

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
 NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

 FINAL - NO SIG  
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DATE ENTERED

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

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

HISTORIC

Oliver P. Morton House

AND/OR COMMON

Oliver P. Morton House

**2 LOCATION**

STREET &amp; NUMBER

319 West Main Street

— NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Centerville

— VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

10th

STATE

Indiana

CODE

18

COUNTY

Wayne

CODE

177

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	<b>PUBLIC ACQUISITION</b>	<b>ACCESSIBLE</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT
			<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL
			<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY
			<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
			<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
			<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
			<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

Historic Centerville, Inc

STREET &amp; NUMBER

Box 73

CITY, TOWN

Centerville

— VICINITY OF

STATE

Indiana

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Recorder's Office, Courthouse

STREET &amp; NUMBER

4th and Main Street

CITY, TOWN

Richmond

STATE

Indiana

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

Indiana Historic Preservation Program and Survey

DATE

1972 - 1974

— FEDERAL  STATE — COUNTY — LOCALDEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

Indiana Department of Natural Resources

CITY, TOWN

Indianapolis

STATE

Indiana

# 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 type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED      DATE _____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

## DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

I. Exterior The Oliver P. Morton House is a 2 story brick off-center entry town house with 6 voids on the principal (north) elevation, 9 voids on the west elevation and 3 voids on the east elevation. The Morton house is symmetrical or regular in form. It has a gabled roof, the end gables facing east and west. The main block of the house is cubical. It has four end gable chimneys not joined by parapets, two in each gable end. The service ell is south of the main block. It is of 2 stories, of brick and carries a gable roof, the end gable facing south. It has two chimneys in the end gable. A 1 story brick gabled smoke house and a 1 story shed porch (now enclosed) are attached to the rear of the service ell.

The main block cornice and freize is Grecian in style, of no particular order. The cornice and freize return across the gable ends for some 3 1/2 feet on each end. The main doorway is a simple Grecian style frontispiece holding a 3 paneled door. All windows and doors have plain cut stone lintels. Most of the sash is original 6 x 6 light sash. The pane size of sash in the service ell is diminished on the second story, decreasing the size of the voids.

II. Interior The main block of the Morton House consists of a left-hand entry hall and a double parlour on the first floor, and 3 bedrooms and a hall on the second floor. The entry hall contains an excellent stairway which terminates in a spiral shell. The newel is missing. The handrail also terminates in a spiral shell. The double parlours are separated by a 4 leaf 4 panel folding door which converts the room into one suite. The original mantels in the parlours have been removed. The front parlour contains a "made-up" mantel of 20th century origin. The rear parlour has none. The service ell to the south of the main block consists of 2 rooms of equal size, divided longitudinally by a frame partition. The west room, which is larger, was apparently a dining room. A secondary stairway in this room formerly led to loft bedrooms on the second floor of the ell. A fine original mantel of Grecian design remains in this room. The eastern room has been thoroughly remodeled, and no original fittings are visible. It may have been a kitchen. The 1 story brick smoke house has a large throated chimney designed for use as a summer kitchen or smoke house. The mantel is a plain board. The second floor is simply fitted. All bedrooms in the main block and in the service ell were apparently heated by stoves rather than by fireplaces. No mantels remain.

# 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 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input 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 type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES

1848

BUILDER/ARCHITECT C.T. Wilson, John C. Dill

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

I. Architectural Significance The Oliver P. Morton House is a detached row house, originally built with nearly blind end walls. Its proportions and detailing is consistent with a high degree of finish and skill. At the time the Morton house was erected, C.T. Wilson of Centerville was a master builder of residential and commercial structures. It is probable that Wilson was the general contractor for the house. The designer of the 1848 Wayne County Poor Farm, John C. Dill, probably designed the Morton House. The similarity between the Poor Farm and this structure is remarkable. The Morton house is a substantial home for the period. It has been severely mutilated by successive remodelings during the 20th century. After restoration, it will be an interesting piece of architecture in its own right.

II. Historical Significance The Morton house was built by Jacob Julian, the younger brother of Abolitionist editor and Congressman George Julian. Jacob was a hunchback. He practiced law in Centerville from the 1840's until his removal to Indianapolis in the 1870's. He was an excellent attorney, but no political figure. Julian, his wife and children occupied the house until 1856, when he sold it to Oliver P. Morton. At that time, Morton was a struggling young attorney with a wife and 2 children. This was the only home the Mortons owned.

Oliver P. Morton was born August 4, 1823 in the extinct village of Salisbury, Wayne County, Indiana. James Morton, his father, ran a tavern in Salisbury. When Morton's parents perished in the early 1830's, he was sent to live with two maiden aunts in Centerville. These two women raised him to manhood. Oliver attended the Whitewater Academy in Centerville, considered one of the best secondary schools in the Midwest. Upon graduation, he was apprenticed to William S. T. Morton, his half-brother, a hatter. Oliver's half-brother was a self-made man; his real estate and merchantile activities were more important to him than his trade. Oliver was released from his apprenticeship articles in 1843. He enrolled in Miami University, Oxford, Ohio. After 2 years at Miami, he returned to Centerville and read for the law. He was admitted to the bar in 1845. Shortly after admission, he married Lucinda Burbank, daughter of Centerville merchant Isaac Burbank. At first, Morton was a Democrat. He was appointed Circuit Court Judge in 1850 through the offices of Andrew F. Scott. He left the bench in 1851 and enrolled in Cincinnati Law School, taking two more years of professional training. Upon Morton's return to Centerville in 1853, he opened a law office with John C. Kibbey. The Morton & Kibbey firm was one of the best known firms in eastern Indiana. In 1856, Morton changed his allegiance from Democrat to Republican, as a result of the Kansas-Nebraska Act. Upon his conversion, Morton became one of the principal organizers of the new party, then known as the Peoples' Party. He was the 1856 Gubernatorial candidate of the Peoples' Party in Indiana. He attended the 1856 Republican Convention in Pittsburg. Morton did not carry the state in 1856, but his vote total was impressive.

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for a new party and unknown candidate. During the next 4 years, Morton developed his law practice and devoted his spare time to organizing the new party for 1860. In 1860, he was the Lieutenant Governor Candidate behind Henry S. Lane. If the Republicans carried the General Assembly and State House, Lane would be made Senator and Morton would become Governor. The 1860 election was overwhelmingly Republican. Lane got a Senate seat; Morton became Governor in January 1861 shortly after South Carolina seceded.

Morton's administration was primarily devoted to sustaining the war effort. Morton raised 4 regiments of volunteers in February-March, 1861. A farm northeast of Indianapolis was converted into a recruit depot and called Camp Morton. Indiana put 53 regiments of volunteers into the war. These units were recruited, fed, clothed and equipped with state money by Morton and by Ashael Stone, his Adjutant General. The war effort was not without opposition. In 1863, a Democratic legislature refused to vote any further funds for furnishing supplies and provisions to Indiana troops. Morton disregarded the General Assembly and the limitation in the 1852 state constitution prohibiting the state from incurring indebtedness. He borrowed \$600,000 from James F.D. Lanier, a former Madison, Indiana banker and Wall Street tycoon. This money went to pay for supplies for troops in the field. In 1865, the Republican General Assembly ratified his acts and appropriated funds to repay these loans.

The Democratic Opposition was a thorn in Morton's side. From 1862 onward, he harrassed the opposition by mass arrests and armed attacks on democratic strongholds. He organized the Union League in Indiana as a paramilitary organization of Republicans. This paramilitary activity increased in 1863, after the Emancipation Proclamation had been announced. The Democrats had a substantial pro-peace wing. In response to Republican pressure, the Democrats formed armed societies known variously as the Sons of Liberty, Knights of the Golden Circle and Order of American Knights (OAK). These groups are better known as Copperheads. In late 1864, several Indiana Copperheads were involved in a stupid plot to engineer a general uprising in the Northwest. This Northwest conspiracy apparently involved several Indiana Democrats. William A. Bowles, Harrison H. Dodd, Horace Heffren, Andrew Humphries, John C. Walker and Lambden Milligan were arrested by military police on treason charges. Heffren turned state's evidence against his friends. These civilians were tried by military commission in the Federal Building at Indianapolis. Morton insisted that the men be treated as foreign agents. After a quick trial, Milligan, Bowles and Stephen Horsey, a minor figure in the plot, were convicted and sentenced to die. The United States Supreme Court reversed the convictions in 1866 after the war.

Morton was rewarded for his Gubernatorial efforts by election to the U.S. Senate in 1866. Shortly after assuming office, he suffered a paralytic stroke which left him crippled for the remainder of his life. Had he not been afflicted, it is probable he would have appeared on the Republican Presidential ticket in 1868. Morton was still a power in the Republican Party. He voted for the impeachment of Andrew Johnson. He was one of the hardest Republican Radicals; he voted for all the major

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reconstruction laws.

After reconstruction, Morton became less active. In 1877, on a speaking tour to the Pacific Northwest, he suffered a second stroke. He was rushed by train to his brother-in-law's house in Richmond, Indiana. When it appeared his illness was terminal, he was transported to Indianapolis, where he died. He is buried in Crown Hill Cemetery, Indianapolis.

Morton was one of the major political figures of the Civil War. He was instrumental in founding the Republican Party. His term as Indiana Governor showed that he was at times a ruthless man. He was also a strong man, able to carry the state without much real support. At times his methods were extra-legal. It is clear that Morton kept Indiana in the war and prevented the loss of Indiana's troops at a critical moment in the war. His Centerville home is the sole remaining structure closely associated with him and his Governorship. It is one of the most significant Civil War era historic landmarks in Indiana.

## 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

W.D. Foulke, Life of Oliver P. Morton (1899); B. French, A Biography of Oliver P. Morton (1866); W. Spahr, A History of Centerville, Indiana (1914); H.C. Fox, ed., Memoirs of Wayne County, Indiana (1912); J.P. Dunn, Indiana and Indianians (1919); G. Treadway, Democratic Opposition to the Lincoln Regime in Indiana (1973); Wayne County Transfer Books (Centerville) 1846-50, 1850-54, 1854-59, 1859-64

## 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY approximately 1

UTM REFERENCES

A	1,6	67,114,0	4,40,918,0
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING

B			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

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

Thomas J. Reed

ORGANIZATION

Historic Centerville, Inc.

DATE

7/24/75

STREET & NUMBER

Box 73

TELEPHONE

CITY OR TOWN

Centerville

STATE

Indiana

## 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

DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

DATE

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST:

DATE

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER



OLIVER P. MORTON  
 HOUSE  
 CENTERVILLE, IND.  
 U.T.M. REF  
 16/671140 /4409180

**NAME**

HISTORIC Oliver P. Morton House

AND/OR COMMON Oliver P. Morton House

**LOCATION**

CITY, TOWN Centerville VICINITY OF COUNTY Wayne STATE Indiana

**MAP REFERENCE**

SOURCE U.S.G.S. Topographical 7.5 min. series Jacksonburg Quadrangle  
 SCALE 1:24 000 DATE 1960

**REQUIREMENTS**

TO BE INCLUDED ON ALL MAPS  
 1. PROPERTY BOUNDARIES