

Thomas Bull House  
Chester County  
Zone 18

A	E432510	N4444640
B	E432500	N4444540
C	E432430	N4444540
D	E432430	N4444640

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

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DATE ENTERED

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*  
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC

THOMAS BULL HOUSE

AND/OR COMMON

Robert's Plantation, Redding Plantation, Mt. Pleasant

**2 LOCATION**

STREET &amp; NUMBER

Bulltown Road

\_\_ NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

East Nantmeal Township

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

16

STATE

Pennsylvania

CODE

42

COUNTY

Chester

CODE

029

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

## CATEGORY

\_\_DISTRICT

 BUILDING(S)

\_\_STRUCTURE

\_\_SITE

\_\_OBJECT

## OWNERSHIP

\_\_PUBLIC

 PRIVATE

\_\_BOTH

## PUBLIC ACQUISITION

\_\_IN PROCESS

\_\_BEING CONSIDERED

## STATUS

\_\_OCCUPIED

 UNOCCUPIED WORK IN PROGRESS

## ACCESSIBLE

\_\_YES: RESTRICTED

 YES: UNRESTRICTED

\_\_NO

## PRESENT USE

\_\_AGRICULTURE

\_\_COMMERCIAL

\_\_EDUCATIONAL

\_\_ENTERTAINMENT

\_\_GOVERNMENT

\_\_INDUSTRIAL

\_\_MILITARY

\_\_MUSEUM

\_\_PARK

\_\_PRIVATE RESIDENCE

\_\_RELIGIOUS

\_\_SCIENTIFIC

\_\_TRANSPORTATION

\_\_OTHER:

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

Howard Guess

STREET &amp; NUMBER

Suite 410, #2 Radnor Corp. Center, 100 Matsonford Road

CITY, TOWN

Radnor

\_\_ VICINITY OF

STATE

PA 19087

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE,

REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Chester County Courthouse

STREET &amp; NUMBER

High and Market Streets

CITY, TOWN

West Chester

STATE

PA

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

Historic American Buildings Survey

DATE

1960

 FEDERAL \_\_STATE \_\_COUNTY \_\_LOCALDEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

Washington

STATE  
D.C.

# 7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The present appearance of the Thomas Bull House is very close to that of the 18th century, changes being those due to vacancy and neglect. The house has not been occupied since 1942. The house shows its growth in three parts. The two older parts are joined to form a four bay southern exposure which had a deep shed-roofed porch along its entire length which wrapped around the east end over a bee-hive oven. These four bays, alternately divided into two windows and two doors beginning at the southeast corner with a door, were the front of the early house.

The oldest part is the eastern end and is entered by a double (Dutch) door of heavy planks. The east wall of this section (and thereby of the entire house) is taken over by an interior chimney and exterior bee-hive bake oven. Inside, a circular staircase wraps around the chimney to the second floor. There is one small, off-center window in the third floor. The north wall has one window on the first floor and one on the second. The roof is gabled with partial returns. This section has no cellar.

The first addition was to the west wall and extended the southern facade by two bays. These were again a door and a window, the door being this time a single six panel door. On the north exposure, there are two windows on the first floor and one on the second floor.

There is one small corner fireplace in this large room leading to the supposition that the addition was made after iron stoves had come into practical use. It is possible that there may have been two corner fireplaces originally. All windows in these two sections are 8/8. The family believes the first of these two sections were built in 1715, and it is notated as such in newspaper articles. This would have put it under the ownership of Owen Roberts of Philadelphia and is within the realm of real possibility. Roberts wife, Ann, is known to have lived in this area long after her husband's death, leading to the thought that she probably lived here during his life when they owned this land.

The third section of the house was built probably between 1783 and 1796. Dating lies in the fact that the property was bought by Thomas Bull in 1783 and that Bull was taxed for "1 large stone house @£ 75 and 1 small stone house @£ 25" in 1796. Both houses were standing as late as 1966 at which time the smaller, or tenant house, was sold and rebuilt on another site near GlenMoore. The larger house is most definitely indicated in the 1798 Chester County Glass Tax by the dimensions "22' by 41', with two-story stone kitchen, 22' by 42', attached", these being identical to the present house. Thomas Bull was a stone mason by trade, although he was employed as manager of Warwick Furnace by Rutter & Potts. He was known locally for his ability to build a smokeless fireplace, and is known to have built other houses in the area.

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This addition is without question a more elaborate style than the first. It added two rooms and a wide central hall and stairway on both first and second floors. It changed the orientation of the house from south to west, being perpendicular to the old house. It is attached to the west wall of the first addition, the rear of the new hallway entering the center west wall of the older house. It is three bays wide. Windows on the first floor are small paned 12/12. They are 8/12 on the second floor and 6/6 on the third floor, each being flanked by panelled shutters. Each window is topped by a prominent stone key-block between cut stone lintels.

The doorway is intricately designed and executed with finesse. A heavy marble step leads to a six panel door over which is a semi-circular fanlight rather than the usual oblong transom. It is embellished by two finely carved wooden pilasters composed of variations on the Doric column, architrave, metope frieze and cornice. A one-story, hip-roofed hood, supported by two simple wooden posts, shelters the doorway. Its floor is a large iron plate probably cast at Warwick Furnace.

The center hall is flanked on either side by a single room of generous proportions. Each room has a fireplace, set against the older house wall, and framed in marble. There is a wide, 6 panelled cupboard on either side of each fireplace. The remainder of the fireplace wall is partially panelled. Each room has 2 windows which are also panelled, the panelling extending below the windows to form a deep window seat. The room to the right of the main entrance has, in addition to its windows, a door opening onto the south lawn.

The stairway is treated simply with a square newel post and cap and round spindles on square bases in a closed stringer. A panelled wainscot is used. It rises to a landing from which a door gives entrance to the second floor of the earlier house. As the stairway then turns, it rises several more steps to the new second floor. This allows the higher ceilings in the addition. The newer part makes use of chair rail and cove moulding. Parts of the interior mouldings have been removed by the well known architect, R. Brognard Oakie, when he was restoring the nearby Redding Furnace mansion. However, he always left enough to verify what had been there originally.

PERIOD		AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW				
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)		
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION				

SPECIFIC DATES c. 1715, c. 1785 BUILDER/ARCHITECT c. 1785 - Thomas Bull

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Thomas Bull, great grandson of the Bull family which came to Pa. from Radmorshire, Wales, purchased a tract of 515 acres from Thomas Rutter and Samuel Potts in 1783. Rutter and Potts were owners of Warwick Furnace, which Bull managed. Bull was a stonemason, a skill he brought to bear in the construction of the mansion which survives today. The exact date of construction is not exactly known but it is safe to assume that it is between 1783-1796. The large two story stone house had dimensions of 22' by 41', with a two story stone kitchen, 22' by 42', attached

Enough is known of Bull himself to offer a portrait of an able and energetic businessman and shrewd leader. Both before and after the Revolution, he managed Warwick Furnace, which provided iron products for the Continental Army. Entering the Army, he was named Lieutenant Colonel of a regiment when General Anthony Wayne was transferred to another command.

After the war, Bull took up the affairs of Warwick Furnace and applied himself to improving his plantation. He was already a citizen of substantial wealth, with property valued at 1,335 pounds in 1785, including two slaves. By 1803, when the tax lists were computed in dollars, his property was valued at \$8,684. His neighbors, following the colonial and Federal pattern, accorded him an important place in political leadership. He was a member of the conventions which framed and ratified the state constitution of Pa. in 1789-90. From 1793-1801, he represented Chester and Delaware Counties in the State Assembly. Bull felt more compelled by his business interests; and retired from politics following the turn of the century. He acquired a 9/16 interest in Joanna Furnace, and in 1812 was an advocate of the Conestoga Turnpike, which promised both direct profits and promotion of the area's economy. Thomas Bull died in 1836, his land and mansion house passed to his son, Levi.

The style of the Thomas Bull house is unusual for this area and is valuable as a well-articulated and little altered example of the Late Georgian-Early Federal architecture. The semi-circular fanlight, finely detailed Doric pilasters, placement of the entrance in the gable end, and the extremely wide and low pitched roof with complete return reminiscent of the classical pediment indicate the increasing classical awareness which characterized the Federal period. It is also indicative of the interests, tastes and appreciations of its builder/architect.

See Continuation Sheet

**10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 2.5

QUADRANGLE NAME Elverson, Pa.

QUADRANGLE SCALE 1:24,000

UTM REFERENCES

A 18 432510 4444640

B 18 432500 4444540

ZONE EASTING NORTHING  
C 18 432430 4444540

ZONE EASTING NORTHING  
D 18 432430 4444640

E         

F         

G         

H         

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION Beginning at a point in Pa. Rt. 345 & proceeding E 300' to a point; thence S 400' to a point; thence W 300' to aforesaid Pa. Rt. 345; and thence N along said road 400' to the place of beginning.

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

**11 FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME / TITLE

Mrs. Eleanor W. Winsor, Estelle Cremers

ORGANIZATION

French & Pickering Creeks Conservation Trust, Inc.

DATE

STREET & NUMBER

313 South 16th Street

TELEPHONE

CITY OR TOWN

Philadelphia

STATE

Pennsylvania

**12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION**

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

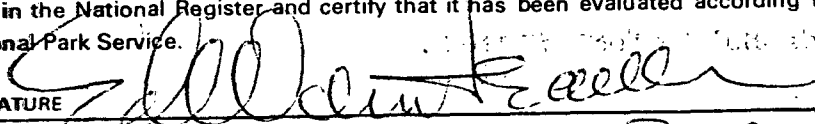
NATIONAL   

STATE   

LOCAL X

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 ED WEINTRAUB, Director  
Office of Historic Preservation

DATE 5-29-79

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

ATTEST:

CHIEF OF REGISTRATION

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
HERITAGE CONSERVATION AND RECREATION SERVICE

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Atlas of Chester Co, Pa., Safe Harbor, Pa.: A. R. Witmer, 1873

Breou's Original Series of Farm Maps: Chester Co, Pa., Philadelphia  
W. H. Kirk and Co., 1883.

Chester Co. Courthouse, Deed Books: C2, p. 48; V2, p. 536; C2, p. 48;  
X3, v. 70, p. 266; Q3, v. 64, p. 173; C7, p. 475; Misc. Deed Book  
142, p. 555; F11, v. 253, p. 562; D21, p. 81; V27, p. 509. Will  
Books: 11, p. 67; H8, p. 177; 17, p. 136; D2, V. 29, p. 453; D2,  
v. 29, p. 453; 37, p. 224; 57, p. 549.

Chester County Historical Society. Miscellaneous papers. East  
Nantmeal Township, Chester County.