

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

FINAL

# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

### 1. Name of Property

historic name Reeves, Jabez, Farmstead  
other names/site number Reeves-Hodson House, 139-391-05023

### 2. Location

street & number County Road 900N N/A not for publication  
city, town Rushville  vicinity  
state IN code IN county Rush code 139 zip code 46115

### 3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	Contributing	Noncontributing
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> district	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u> buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u> sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u> structures
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u> objects
		<u>4</u>	<u>5</u> Total

Name of related multiple property listing:  
N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

### 4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this  nomination  request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria.  See continuation sheet.

[Signature] Date 5-4-89  
Signature of certifying official  
Indiana Department of Natural Resources  
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria.  See continuation sheet.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of commenting or other official Date  
\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau

### 5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register.  
 See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the National Register.  See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register.
- removed from the National Register.
- other, (explain:)

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

## 6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC: single dwelling  
AGRICULTURE: storage  
AGRICULTURE: agricultural outbuilding

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

AGRICULTURE: animal facility  
AGRICULTURE: storage  
WORK IN PROGRESS

## 7. Description

Architectural Classification  
(enter categories from instructions)

OTHER: I-house  
Italianate  
Greek Revival

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation BRICK  
walls BRICK  
WOOD: weatherboard  
roof ASPHALT  
other METAL

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

Located on 185 acres in northern Rush County and three miles south of the National Road, the Jabez Reeves farmhouse, with surrounding outbuildings and barn, dominates the rural landscape and is an outstanding example of Midwestern vernacular architecture. This two-story brick I-house, with two story rear wing, creates a cross gable plan with a shed roof extension to the west.

The Reeves farmhouse (c.1855) is an example of early post-railroad folk housing. The austere exterior is lightened by the sparse Italianate detailing. Without the original side porch, the detail is limited to segmental arch windows, simple brackets below the wide eave, and the doorway.

At ground level and extending upward approximately 24 inches, scored concrete was used as facing for the brick foundation. The exterior brick was laid in common bond pattern with header rows occurring after seven stretcher rows. The brick surface is now covered with a thin layer of white paint, and will be painted again.

The main facade of the house faces north (photo 2). This facade reveals the three bay I-house plan of the house, with a central entry flanked by six-over-six double-hung windows. The entrance has a door with arched panels and sidelights, surmounted by a semi-circular fanlight. The entry arch has a protruding outer course with brick dentils and molded brick impostes (photo 9). All of the windows on the house, with the exception of one east window and two west windows, are six-over-six wood double-hung sash with segmental arches and stone sills. There are three such windows on the second floor of the main facade.

A sizeable ell extends from the rear center of the front block (photos 3 and 5). The east side has ghost lines and joist pockets indicating a missing side porch (photo 5). A doorway has been bricked up, and a ground floor window has been shortened on this side.

The west side of the ell has a one story shed roof extension (photo 3). The extension is frame in the center section, originally it may have been open. The frame area has two fixed windows.

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There are two windows above the shed roof on the ell, and one facing south on the back of the main block. The west gable of the main block has one first story window. The gable end of the ell has one offset transomed doorway (photo 4).

The house has medium-pitched gable roofs covered with asphalt shingles. Originally, the house had slate roofing. A pronounced cornice, narrow frieze, and decorative scroll brackets complete the roof/wall junction. Ghost marks indicate that some brackets are missing.

Two end interior chimneys heat the parlor and library on the first floor and the two bedrooms above. Another interior chimney is centrally located in the rear wing to the south. A fourth chimney is situated on the west side of this rear wing.

True to the I-house plan, the two front rooms flank the entrance foyer. The parlor to the west opens into the foyer (photo 10), and the library to the east opens into the hallway which connects the foyer to the service wing. The hallway, which is beside the staircase, leads to the dining room (photo 12). Behind the dining room is the kitchen with an enclosed side porch--the central room of the shed roof extension. To the south of this porch is a small room which is accessible only from the kitchen. A similar room is located to the north of the porch and opens into the dining room. There are four bedrooms on the second floor--two on either side of the central stairway, and two in the rear wing above the dining room and kitchen.

Two stairways access the second floor. The main staircase rises from the entry foyer to the upstairs hallway that extends from front to back and into which the four bedrooms open (photos 15, and 19). The fourth bedroom at the back also has utility stairs from the kitchen below (photos 13 and 18).

The modest exterior belies the main feature of the interior--its intricate woodworking. Each room and hallway contain individual patterns of wood trim, with only two doorway/window moldings being repeated. The woodwork in the dining room matches that of the kitchen, and a pedimented window surround is found in both small rooms of the west extension. The wood trim throughout the house

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was once grained, but most has since been painted.

Exceptional woodworking remains on the east wall of the library (photo 11). Built with pegged mortise and tenon joints, this floor-to-ceiling cabinetry is situated on either side of the fireplace. The only other fireplace in the house is located in the dining room and is surrounded by a mantel and wooden panels (photo 12). To the left of this fireplace is a floor-to-ceiling china cabinet covered by four paneled doors. This storage area, at one time, opened into the kitchen behind where identical doors and classical trim were located. The kitchen side has since been blocked and replastered. In the parlor and each bedroom, small wooden mantles were positioned above the stoves which were used to heat these rooms (photo 17).

All interior walls and ceilings are plastered, and small areas on the second floor are still covered with residual layers of wallpaper. The four-paneled interior doors throughout the house are similar. The hardware which remains includes door knobs of white porcelain or Bennington pottery and lock boxes.

To the west of the house is a windmill which presently is not connected to the well. The owners plan to keep the windmill and make it operational. The windmill is over fifty years old, but its exact date is uncertain (photo 7). A brick smokehouse (c. 1855) stands just to the southwest of the house. Built of the same brick as the house, the smokehouse also has a scored foundation motif applied over the brick at ground level (photo 7). Additional outbuildings have been constructed through the years. One large English barn, with a hipped roof addition to the north, still remains on the property and is presently in use. The roof of this barn is now metal, but earlier photographs of the property show this barn with a slate roof--the 1880 date appearing in lighter color. These two buildings and one structure contribute to the farm's history.

Several buildings and one structure do not contribute to farmstead. Two sheds of recent construction are non-contributing, as is a frame garage. A frame barn of uncertain vintage is considered non-contributing. A modern round metal silo is counted as a non-contributing structure. The wood fence in front of the

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house cannot be dated and is not included in the resource count since it is not substantial in scale. Currently, the grounds are used for raising hogs and the barns are used for the storage of various feeds. The house is being rehabilitated.

**8. Statement of Significance**

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally     statewide     locally

Applicable National Register Criteria     A     B     C     D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions)     A     B     C     D     E     F     G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE  
AGRICULTURE

Period of Significance

c.1855-1917

Significant Dates

c.1855  
1880

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

N/A

Architect/Builder

Unknown

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

The Jabez Reeves Farmstead is significant both for its outstanding architecture and as a fine example of a Nineteenth Century farm. The farm has agricultural significance as a collection of well-preserved historic agricultural buildings and because of several implements devised on the farm.

The Reeves House is among the most outstanding mid-Nineteenth Century farmhouses in Rush County. It is an example of transitional architecture in that its form is similar to the Federal period, yet its exterior detailing reflects the beginning influence of the Italianate style. Furthermore, simple Greek Revival woodwork is found throughout the entire rear service wing. The window and door surrounds of the upstairs hallway and the west bedroom have high relief moldings which are keyed.

This large brick I-house, with simple Italianate details, stands atop a small rise down a long lane, and is surrounded by 185 acres of land. The farmhouse remains in very good condition and is largely unaltered. The only three noticeable changes are 1) the removal of a wooden side porch to the east, 2) the removal of some brackets, and 3) the conversion of a small first floor room to a bathroom. Nearly all the original doors and windows are in place. The interior cabinetry and woodwork, some of which retains its graining, are in excellent condition. Also located in close proximity to the house are three early auxiliary structures--a smokehouse, windmill, and post-and-beam English barn (c.1880).

The history of this farm begins in the early 1800s. Jabez Reeves was one of the original settlers who migrated to Rush County, Indiana. In 1827, after purchasing from the government an 80 acre tract located in Center Township, he brought his wife and two-month-old son, William, from Ohio to Rush County. There, Jabez and his wife had six more children. William, the eldest, helped his father clear trees and cultivate the soil. The farm soon grew into a prosperous one. A brick I-house, a symbol of economic success, was built in the mid 1850s.

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By 1861, Jabez had acquired an additional 130 acres that bordered his original 80.

William Franklin Reeves bought the 210 acre farmstead from Jabez in 1861. William and his wife Hannah resided in the home his father built. Their children also grew up working on this farm. Carrying on his father's tradition, William became a substantial farmer and well-respected member of the community. Within a few years, William sold 25 acres from the farm, leaving 185 acres which has remained intact to this day.

Two of William's sons, Marshal Truman and Milton Othello, showed early signs of inventive genius, often tinkering with the machinery and making improvements. During the summer of 1869, Marshal, a teenager, constructed a plow which had two double shovels fastened to it, thereby doubling the number of rows tilled in one pass. Knowing there was a market for his son's device, aptly named the "Hoosier Boy Corn Plow", William aided Marshal in its improvement. It was then patented; and by 1875 Marshal, backed by his father and his uncle, A. B. Reeves, had founded the Hoosier Boy Cultivator Company of Knightstown, Indiana. It was also in this year that Marshal left his boyhood home and moved to Knightstown.

In the fall of that year, the company moved to Columbus, Indiana, and its name was changed to Reeves & Company. In 1881, Marshal and his company developed the first truly practical machine for the purpose of stacking straw. The Reeves Straw Stacker soon became a necessity on every farm. Reeves & Company grew into one of the largest plants in the country which manufactured farm implements and machinery. Eleven branches were located in key agricultural areas of the plains states. Other Reeves inventions were the Reeves Stalk Cutter, Barley Hay Stacker, Barley Harrow and Double Shovel Plow, Reeves Automatic Drive Gates, self-adjusting Cant-Hook, and numerous engines for farming, industry, and road construction.

Marshal's younger brother, Milton, also shared a talent for invention, steering him in the direction of automobiles. The Edison Institute in 1910 awarded Milton the Edward Longstreth Medal for the design and development of the variable speed

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transmission. This invention has the distinction of being among the rather limited number of basic patents--true firsts--issued by the U. S. Patent Office. This device was a breakthrough for the then infant auto industry which had been relying on an engine that could only run at one constant speed. One of the first two transmissions that he built was used on a lathe in the Reeves Pulley Company plant; the other transmission varied the speed in one of the first American cars, a Reeves Motorcycle. At his death, Milton held over one hundred patents in his name. Unfortunately, it is not known if these devices were invented on the family farm, or how long Milton lived in the Reeves House.

In just three generations, the Reeves family developed from pioneers to a wealthy industrial family. Each generation marked economic and social changes. Jabez, an early settler, became a successful farmer. William, served as Justice of the Peace and Township Trustee. Although they moved as adults from Rush County, Marshal and Milton, William's sons, spent their formative years on the land, in the same house. Both brothers became inventors and businessmen, Marshal being a highly successful manufacturer, civic leader, and noted philanthropist. Today, Reeves & Company is a division of the Reliance Electric Company in Columbus.

The farm left the Reeves family in 1917. During the autumn of 1986, the house was in imminent danger of being razed. It was purchased by Joe Hodson, great-grandson of Milton Reeves, and his wife Toni. The present owners are in the process of restoring the farmhouse as a wedding gift for their daughter.



**9. Major Bibliographical References**

Bradley, George K. Reeves and the Automobile. Cleveland, Ohio: Reliance Electric Co., published after 1969--no date given.

Kniffen, Fred. "Folk Housing: Key to Diffusion." Annals of the Association of American Geographers. 55 (December 65): 549-579.

"M.T. Reeves Dies at Home North of City." The Evening Republican (Columbus, Indiana), December 23, 1924, p. 1.

Reeves Line of Power Farming Machinery (General Catalog). Columbus, Indiana, circa 1915.

St. Clair, Haston L. Historical Stories about Reeves Engines. No publisher given.

See continuation sheet

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_

Primary location of additional data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Specify repository:

Indiana Historic Sites and Structures Inventory

**10. Geographical Data**

Acreage of property 6.6

UTM References

A 16 629460 4399800  
 Zone Easting Northing

C         

B           
 Zone Easting Northing

D         

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Verbal Boundary Description Commencing at a point 1136 feet along the south right-of-way of CR 900N from CR 200W, then south 778 feet, hence west 368 feet, hence north 778 feet, and then returning east 368 feet along the right-of-way of CR 900N to the point of origin to include 6.6 acres of land.

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The boundary has been selected to include all associated resources without including non-contributing acreage.

See continuation sheet

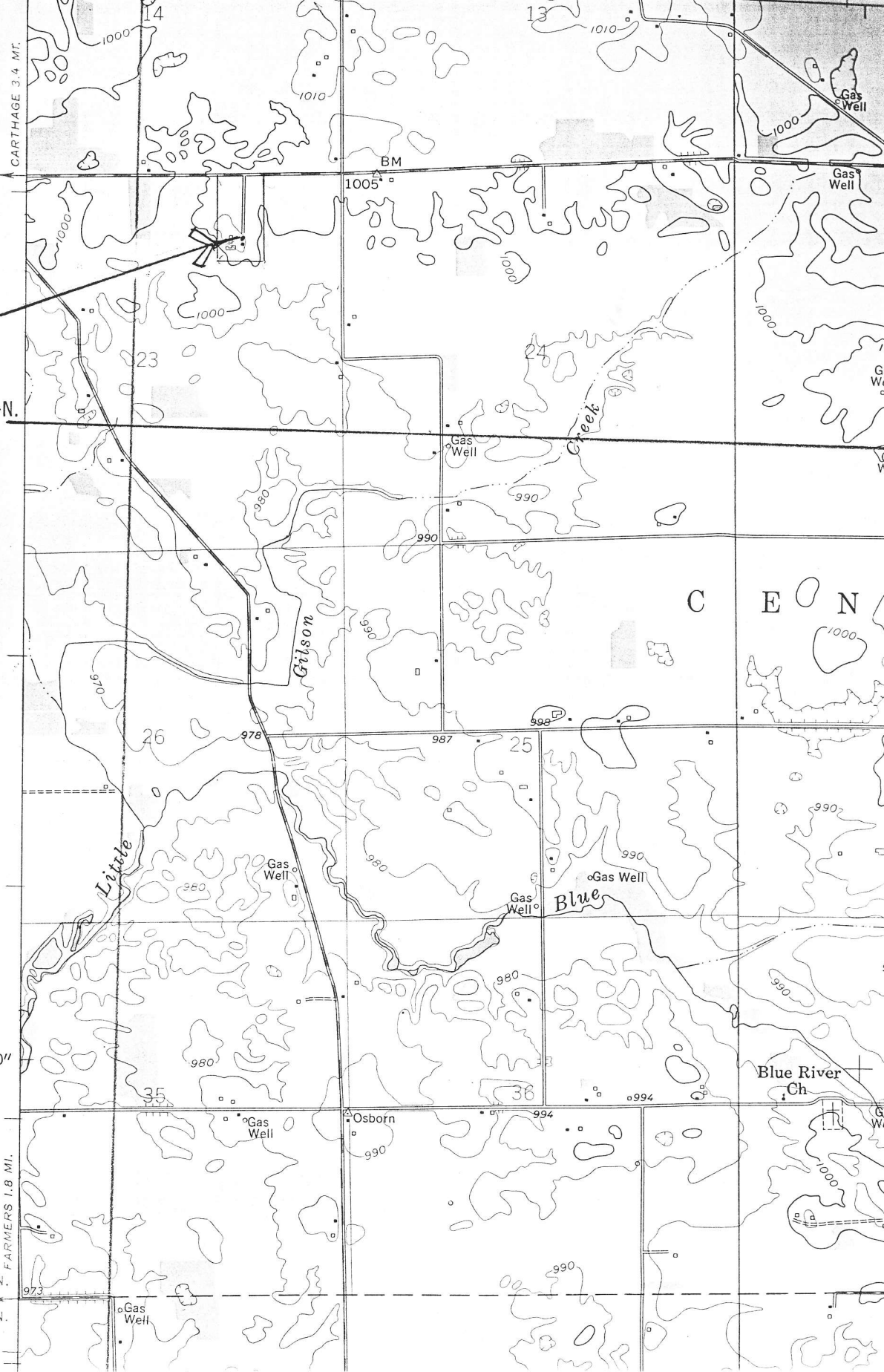
**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title Sue Becher Gilliam and Cynthia Barnhart  
 organization \_\_\_\_\_ date 2/2/88  
 street & number R. R. 2, Box 52 telephone 317/345-2270  
 city or town Knightstown state IN zip code 46148

(KNIGHTSTOWN)

UNITED STATES  
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

85°30' 39°45' 629000m.E. R. 9 E. R. 10 E. 27'30"



JABEZ REEVES  
FARMSTEAD  
CR 900 N  
RUSH CO., IN  
16 629460 4399600

4399000m.N.

42'30"

12 MI. TO U.S. 52  
FARMERS 1.8 MI.  
T. 15 N.  
T. 14 N.

C E N

Blue River  
Ch

Osborn

Blue

Gibson

Little

BM

Gas Well

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