

## COLORADO CULTURAL RESOURCE SURVEY

**Architectural Inventory Form**

Page 1 of 9

**Official Eligibility Determination  
(OAHF use only)**

OAHF1403

Rev. 9/98

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Initials \_\_\_\_\_

- ☐ Determined Eligible – National Register  
☐ Determined Not Eligible – National Register  
☐ Determined Eligible – State Register  
☐ Determine Not Eligible – State Register  
☐ Need Data  
☐ Contributes to eligible National Register District  
☐ Noncontributing to eligible National Register District

**I. IDENTIFICATION**

1. Resource number: **5LR.6598** Parcel number(s): **9514431002**  
2. Temporary resource number: **N/A**  
3. County: **Larimer**  
4. City: **Loveland**  
5. Historic Building Name: **Benson House; Thornton House; Davis House; Twin  
Pines Nursing Home**  
6. Current Building Name: **Chessare House**  
7. Building Address: **355 W 5th Street**  
8. Owner Name: **Sondra Chessare**  
Owner Organization:  
Owner Address: **355 W. 5th St**



44. National Register eligibility field assessment: **Eligible**  
Local landmark eligibility field assessment: **Eligible**

# Architectural Inventory Form

Page 2 of 9

## II. GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

9. P.M.: **6th** Township: **5N** Range: **69W**  
**SE ¼ of SW ¼ of NE ¼ of SE ¼ of Section 14**
10. UTM reference (Datum: NAD27)  
 Zone: **13** **493207 mE** **4471585 mN**
11. USGS quad name: **Loveland, Colorado**  
 Year: **1962; Photorevised 1984** Map scale: **7.5'**
12. Lot(s): **Lot 3, and East 30 FT. of Lot 2, Block 3**  
 Addition: **Kilburns West Side Addition** Year of addition: **1883**
13. Boundary description and justification:  
**This legally defined parcel encompasses, but does not exceed, the land historically associated with this property.**  
 Metes and bounds?: Describe:

## III. ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

14. Building plan (footprint, shape): **Rectangular Plan**
15. Dimensions in feet: **2715 square feet**
16. Number of stories: **2 1/2**
17. Primary external wall material(s): **Brick**
18. Roof configuration: **Hipped Roof**
19. Primary external roof material: **Asphalt Roof/Composition Roof**  
 Other roof materials:
20. Special features: **Porch**  
**Roof Treatment/Dormer**  
**Chimney**  
**Window/Segmental Arch**
21. General architectural description:  
**The stately 2.5-story, 1903, Clarence V. Benson House is the primary residence located on the north side of West 5th Street in the block between Grant and Harrison Avenues. The formerly elegant (but now neglected) mansion is supported by a low, unpainted, coursed sandstone foundation, while its walls are made of red brick laid in running bond. The roof is hipped, covered with black asphalt composition shingles, and has boxed eaves with painted white bead board trim. There are three chimneys: a tall red brick fireplace chimney is located on the west (side)elevation; a tall red brick chimney is located on the north (rear) elevation; a short red-brick chimney is located on the west-facing roof slope. Intersecting gables, with painted green and white variegated wood shingles in their upper gable ends, are located on the south, east, and west-facing roof slopes. A hip-roofed dormer is located on the south-facing roof slope, as well, overlooking the façade. A historic, but not original, two-story, full-width, enclosed front porch dominates the façade on the south elevation. A painted white, 15-light, glass-in-wood-frame door enters the east end of the enclosed front porch from a 3-step concrete stoop with low flanking knee walls. An 18-light sidelight is located to the east of the door. A band of six 18-light fixed-pane windows penetrate the porch wall to the west of the entry door. A band of nine 6/6 double-hung sash windows penetrate the porch's second story on the façade elevation. All of the porch's windows feature painted white wood frames, and the exterior porch walls are clad with painted white horizontal wood siding. A canted hip-**

## Architectural Inventory Form

Page 3 of 9

---

roofed bay is located on the west elevation. Elsewhere, the windows are predominantly 1/1 double-hung sash, with painted white wood frames, sandstone lugsills, and segmental brick arches. A modest, single-story, wood-frame enclosed rear porch addition wraps around the house's northeast corner.

22. Architectural style: **Late 19th and Early 20th Century American Movements**

Building type:

23. Landscape or special setting features: **This property is located on the north side of West 5th Street in the block between Grant and Harrison Avenues. The property is poorly-maintained, and is suffering from neglect.**

24. Associated buildings, features or objects:

### Garage

**A single-stall wood-frame garage is located east of the house. This modest utilitarian building is supported by a concrete foundation, and its walls are clad with painted white horizontal wood siding. The garage roof is a low-pitched front gable, covered with asphalt composition shingles, and with widely-overhanging boxed eaves. A painted white wood-paneled garage door on the south elevation opens onto a driveway which extends to West 5th Street.**

---

## IV. ARCHITECTURAL HISTORY

25. Date of construction: Estimate: **1903** Actual:

Source of information: **Loveland city directories; Sanborn Insurance map (1906); plaque on façade wall**

26. Architect: **Unknown**

Source of information: **N/A**

27. Builder: **Unknown**

Source of information: **N/A**

28. Original owner: **Clarence V. Benson (probably)**

Source of information: **"Loveland." *Fort Collins Weekly Courier*, June 4, 1902, p. 9; Loveland city directories; plaque on façade wall.**

29. Construction history:

**Larimer County Assessor records list 1908 as this house's year of construction; however, Loveland city directories, Sanborn Insurance maps, and historic newspaper articles provide compelling evidence that it was actually built some years earlier. A plaque on the façade wall, within the enclosed front porch (apparently placed there circa 1996) states that the house was built in 1903. This date is probably accurate, or nearly so. The dwelling is depicted on the 1906 Sanborn Insurance map, and its address appears in the (first available) 1904 Loveland city directory. City of Loveland building permit files reveal that a bay window was added in 1978.**

30. Original location: ☒ Moved: Date of move(s):

---

## V. HISTORICAL ASSOCIATIONS

31. Original use(s): **Domestic/Mansion**

32. Intermediate use(s): **Health Care**

33. Current use(s): **Domestic/Single Dwelling**

34. Site type(s): **Large single family residence, used as a nursing home between circa 1947-1958**

## Architectural Inventory Form

Page 4 of 9

---

35. Historical background:

Historic records provide conflicting information regarding this prominent house's year of construction and its earliest owners and residents. By most existing secondary accounts, this house was built in 1903 and was originally owned and occupied by prominent Lovelanders Clarence V. and Lucy (Bell) Benson. This generally fits with the following small item in the *Fort Collins Weekly Courier* published under the heading "Loveland" on June 4, 1902: "C.V. Benson has sold his residence and will soon occupy his new residence property on the west side." Moreover, C.V. and Lucy Benson are listed as the property's residents in the (first available) 1904 Loveland city directory. Between 1904 and 1917, however, the city directories indicate that 355 W. 5th Street was the home of Mrs. Jessie (Scoville) Thornton (widow of Wilbur R. Thornton), and her children Clarence and Theresa Thornton. Wilbur Thornton had passed away in June of 1901 at the age of 48. Jessie Thornton died some years later, in December 1935; and further, her obituary contains this sentence regarding the 1901 death of her husband Wilbur Thornton: "His death occurred June 19, 1901, the family home at that time at 355 West Fifth Street".

Clarence Vanderburgh Benson was born in Loudon, Iowa, Sept. 27, 1868. His family came to Golden, Colorado in 1870, and in 1877, moved to a farm near Loveland where Clarence spent much of his childhood. After graduating from Colorado Agricultural College in 1890, Clarence entered the law school at the University of Michigan at Ann Arbor, graduating in 1892. He would go on to open a law practice in Loveland, and to marry Lucy Bell on Nov. 29, 1893. She was the granddaughter of Samuel Bell, former governor and senator of New Hampshire. Born into a prominent family, Clarence Benson became a very active member in the affairs of Loveland. He was elected city attorney twice, was a member of the board of directors for the Bank of Loveland and served as a member, and later as president, of the Loveland Board of Education. Other organizations he was a member of included the Masons, Elks Club, Shriners and Knights of Pythias. In 1904, he was elected as judge of the county court in Larimer county. In 1908 Judge Benson was nominated by the Republican state convention for the office of lieutenant governor. Clarence Vanderburgh Benson died August 28, 1945, at the age of 74, following an extended illness.

The 1906 city directory lists Mrs. Jessie Thornton, and her children Clarence and Theresa Thornton as this property's residents. An Ethel Anderson, perhaps a live-in servant, or an extended relative, was also included in the Thornton household in 1906. Jessie Thornton, who had been widowed in 1901, was also listed as this house's primary resident in the 1910-1911 and 1917 city directories. Wilbur R. Thornton, her husband, had been a prominent member of the Loveland community prior to his death in June of 1901. Born in Warsaw, New York, on April 8, 1853, Wilbur Thornton became a teacher and carpenter before marrying Jessie Scoville in 1877. After the couple moved to Colorado, Mr. Thornton became the head of the Consolidated Home Supply Ditch and Reservoir Company, and acquired a reputation for good business sense and honesty in dealings with his fellow man. Like his predecessor of this house, C. V. Benson, Wilbur was a member of the Masonic Lodge, and when he passed away on June 19, 1901, he was laid to rest according to the ancient rites of the Masonry. He apparently succumbed to complications after surgery for an appendicitis, at the relatively young age of 48.

After Wilbur's death and the Thornton family's arrival to this house, Jessie Thornton continued to live here for many years until finally moving to Fort Collins in 1918 or 1919. Not to be overshadowed by her late husband, Mrs. Thornton is remembered in her obituary as an upstanding member of the Loveland community as well.

The 1919, city directory lists J. I. Lanham as the property's new resident, followed in short order by R. L. Brock in 1922 and George M. Davis in 1925. According to the directories George Mason and Lena Caroline Davis lived in

## Architectural Inventory Form

Page 5 of 9

---

this house until the early 1940s. George and Lena were married on Nov. 21, 1902 in St. Louis, Missouri. They moved to Colorado Springs where they operated a drug store, before moving for short periods of time to Limon and Lamar, in eastern Colorado, before moving to Loveland in 1915. The couple had one daughter, Geneva (Mrs. Welden Ball), one granddaughter and four great-grandchildren. Mr. George Davis died on December 7, 1955, at the age of 81, followed by le Mrs. Lena Davis who passed away fifteen years later, on January 2, 1970.

After the Davis family left this property in the mid-1940s, this building was converted for use as an elderly care facility. Between circa 1947 and 1958 this facility was known variously as "Knights Rest Home" and as the "Twin Pines Nursing Home." After this interlude as a nursing home the directory listings show that it returned to the status of a private residence with the arrival of Carrie E. Jones in 1958. Carrie apparently resided here through the late 1960s. Circa 1972, this property became the residence of attorney Richard W. Ball. He lived in this house until circa 1990, when Patrick and Patricia Williams acquired the property. The Williams' reportedly lived here until 1996, and were followed here by Jeffrey P. and Debra R. Owens.

Presently (in 2008) the property is owned by Sondra Chessare. Having served as a rental for the past several years, the property is now rapidly deteriorating.

36. Sources of information:

Building permit files, on file with the City of Loveland Building Division.

Larimer County Assessor records.

Larimer County Assessor: Residential Property Appraisal Card.

Loveland city directories.

Sanborn Insurance Maps.

"A Good Man Has Gone." (Wilbur Thornton obituary) *Loveland Reporter*, June 20, 1901, p. 1.

"Death of Wilber R. Thornton." *Loveland Register*, June 26, 1901 p. 4.

Loveland." *Fort Collins Weekly Courier*, June 4, 1902, p. 9

"Mrs. Thornton, Former Pioneer Resident, Dies." *Loveland Daily Reporter Herald*, Dec. 4, 1935 p. 1.

"Clarence V. Benson Dies in Long Beach" *Loveland Daily Reporter Herald*, August 29, 1945 p.1.

"Davis" (George Davis obituary) *Loveland Daily Reporter Herald*, December. 8, 1955, p.5.

"Mrs. G. M. Davis Dies Friday" *Loveland Daily Reporter Herald*, Jan. 3-4, 1970 p. 3.

"Mrs. G. M. Davis Services Held" *Loveland Daily Reporter Herald*, January 6, 1970 p. 3.

# Architectural Inventory Form

Page 6 of 9

## VI. SIGNIFICANCE

37. Local landmark designation: Yes No ☒ Date of designation:

Designating authority:

38. Applicable National Register criteria:

A. Associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad pattern of our history;

B. Associated with the lives of persons significant in our past;

☒ C. Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or represents the work of a master, or that possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguished entity whose components may lack individual distinction;

D. Has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in history or prehistory.

Qualifies under Criteria Considerations A through G (see Manual).

Does not meet any of the above National Register criteria.

Loveland Standards for Designation:

- |                                     |                          |  |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Architectural            | Exemplifies specific elements of an architectural style or period  |
|                                     | Architectural            | Is an example of the work of an architect or builder who is recognized for expertise nationally, statewide, regionally, or locally |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Architectural            | Demonstrates superior craftsmanship or high artistic value   |
|                                     | Architectural            | Represents an innovation in construction, materials, or design   |
|                                     | Architectural            | Represents a built environment of a group of people in an era of history   |
|                                     | Architectural            | Exhibits a pattern or grouping of elements representing at least one of the above criteria   |
|                                     | Architectural            | Is a significant historic remodel  |
|                                     | Social/cultural          | Is a site of an historic event that had an effect upon society   |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Social/cultural          | Exemplifies the cultural, political, economic, or social heritage of the community   |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Social/cultural          | Is associated with a notable person(s) or the work of a notable person(s)  |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Geographic/environmental | Enhances sense of identity of the community  |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Geographic/environmental | Is an established and familiar natural setting or visual feature of the community  |

39. Area(s) of significance: **Architecture**

40. Period of significance: **1903**

41. Level of significance: National: State: Local: ☒

## Architectural Inventory Form

Page 7 of 9

## 42. Statement of significance:

**This stately, but now neglected, house is architecturally significant for its early twentieth century architectural characteristics. It is also architecturally notable for its fine brick masonry construction and other details. The property is also historically significant for its association with Loveland's residential development, from the time of its construction through the late 1950s. In particular, the property is significant for its associations with the Benson and Thornton families, both of which made significant contributions to broad patterns of Loveland's history. The property may well qualify for individual listing in the National Register of Historic Places and/or in the State Register of Historic Properties. The property should also be considered eligible for local landmark designation by the City of Loveland.**

## 43. Assessment of historic physical integrity related to significance:

**This property displays an overall high level of integrity relative to the seven aspects of integrity as identified by the National Park Service and Colorado Historical Society - location, setting, design, materials, workmanship, feeling and association. There have been only minimal adverse exterior alterations, to the historic dwelling.**

### VII. NATIONAL REGISTER ELIGIBILITY ASSESSMENT

44. National Register eligibility field assessment: **Eligible**Local landmark eligibility field assessment: **Eligible**45. Is there National Register district potential? Yes ☒ No

**Discuss: Historic residential properties in the neighborhood west of downtown Loveland may collectively possess the historical and/or architectural significance, and display sufficient physical integrity, to comprise one or more State or National Register historic districts.**

If there is National Register district potential, is this building: Contributing ☒ Noncontributing N/A:46. If the building is in existing National Register district, is it: Contributing Noncontributing N/A: ☒

### VIII. RECORDING INFORMATION

- |                           |  |               |  |
|---------------------------|--|---------------|--|
| 47. Photograph number(s): | <b>CD #4, Images 24-31</b>                           | CDs filed at: | <b>City of Loveland</b>                            |
| 48. Report title:         | <b>City of Loveland Fifth Street Historic Survey</b> |               | <b>Community and Strategic Planning Department</b> |
| 49. Date(s):              | <b>01/12/08</b>                                      |               | <b>500 E. Third Street</b>                         |
| 50. Recorder(s):          | <b>Carl McWilliams</b>                               |               | <b>Loveland, CO 80537</b>                          |
|                           | <b>Timothy Wilder</b>                                |               |  |
| 51. Organization:         | <b>Cultural Resource Historians</b>                  |               |  |
| 52. Address:              | <b>1607 Dogwood Court</b>                            |               |  |
|                           | <b>Fort Collins, CO 80525</b>                        |               |  |
| 53. Phone number(s):      | <b>(970) 493-5270</b>                                |               |  |

# Architectural Inventory Form

Page 8 of 9

## Sketch Map





# Architectural Inventory Form

Page 9 of 9

## Location Map

