feet, in the east end located beside and also owned by John Dragon, but used by the staff at the white water business. Construction is very similar to the Billy McGuffin House. It has gold-painted weatherboard siding and 2 bay facades. Window treatment is 2 over 2 sash windows. The porch is a curved veranda surrounding the south-east corner of the building, and the front entrance is located at an angle in the corner of the building. A small porch with shed roof is on the rear east facade.

5. Jack Kelly House. (circa. 1900) Another 2 story house built for the railroad workers. It is located beside and is the mirror image of the John Dragon Staff House having its porch surrounding the southwest corner of the building and its entrance doorway also at an angle in the southwest corner. The facades are 2 bay windows are 2 over 2, but the weatherboard siding has been covered with gray asphalt shingles resembling shakes. The floor plan is 30 x 32, four rooms with an added bath between the living room and a first floor bedroom on the front of the house and a dining room and kitchen. The owner was a C & O Railroad engineer for many years, and he has accumulated much more about Thurmond. A number of shed dependencies are on the Kelly property both across the road and garages on the lot beside him.

6. John Bullock House. (circa. 1925) This is one of several "jenny lind" houses once built along the hillside toward the middle of Thurmond about 1925. Most are in poor condition, but this one is being rehabilitated, but altered some by a deck. The house is a very simple one story, four room worker house built with board and batten construction. The house was built on stilts, once framed in, and now uncovered again by the present owner. The sides are 2 bay facades and the front 3 bays with a center doorway. Windows are simple 2 over 2 sash windows. The house has small additions to the left side and rear, and recently a full deck around two sides and new shed roofs over the doorways have been added. The floor plan is the basic four rooms, 26 x 24 feet, with circular traffic pattern typical of many houses in town. The house is currently undergoing renovation by the owner, a young man interested in Thurmond history who also owns a boarding house (Fatty Lipcomb's) for white water rafters.

7. "Fatty Lipcomb's" - John Bullock/Roger Armandtrout House. (circa. 1900) This important house fronting the railroad tracks and tucked into the foot of the mountain is now the western most house on the flood plain. (Two houses to the west, including the original site of the first telephone exchange in the region have burned in recent years.) The house retains much charm in spite of having been modified to the needs of a boarding house over the years. The house is large--50 x 25 feet--2 story, white weatherboard with green trim. It has a full walk-in basement of coursed cut stone and a green tarpaper roof. The front facade features a center bay window on the first floor and a two story veranda on the left and around the corner to the side. Posts on the first story veranda are turned, but the second story posts are square. The two story part of the house is a T turned on its side with the base extending to the left. Additional rooms to the right side turn the first floor into the basic four room square with the base of the T serving

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as an additional fifth room. An additional porch is tucked into the back corner of the T, and another closed in porch is attached to the first floor right facade. The latter two have provided access to the paved road which climbs the hill behind the house, but a bridge walkway is now gone from the small porch in the rear. Window treatment is 1 over 1 sash windows. The house has long served as a boarding house. For a number of years, the Littlepage family lived on the first floor and rented the second. Today it serves as a guest house for white water rafters and is owned by John Bullock and Roger Armandtrout.

8. James Humphrey Jr. House. (circa. 1920) This 2 story house, 22 foot front x 30 feet, is the most prominent one located fully on the flood plain facing the railroad. The house is a frame house with front end gable roof and front porch with gable roof nicely paralleling the angle of the roof. The porch with a double window and entrance door to the left, and the second story front facade has a triple window. The side facades have 2 bays and all windows are one over one sash windows. The original white weatherboard has been covered with red brick asphalt shingle, and a single porch-storage room with shed roof has been added to the rear. Red and white aluminum awnings cover most windows and the porch. The house is said to have been the train master's house. It is currently owned by James Humphrey, Jr., newly elected mayor of the town.

9. Thurmond Union Church. (1927) A 2 story, rectangular wood frame building with weatherboard siding painted white. It has a coursed rubble foundation and a gable roof. The end facades are 2 bays and the side facades have 3 bays. There is an additional bay in the form of the entrance door covered with a small shed roof in the eastern corner of the north facade. The windows are 1 over 1 sash with clear glass, except that the second story gable end windows have a modified gable arch. A small bell tower sits atop the eastern end of the building, but is almost invisible given the approach from the west and surrounding vegetation. The first floor is used for Sunday School rooms and the second floor is the sanctuary. The building has been used by Baptist, Methodist, and Presbyterian congregations. The building sits on the foundation of a previous building which has a standing bell tower entrance. The first building was built around the turn of the century and was supported by the McKell interest. Present owner is John Dragon, the white water owner. Not now used for regular services.

10. The Mankin-Cox Building. (1904) This is a 3 story, brick building built by Dr. J. W. Mankin who had offices on the second floor, and whose wife, a pharmacist, operated a drug store on the right side of the first floor. The New River Banking and Trust Company moved from the Dun Glen hotel in 1911 and occupied the other half of the first floor for many years. Dr. Young, the town dentist, had offices on the second floor, also. The building is red brick with a four bay, 45 foot front. Windows are 1 over 1 sash with cut stone sills and decorative brick segmented arches. The iron store fronts have recessed center exterior entrances; entrance to upper floors in from the side. The Cox Building Company took over the building in the 1920's, and the building currently is owned by Erskin Pugh. It has no business use presently (a pizza place was not successful recently), but some use is made of the upper floors.

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11. The Goodwin-Kincaid Building. (1901) The oldest and longest--75 foot front--of the commercial buildings, this building has been in a state of ruin for some years. However, the left one third recently has been rehabilitated for use by the adjoining restaurant. The first floor housed a restaurant and two stores, while apartments occupied the upper two floors. The front facade is cut stone with nine bays and cut stone window sills. The original windows are gone. Cut stone corbels define the parapet. The stone front is framed with a cast iron column and beam system. A tulip motif decorates the column capitals. The left portion has been rehabilitated with 3 sash 1 over 1 over 1 windows and a new store front with framed awning. The right two-thirds of the building has only the front facade; the roof and flooring have all caved in. A Greek restaurant and two clothing stores once occupied the building. Mr. Kincaid who once owned the building was also manager of the store at Fire Creek. Dr. C. F. Ridge had an office on the second floor (entrance from the rear), and the telephone exchange early moved to the second story of the building. It played a prominent role in the center of Thurmond's commercial district and loss of this structure would devastate the commercial area. The building is now owned by Erskin Pugh.
12. National Bank of Thurmond. (1906) A four story brick building with banking facilities on the first floor and apartments above. The building has a six bay, 58 foot front. The main banking area occupied 2/3's of the main floor. The original cast iron beam store front of the bank was remodeled into a limestone classical revival front facade. It now features a pedimented entrance, a dentiled cornice and frieze supported by two full and two quarter tuscan columns. The rest of the front facade is plain brick with one over one sash windows and cut stone sills. A brick frieze and cornice decorate the parapet. Much of the interior decor of the banking lobby remains: the marble floor, wainscoat and check writing table. They have been incorporated into the Banker's Club restaurant. The restaurant kitchen occupies the right third of the main floor, an area that once housed a clothing store and later a pool hall and barber shop. Rooms for white water guests comprise the upper three floors today. (The adjacent portion of the Goodwin-Kincaid Building has been rehabilitated for use as a private dining area by the Banker's Club, thus reviving that portion of the building's original use as a restaurant.) The building is significant not only as a landmark in the town, but also because it was built by W. D. Thurmond, who was head of the bank. The building and Banker's Club is currently owned by Erskin Pugh.
13. Thurmond Station. (1888) Thurmond Station is a landmark structure. It is the original structure, and is essentially unchanged after 95 years of extensive use. This is a two story frame structure with board and batten siding and a horizontal band at the second story level. A bracketed shed roof partially shelters the station platform (once much longer than it now is). A signal tower with gable perpendicular to the main gable slate roof projects four feet to the trackside of the main wall. The tower has six windows on the front facade, one on each side, and is decorated with wood shingles below the windows. The second story of the front facade also has 15 windows to the left of the signal tower, and three to the right. A covered balcony walkway on the rear gives access to second story offices. Much of the interior is still in place including the round, tongue and groove ticket windows and some waiting room benches. The station is 136' 6" long and 16' wide. At one time, a freight shed (205 x 32) extended out over the river bank behind the station, and an engine turn-around once set between the rear station and the railroad bridge. The ground floor had the following uses (west to east): baggage, railroad express,

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lunch and news counter, waiting room, ticket agent, waiting room and toilets. The second floor (west to east): yard master, conductors' bullpen, train operator in signal tower, track supervisor, supply room car distributor, bath, chief clerk, train master, coal buyers' offices. Today, the station is still in use by a single operator, but Amtrak no longer makes regular stops at the station. The National Parks Service plans to purchase the station and jointly use it with the railroad as a visitor center for its interpretation of Thurmond as part of the New River Gorge National River.

14. Thurmond Railroad Bridge. (circa. 1910) The railroad bridge at Thurmond is a most significant structure. Building the bridge initially in 1888-1889 caused the town to be founded, and the bridge remains the only way in and out of town. The original truss bridge with supporting members that appear lighter and smaller than the present bridge washed away about 1908. A new bridge was built around 1910 (perhaps as late as 1915 for coal was sent around by way of Sewell for a while). The new bridge is both a truss and a deck bridge. The truss section spans the main channel of the river, but the longest part of the approximately 840 foot span is a simple deck bridge on concrete piers. On the eastern or up-river side is a one lane--10 feet--automobile road that gives access to the town. The road was originally built as a walkway from the station across the river to the Dun Glen Hotel, and had to be strengthened when automobiles came into use. The bridge crosses the river at an angle, necessitating that the west end post extend further north than the east one, and that the top lateral braces and the portal braces be diagonal. Piers for the original bridge were quarried just across the river up Arbuckle Creek a quarter mile. Two of these piers are still in use, but the other seven piers are concrete. The roadway is currently undergoing repair, and residents must drive on the railroad portion of the bridge on which planks have been laid to make a road at track level. This railroad portion of the bridge is 20 feet from outside to outside of each of the 30 inch main portal beams.

15. The Engine House. (Repair House). (circa. 1900) The railroad yards of Thurmond featured a major repair shop often called the round house or the engine house. It is a long, single story wooden structure approximately 250 x 70 feet. It has a low-pitched gable roof surmounted down the center by a long cupola full of ventilation louvers. The cupola is separated in the middle. Each gable end has two large doors through which two tracks run into and out of the repair shop. The facade is dark brown board and batten construction, and the north facade has 25 large double sash windows with 12 lights over 12 lights. Both inside and outside, the tracks run over concrete pits from which repairs can be made. In its most active periods, 50-70 men--machinists, boiler makers, steam-fitters, etc.--worked here daily checking 600 cars coming down out of the coal fields before shipping them across country. Today, a single machinist is on duty checking about 500 cars a month. Portions of the south facade over looking the river bank are open to weather where small shed attachments have been removed, and the roof is in bad shape. The building is a pivotal part of the yard complex, and there is hope the National Park Service and the Chessie System can work out some arrangement to save it.

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16. Wildwater Unlimited/Site of the Dun Glen Hotel (1901-1930) The fabulous Dun Glen Hotel is the center of more stories and lore about Thurmond than any other structure in town. The hotel was built by Thomas G. McKell in 1901, and it burned July 22, 1930. There remains one section of the ground floor. The southwest corner of the hotel now forms the country store and office area of a white water rafting outfit. The section is one story brick with a cut stone foundation. The building houses the original vault for the hotel (the New River Banking and Trust Company founded by McKell began in the hotel) and a safe which will not fit through the doors and may be original. Outside in the parking lot one can find some of the original floor. A portion of the east wall has been incorporated into a new building that serves as a staff building for the white water business. Also notable is the concrete cistern that served the hotel. Archaeology is possible on the site; the present owner has uncovered many items in what was apparently a dump site for the hotel. A dormer on the west end of the country store is the place where it is believed the viaduct or boardwalk from the railroad bridge crossed Dunloup Creek and entered the hotel on the second story level. Also standing are portions of the stone piers on Dunloup Creek that supported the viaduct. Interestingly, a central building of the present complex, a gas station, was built from bricks of the old La Fayette hotel across the river that burned in 1963. (One gets the impression from talking to residents that a good deal of arson has occurred in Thurmond's history!)

The Dun Glen was a four and one half story resort hotel with 100 rooms. The gray-white wood framed building had brick on the ground floor and wood above. It was surrounded on three sides by a broad veranda on the second story level that connected by the viaduct to the railroad bridge taking guests across the river to the station. The building was approximately 310 x 118 feet. The gable roof was slate and was pierced by three perpendicular gable wings extending the front facade toward the river. The middle gable wing was further extended by a gable addition on the third floor level, and by an additional gable portico covering a double stairway leading from the ground to the veranda. Four gable dormers pierced the roof on the river side, and two additional ones were located on the outside of each of the end wings. The Dun Glen was noted for its entertainment: from drinking and gambling in the early years of the century to the big banks of the 1920's. It was a favorite resort for vacationers from the east and from Cincinnati and the west, and it was the frequent stop for businessmen, coal buyers and salesmen who came to town. Its few remains are well-preserved by Wildwater Unlimited, John Dragon, owner, but much of the integrity of the site was lost long ago.

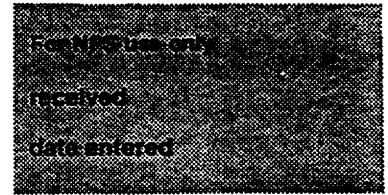
Contributory Buildings. Listed beginning west of the commercial district, up the mountain side in the west end of town, across the hillside to the east end of town and back down the hill to the commercial district.

17. Tom Kelly House. (circa. 1920) A heavily modified house important as once being the site of the Moose Lodge, the movie theatre and Thurmond Gospel Church before being converted into a residence by O. A. Starks about 1960.

18. Sid Childers/Margie Richmond House. (circa. 1900, 1940) This stone and brick building was once the power building for the community. The original 3 story stone building burned and the top two floors were removed and a new brick second floor was added about 1940. Currently the building is jointly owned, Sid Childers owning the eastern half

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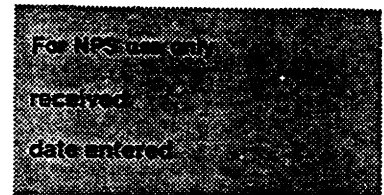
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and Margie Richmond the western half. Each lives upstairs, but first floor apartments below are not being rented presently.

19. Margaret Dalton House. (circa. 1920's) Modified one story four room.
 20. Vivian Kelly House. (circa. 1920's) Modified one story four room.
 21. Drema Robertson House. (circa. 1920's) Modified one story four rooms. Essentially the same house as the Dalton and Vivian Kelly Houses.
 22. Marilyn Brown House. (rented, John Bullock Owner) (circa. 1900) A one story four room. Perhaps the smallest in town.
 23. Wedzel Young House. (circa. 1900) A 1½ story with porch on pattern of the Wells House.
 24. Harold Smith House. (circa. 1900) A basic four room out over the hillside, closed in below.
 25. Estel Smith House. (circa. 1900) A basic four room out over the hill.
 26. Homer Nicely/Charles Ashley House. (1930) A one story, six room house built for bank cashier Joe Stone, brother-in-law of George Bullock, chief stockholder of the bank, shortly before the bank failed. Newest house in Thurmond. Most extreme western house in town.
 27. May Bagoski House. A 1½ story with porch. Deteriorated from being vacant for a number of years before present owner acquired some months ago. (circa. 1900)
 28. The Via House. (circa. 1900) A 1½ story with porch. Abandoned and being dismantled.
 29. Sidney Ward House. (circa. 1900) A 1½ story with porch.
 30. J. D. Sears House--rental. (circa. 1925) A one story, four room jenny lind in poor condition.
 31. Bessie Sears House. (circa 1925) A one story, four room jenny lind in poor condition.
- Contributing Houses (the following are in the McKell portion--eastern part--of town).
32. James Humphrey Sr. House. (pre 1920) A basic 1 story, four room with two added on back and basement enclosed.
 33. Ernest Garrett House. (pre 1920) A basic 1 story, four room with basement enclosed and a small addition.
 34. Philip McClung House-Home Place, rental. (post 1920) Basic 1 story four room out over the hill.

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35. Philip McClung House--rental. (post 1920) Basic 1 story, four room out over the hill.
36. Friday Meadows-Philip McClung House. (post 1920) Heavily modified House once an "L" shape. One story frame. Eastern most house in town.
37. Erskin Pugh House. (circa. 1900) A large 2 story "L" near the business district. Fair condition.
38. Erskin Pugh House--rental. (pre 1920) A single room house behind the commercial establishments, on the hillside.
39. LaFayette Hotel Site. (1901-1963) A 3½ story brick hotel in a "U" shape with approximately a 130 foot front stood on this site. The building had a hip roof with a center front gable. A second story porch extended to the railroad tracks. The street level had several shops and commercial establishments and the second floor served as the lobby. The building burned in 1963. The site has potential for archaeology into the town's past.
40. Armour and Company Wholesale Meat Plant. (circa. 1905) Site of a two story, five bay front building on 120 foot lot. The main floor was the meat processing and refrigeration area, and apartments for employees occupied the second floor. A railroad siding once came into a large loading platform. The building was abandoned by Armour in 1932 and the building was converted to apartments throughout. The building burned at the time of the LaFayette Hotel fire next door (1963). Only a concrete slab remains.
41. Thurmond Water Works. A concrete block structure, one story, housing the city's water pump which is the original one installed when the LaFayette Hotel was built, 1901. Present block structure is of later construction.
42. Coal Dock. (1922) This large concrete structure is a major feature of the railroad yard landscape. It is approximately 30 x 33 feet, and stands about 70 feet tall. A track runs through the middle from which coal was loaded into the tower to be dispensed to engine tenders through chutes (no longer on the structure) on either side. Abandoned by the C & O in 1960, it is still solid and a major feature of the yard.
43. Two Water Towers. These two water towers are approximately 60 feet tall. The first one located to the west was built before 1900. It is a 100,000 gallon tank standing on four steel girders mounted on 4 foot concrete blocks. The second tower standing just east of the first, was built before 1950 and is a 54 foot cylinder standing on a 40 inch concrete base. The newer tower is still in use and in good condition. The first tower has an octagonal wood roof that is in bad shape, and the Chessie System retired the tank in 1960, but it still is basically sturdy.
44. Sand House and Sand Tower. Approximately 12 x 25 feet, the sand house is located near the concrete coal dock and was used as a storage bin for sand used for engine traction. The structure has lost most of its wooden roof and was abandoned in 1964 for a new sand tower and drier located at the northeast corner of the engine house. The sand tower

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stands approximately 30 feet tall and is fed with sand by a conveyor from a drier that evaporates water from the sand allowing it to drop on to the conveyor. A small 12 foot building houses the heating equipment.

45. Post Office/Commissary. Located beside the water towers is the US Post Office which since 1963 and the fire at the LaFayette Hotel has occupied a steel building once used as a commissary by the C & O. The 56 x 16 building is a one story, gable roofed building with five bays--a door on the left, a window, then the center entrance door and two more windows.

Intrusions.

46. The Humphrey House. A one story vinyl-covered four room house over a full basement, of recent construction, located between the road to the railroad bridge and Dunloup Creek.

47. The River Rat. A one story masonry building serving as a local watering place. Of recent construction and located beside the Humphrey House on the road to the railroad bridge.

8. Significance

| 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic | <input type="checkbox"/> conservation | <input 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/ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799 | <input type="checkbox"/> art | <input type="checkbox"/> engineering | <input type="checkbox"/> music | <input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899 | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commerce | <input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement | <input type="checkbox"/> philosophy | <input type="checkbox"/> theater |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900- | <input type="checkbox"/> communications | <input type="checkbox"/> industry | <input type="checkbox"/> politics/government | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> transportation |
| | | <input type="checkbox"/> invention | | <input type="checkbox"/> other (specify) |

Specific dates 1884-1950

Builder/~~Architect~~ W.D. Thurmond, town proprietor

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

Thurmond, West Virginia is historically significant for its extraordinary commercial vitality in the early twentieth century in spite of extreme inaccessibility. For thirty-five years, Thurmond, located in the heart of the New River Gorge, was inaccessible except by railroad. Yet, as the chief railroad center on the Chesapeake and Ohio Railroad serving portions of the fabled coal fields of Southern West Virginia, Thurmond produced more tonnage and revenue than Cincinnati and Richmond combined. The town had not a single street, yet boasted two banks, two hotels and a thriving commercial block. Architecturally, the town is significant for its railroad architecture and for its vernacular worker housing and simple commercial buildings, not because they have great style or beauty, but for what they say about the thriving life in the West Virginia coal fields for some sixty years. Archaeology is possible at the hotel sites.

Thurmond is named for William Dabney Thurmond (1820-1910) who moved to the area in 1844 and served during the Civil War as the leader of a band of Partisan Rangers supporting the Confederate cause. In time, following the war, he became an active businessman, banker and proprietor of Thurmond. He acquired the 73 acre site as payment of surveying a larger tract in 1873, the same year the C & O Railroad opened its main line from the Atlantic Ocean to the Ohio River. Yet, only a single house was built on the land (1884) until the C & O bridged the New River in 1888-1889 just a couple hundred yards east of his property to reach coal mines on the south side of the river. A railroad station was also built in 1888 at the bridge location, and soon Thurmond's land became an assembly yard for the railroad. The completion of the DunLoup Creek railroad branch to Glen Jean (instigated by Thomas G. McKell) opened more mines and stimulated Thurmond's growth. A hotel was built in 1891, but burned in 1899. In the first decade of the twentieth century another 35 room hotel (first called the Thurmond, then the La Fayette) was built (1901), then the Goodman-Kincaid building with two stores and two floors of apartments (1901), the Mankin-Cox building also with two stores and two floors of apartments (1904) and the National Bank of Thurmond with three floors of apartments (1906) and an Armour and Co. wholesale meat plant with apartments on the second floor (1906). W. D. Thurmond also built about 30 houses, both one and two story houses, for rent to workers. He had a policy never to sell, and by his death, only three lots had been sold to commercial interests like Armour.

A second source of Thurmond's history rests in the personage of Thomas Gaylord^{McKell} (1845-1904). His father-in-law had speculated in West Virginia land, and at his death, McKell and his wife Jean Dun McKell, took their share of the estate in West Virginia land and moved from Chilicothe, Ohio in 1887. McKell came to own 25,000 acres including the land just east of Thurmond around the station and railroad bridge and across the river and up DunLoup Creek. He laid out the Dunloup Creek railroad branch, opened new mines, built the town of Glen Jean on the plateau five miles away, and crowned his work with the fabulous one hundred room Dun Glen resort hotel built across the river in 1901.

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W. D. Thurmond was a straight-laced southern gentleman; T. G. McKell was a sharp operator and a bit of a bon vivant. On Thurmond's land, there was no liquor, not even at the La Fayette Hotel. On McKell land, liquor was welcomed, and the Dun Glen became a famous resort with drinking, gambling and numerous stories of sex and violence. The "good" people lived in Thurmond, but on McKell's land just to the east and across the river there were not only worker houses, but a row of Black shanties on the hill above the station, a saloon near the station, and on the southside near the Dun Glen developed an area called "Ballyhack" or "Bahalac" that became famous for its saloons, gambling, and prostitution in the early days of the twentieth century.

By 1910, Thurmond produced \$4.8 million of freight revenue for the C & O, almost 20 percent of its revenue, ten times more than Richmond and 2½ times more than Cincinnati. Some 150 railroad men worked out of Thurmond in its heyday. There were three shifts at the engine house or repair shop, each shift with 20-25 men. Upward of 18 train crews operated out of Thurmond, plus many supervisory personnel. The population of Thurmond is hard to gauge because the incorporated part of town (1903) excluded the McKell land. Thurmond proper probably never had more than 300-400 people, but including McKell land and the Southside, population may have doubled that at times. Thurmond claimed to have been the largest banking center (McKell opened a bank in the Dun Glen in 1904) and the greatest shipping center for its size in the world. The town was featured in the Ripley "Believe-It-Or-Not" newspaper feature. In 1921, a roadway came down Dun Loup Creek, but even today auto traffic enters Thurmond only by single lane deck on the railroad bridge and can travel but a single land road up the hill in the east end of town, across the face of the mountain and down the hill in the west end. There is still no through street on the level. The railroad is still the "mainstreet" of Thurmond.

Thurmond's decline came in the 1930's. The Dun Glen burned in 1930. Thurmond National Bank closed in 1931 and the New River Bank (the McKell bank) moved to Oak Hill in 1935. Armour moved to Beckley in 1932, and the telephone exchange which was the first in the area in 1902, also moved to Beckley in 1938. Still, the town thrived as a railroad center until the 1950's when the railroads replaced steam engines with diesel engines and many jobs were lost. Today, the depot has only one operator who coordinates crew activity in the area, and one workman in the engine house. The population is now about 100 counting both parts of town. White water rafting is now the major industry in town.

There is much legend and lore about Thurmond. There was Harrison Ash, the Kentucky lawman at the turn of the century with seven notches in his gun; Leo Shaeffer, the Austrian Businessman who ran the McKell town of Glen Jean from an office in the Dun Glen; Davey Mitchell, the Blackman who called the trains and sold fried pies at Thurmond station; the blasting of rock for the Arbuckle Creek railroad spur (across the river from Thurmond, west of the Dun Loup) that created a profile for President William McKinley in sandstone, much to the astonishment of the workers who later learned McKinley had been shot that day. Charles Wells, a Thurmond resident for sixty years, plays down the violent past (only two murders in his sixty years) and emphasizes the good features. He recalls the 1000 member Royal Arch Masonic Lodge, the many dances and social occasions at the two hotels (he played piano for a local band), the numerous services available to residents in the town's heyday (fresh seafood from Chesapeake Bay within 24 hours), the big bands at the Dun Glen (like Paul Whitemen), the hardworking railroad men who lived in the town. It was dirty and sooty

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but to Charles and Dorothy Wells, it was a good life. (From interview by R. E. Harper, August 28, 1980)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Marshall, Paul D., ed., A Cultural Research Project: The New River Gorge National River, Vol II, Charleston, WV 1981
Witschey, Walter R. Thurmond. The Thurmonds of Virginia. Richmond, 1978 (Includes three other pamphlets)

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property approximately 98 acres

Quadrangle name Thurmond, WV

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UMT References

A

| | | |
|------|----------|------------|
| 1,7 | 49,310,0 | 4,201,86,0 |
| Zone | Easting | Northing |

B

| | | |
|------|----------|------------|
| 1,7 | 49,321,0 | 4,201,29,0 |
| Zone | Easting | Northing |

C

| | | |
|------|----------|------------|
| 1,7 | 49,304,0 | 4,201,12,0 |
| Zone | Easting | Northing |

D

| | | |
|------|----------|------------|
| 1,7 | 49,336,0 | 4,200,74,0 |
| Zone | Easting | Northing |

E

| | | |
|------|----------|------------|
| 1,7 | 49,332,0 | 4,200,70,0 |
| Zone | Easting | Northing |

F

| | | |
|------|----------|------------|
| 1,7 | 49,314,0 | 4,200,81,0 |
| Zone | Easting | Northing |

G

| | | |
|------|----------|------------|
| 1,7 | 49,308,0 | 4,200,74,0 |
| Zone | Easting | Northing |

H

| | | |
|------|----------|------------|
| 1,7 | 49,311,0 | 4,200,59,0 |
| Zone | Easting | Northing |

Verbal boundary description and justification

Beginning at the point where the west side of the C & O Railroad Bridge carrying WV Route 25/2 (alternate) across the New River touches the north bank of the river proceeding north-

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

| state | N/A | code | county | code |
|-------|-----|------|--------|------|
| state | | code | county | code |

11. Form Prepared By

name/title R. Eugene Harper, Ph.D. Professor of History
organization University of Charleston date September 15, 1983
street & number 2300 MacCorkle Avenue SE telephone 346-9471 area code 304
city or town Charleston state West Virginia

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

title Commissioner, Department of Culture and History date November 23, 1983

For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

date

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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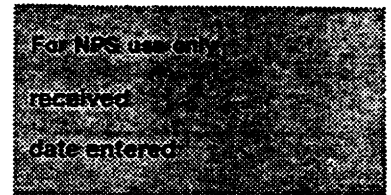
Major

Continuation sheet Bibliographical References

Item number

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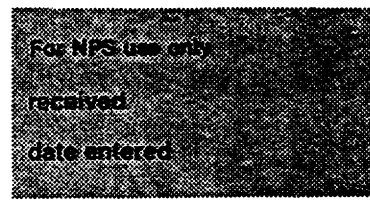


Chesapeake and Ohio Railway Company, "Right of Way and Track Map" V-II/48, October 17, 194
Richmond, Virginia
Photography of Thurmond, 1920, by Red Ribble, in the possession of Billy McGuffin.
Photograph of eastern Thurmond, circa. 1905--the National Bank of Thurmond is not the Phot
--provided Paul Marshall by Wallace Bennett.

Note on dating items. Because both portions of Thurmond were owned by private individuals (Thurmond and McKell) who built the houses but did not sell them, and their land was then acquired by land companies who controlled the communities for a number of additional years, home ownership did not become frequent in Thurmond until the 1940's. Residents, therefore, do not know the exact date of their houses. Likewise, because there are no individual deeds until late, deed search does not help the dating process. The two photographs and the memory of long time residents of Thurmond have been used for most of the dating. Interviews we had with Billy McGuffin, Philip McClung, Mr. and Mrs. Jack Kelly, Mr. and Mrs. Jack Kelly, Mr. and Mrs. Charles Wells, Mr. John Dragon, Gayle Humphrey and Marilyn Brown.

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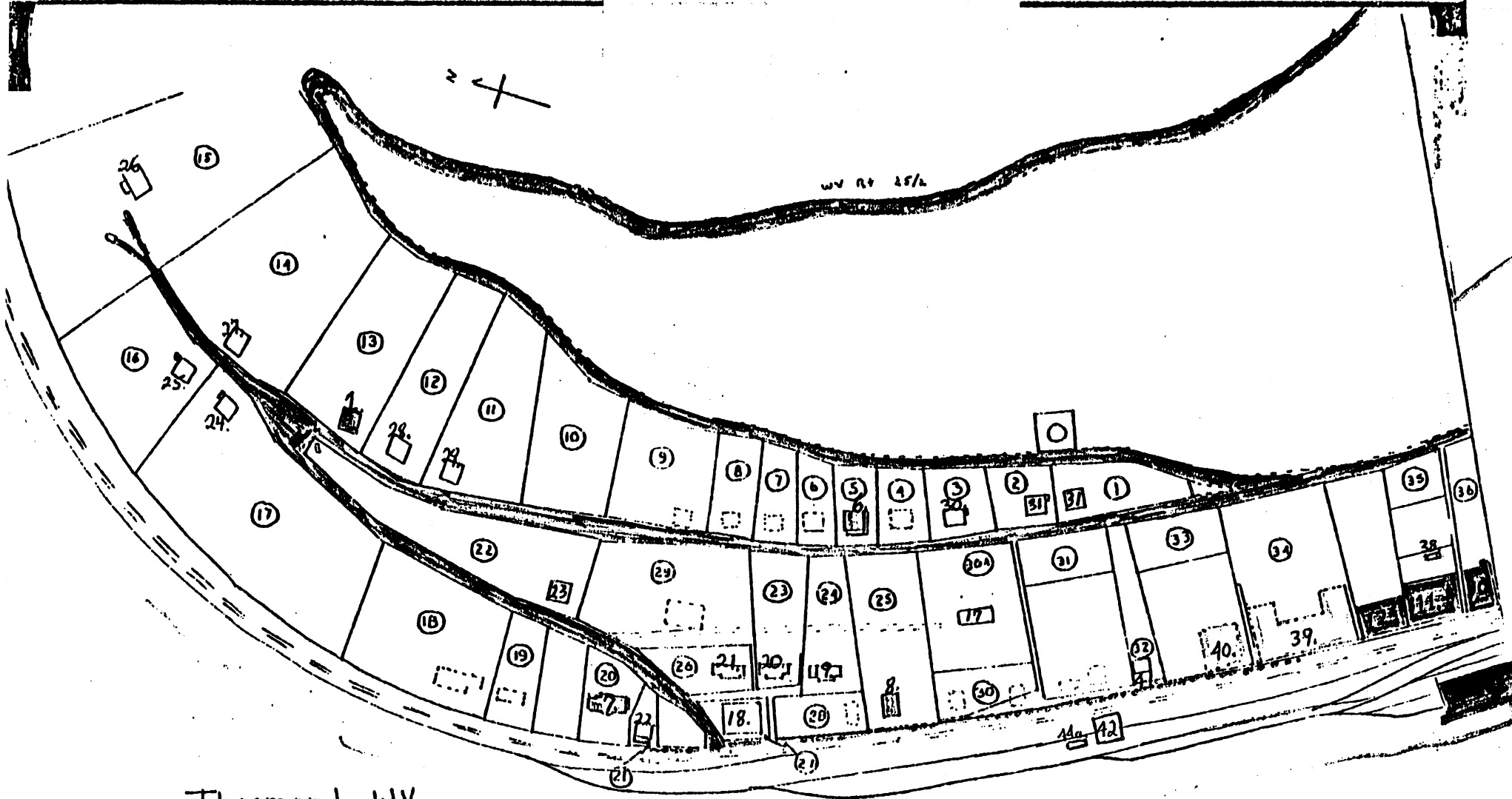
Page 2

west along the northern bank of the river to the Thurmond corporation line, then south and south west by that line to the point where the corporation line (bearing N58°45'E) crosses WV 25/2 the second time in the residential section, then east along 25/2 including one lot deep on each side of the road to the eastern end of the town, including at the eastern end of the Thurmond Union Church, the Billy McGuffin and the Philip McClung lots, then back west by the road down the hill to the railroad tracks, Thence southeast along the northern boundary of the Chessie System right of way to a point twenty yards east of Thurmond Station, thence south to the river bank, thence following northwest along the river bank to the east side of the railroad bridge, thence southe by the railroad bridge to the south side of the river, thence south east along the reive to the eastern edge of Wildwater Unlimited, thence south to WV Route 25, thence northwest via WV 25 to the intersection with WV 25/2, cross WV 25/2 and then by the west side of the road and railroad bridge to the point of beginning.

UMT References - Continued

- I 17 493330 4200460
- J 17 493300 4200380
- K 17 493100 4200430
- L 17 493020 4200840

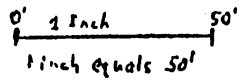
THURMOND HISTORIC DISTRICT
Thurmond, Fayette Co., W. Va.
Sketch map #1



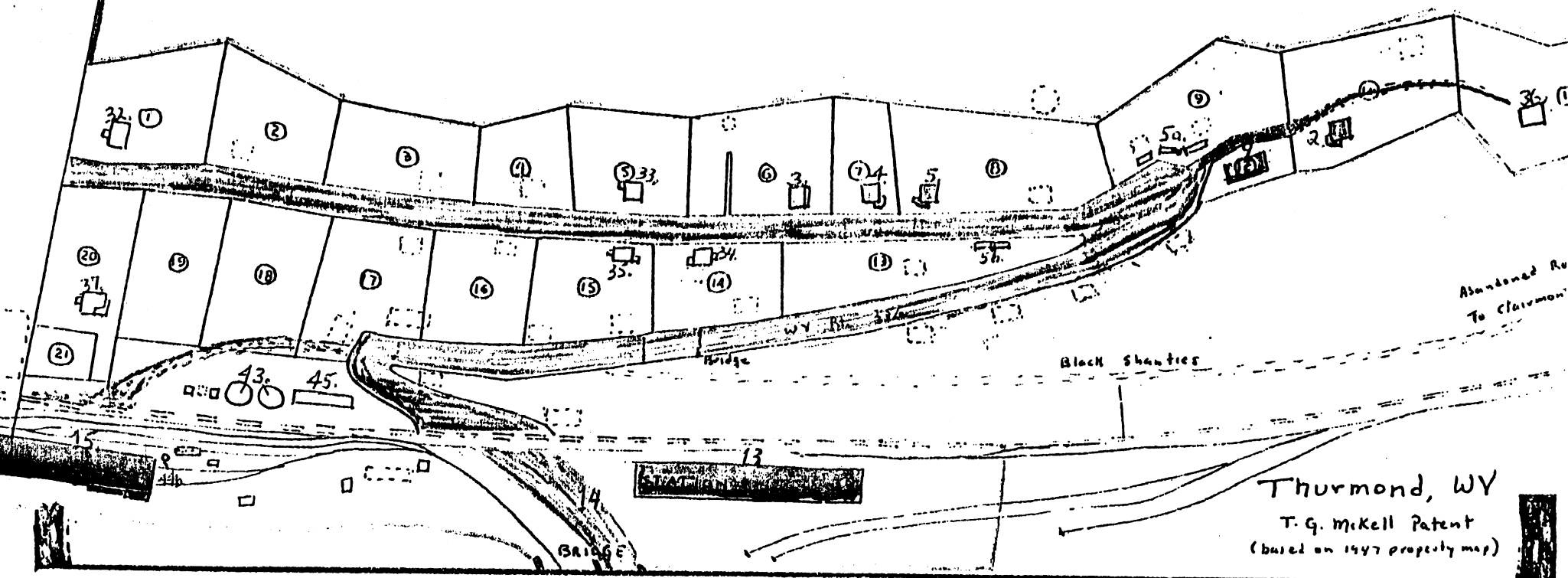
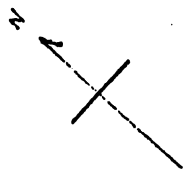
Thurmond, WV
W.D. Thurmond Patent
(based on 1987 property map)

Buildings by Rank

Scale



THURMOND HISTORIC DISTRICT
 Thurmond, Fayette Co., W. Va.
 Sketch map #2



- Pivotal buildings
 - First Rank buildings
 - Contributory buildings
 - Paved road
 - Gravel road
 - Dirt road
- } Pivotal structures

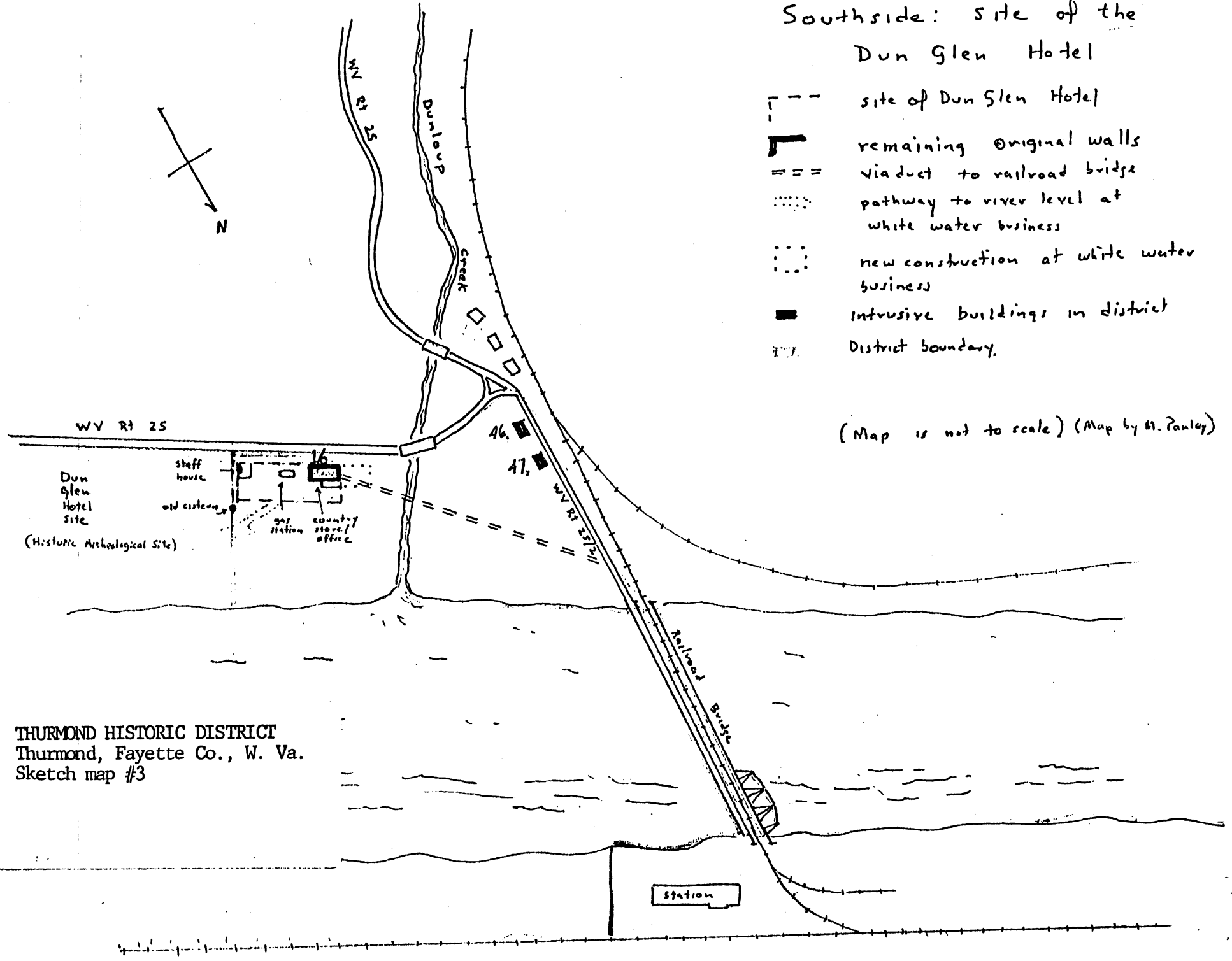
Buildings
 By
Rank

Scale
 0' 1 Inch 50'
 1 inch equals 50 feet

Southside: site of the
Dun Glen Hotel

- site of Dun Glen Hotel
- ┌ remaining original walls
- === viaduct to railroad bridge
- ⋯ pathway to river level at white water business
- ⋯ new construction at white water business
- intrusive buildings in district
- District boundary.

(Map is not to scale) (Map by M. Panley)



THURMOND HISTORIC DISTRICT
Thurmond, Fayette Co., W. Va.
Sketch map #3





