

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# 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 Harcourt, James F., House  
other names/site number 139-380-50032

### 2. Location

street & number County Road 500W at 750S  N/A not for publication  
city, town Moscow  vicinity  
state Indiana code IN county Rush code 139 zip code 46156

### 3. Classification

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

Patrick R. Ralston 8-8-89  
Signature of certifying official Date

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: agricultural outbuilding

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC: single dwelling  
AGRICULTURE: storage

**7. Description**

Architectural Classification  
(enter categories from instructions)

Second Empire  
Italianate  
OTHER: transverse frame barn

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation STONE: limestone  
walls WOOD: weatherboard  
METAL  
roof STONE: slate  
other METAL: cast iron

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

SEE CONTINUATION SHEETS

See continuation sheet

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 1

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Description:

The James F. Harcourt house has retained its original fabric in a well maintained form relatively unaltered since its construction. The house stands facing west on a rise overlooking a farm field containing its outbuildings, a private lane, and a wooded slope down to the Flat Rock River. The immediate yard is bounded on its north and west sides by Rush County Roads 500 W and 750 S which intersects northwest of the house. The grassy elevated yard extends along both county roads.

The house is a two story structure with an irregular cruciform plan, with an attached kitchen and service area forming the east arm, and a two story hexagonal bay on the outside ends of both the north and south arms. The house is capped with a shallow-pitch mansard roof pierced with two dormers. The exterior walls are pierced with asymmetrically-placed windows stacked in vertical lines with four located in a single story projecting bay on the west facade.

The house's foundation consists of rubble-coursed limestone faced with large slabs of dressed limestone. This supports a balloon structural frame constructed of machine-sawn oak lumber, which is sheathed in weatherboard, except on the rear service areas which are sheathed in vertical board-and-batten siding. The house is flanked by original, flat tin-roofed wooden porches on three of its sides. The main roof was built in the Mansard mode, but its straight and shallow pitch distinguish it from "high-style" mansards. The roof is pierced with several dormers, and all but the rear service area is sheathed in the original slate roof. The service area is roofed with asphalt shingles.

The porches on the north and west sides, which are set inside the notches of the cross plan, are floored with single slabs of limestone and have posts and cornices embellished with ornate wooden scrollwork (photos 1-3). The roofs of these porches are ringed with original ornate cast iron cresting and are sheathed with painted sheet metal. A third porch, located on the east side, is enclosed with wooden latticework and it is through the floor of this porch that a staircase descends to the basement.

The Harcourt House retains most of its original one-over-one, double hung sashes. The windows on the front facades are fitted with interior shutters while those on the rear and service areas of the house were equipped with exterior shutters which are presently stored in the house's attic. The bay window on the west facade is fitted with an original interior glass pocket door which functions as a thermal barrier. The north wall of the rear service area is pierced with two small window openings sealed with side-hinged solid wooden shutters.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 2

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The house retains its original doors which are constructed of panelled wood incised with decorative patterns. All of these doors are fitted with fixed, single-pane, bevelled glass windows. A small projecting addition on the east side of the service area contains a modern roll-type garage door.

The Harcourt House is embellished with several types of wooden ornamentation. Each window is flanked by two vertical boards stretching from the foundation to the cornice (photo 2). Under each window within these boards is fitted a panel of diagonally-placed, unlapped weatherboards. Each door is similarly framed. The frieze is formed of vertical tongue-and-groove boards cut at various lengths to form a staggered pattern at the bottom (photo 10). This frieze is joined to the soffit by paired brackets with wooden pendants.

The interior walls are constructed of lime plaster on wood lath, trimmed with a variety of woodwork types. This woodwork is of walnut and is generally decorated with machined molding profiles with the exception of several rooms which have incised Eastlake decorative patterns. The entry hall opens off of the west porch and is dominated by a staircase with a rail of walnut with alternating balusters and horizontal dowels (photo 4). Most of the interior rooms in the main body of the house radiate from this stair hall. The parlor contains a fireplace with well-preserved Eastlake incisions as does the oversize dining room. The second floor is accessible from the main staircase which leads to a center hall and from a rear service stair (photo 16). The woodwork in the southwest second floor bedroom is particularly fine, consisting of well-preserved light wood with dark Eastlake incisions highlighted with gold paint (photos 17 & 18). Many of the public areas on the first floor are decorated with Eastlake-patterned trim and decorative molding profiles while the service areas are trimmed with unembellished wood.

The landscape surrounding the Harcourt house is a combination of domestic lawn, pasture, cultivated fields, and forests. The lawn surrounding the house is shaded by large oak trees and lower bushes. This lawn is bounded by rolling cultivated fields and wood breaks.

The Harcourt property contains three outbuildings (photo 19). The remnants of a nineteenth century house stand northwest of the main house on the west side of County Road 500 W. This house was constructed before Harcourt purchased the property in 1867 (photo 20). It may have once served as the kitchen but is presently used as a storage building. This is a one-story wood frame building with vertical board-and-batten siding on all but its north side which is sheathed with simple planks. A wooden cornice is ornamented with brackets which wrap around to roof returns. The east side of the side gable roof is sheathed in tar paper while the west side is still sheathed in wood shakes. The interior retains remnants of wood lath and plaster walls and ceilings.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 7 Page 3

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West of the first outbuilding and down a farm lane stands a small nineteenth century front-gable, central-portal barn which was also constructed before Harcourt's purchase (photo 21). This is a post and lintel, pin-frame building of hand-hewn timbers sheathed with vertical board-and-batten siding. The center portal is flanked by smaller doors on each side. The interior contains side lofts (photo 22).

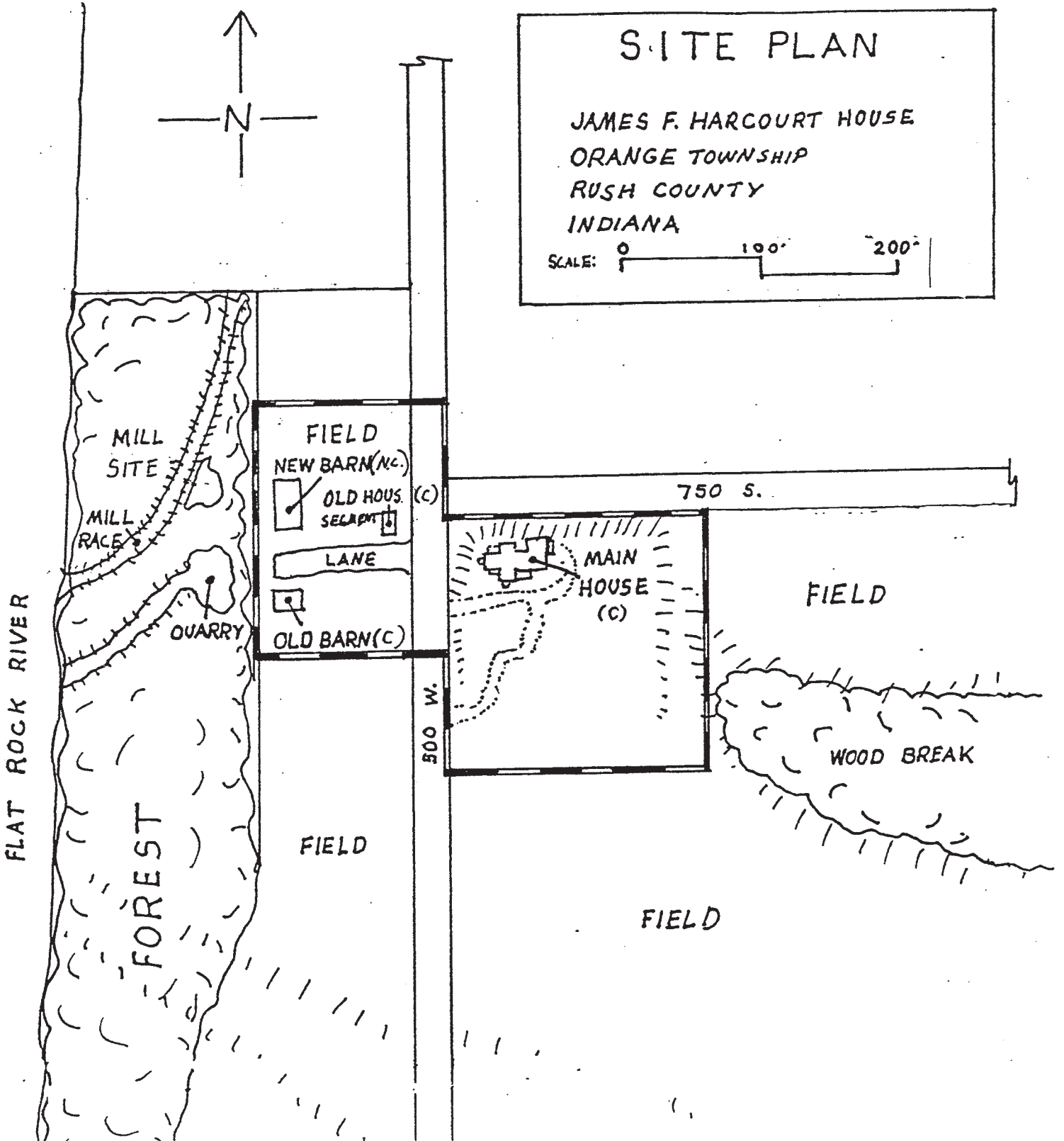
Directly north of the nineteenth century barns stands a noncontributing modern pole barn. This building is constructed of a wood frame sheathed in painted metal panels.

County Road 500 W, which runs north-south through the property, as well as 750S, which intersects it northwest of the house, are both paved with asphalt and are flanked with grass-covered dirt embankments and ditches. The farm lane runs west from the old house segment to the barns and is paved with dirt and gravel. It is flanked by barked-covered posts supporting barbed and woven wire strands. The lane once continued westward to a ford through the Flatrock River, which lies at the bottom of a westward-sloping hill.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 4



**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)

INDUSTRY  
AGRICULTURE  
ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

1867-1893

Significant Dates

1867

1881

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

N/A

Architect/Builder

Washburn, Park

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

SEE CONTINUATION SHEETS

See continuation sheet

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places  
Continuation SheetSection number 8 Page 1

## Significance:

The James F. Harcourt house was the home of the inventor and manufacturer of the Harcourt "Young Hoosier" Wheat Drill, and its construction was the direct result of the profits derived from this industry. This wheat drill was one of the earliest multi-row seed injecting planters to be patented, and it was distributed widely throughout the Midwest before it was outmoded by newer, mass-produced planter types in the 1880s. The manufacturing operation which was located on adjacent land was a significant part of the development of mechanized farming in the southeastern Midwest and was a good example of the small scale at which early specialized machines were manufactured. Consequently, this house, as the home of the inventor and manufacturer of the Harcourt Wheat Drill, has local significance in the areas of industry and agriculture. It is architecturally significant as an outstanding rural dwelling bearing the influence of both high style and vernacular design elements. This architectural significance is enhanced by the high level of integrity found throughout the house.

James F. Harcourt was a native Rush County resident who lived on and farmed adjacent property beginning around 1860. His prominence in local politics and business was evidenced by his service as Justice of the Peace and his mention in local newspaper social features. He experimented with new agricultural mechanisms until he perfected and patented the wheat drill in 1866. Harcourt designed his drill to meet the unique planting needs of farmers in the southern regions of several Midwestern states. Each autumn farmers in this region planted winter wheat while the stocks of corn were still standing. This form of crop rotation was unique to this section of the corn belt, which was unable to support the single cash crops of the upper Midwest. The "Young Hoosier" drill was a small machine with long, narrow arms which planted wheat seeds between the corn rows while being pulled by a single horse. This market was too limited to be profitable for large agricultural machinery manufacturers leaving the opportunity for small entrepreneurs such as Harcourt. Probably only two other manufacturers, the Wayne Agricultural Works and the American Seeding Machinery Company, both of Richmond, Indiana, produced similar drills (which eventually superseded the "Young Hoosier").

Harcourt's drill was more technologically sophisticated than the first force feed seed drill patented in 1851 and also more advanced than the first widely-used drill, which was manufactured by C. P. Brown beginning in 1866. An improved version of Brown's drill, the "Empire," was licensed for sale by an Ohio firm in 1867, approximately concurrent with the first production of the Harcourt Drill. The Harcourt property is historically significant as an important example of the small, innovative agricultural manufacturers that met the regionally-specialized need in the late nineteenth century but which were later overcome by mass-produced and marketed implements when farming methods changed.



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places  
Continuation SheetSection number 8 Page 2

Harcourt purchased a 42 1/2 acre tract of land east of the Flat Rock River in about 1867, part of which contains the nominated outbuildings. This land contained a three story, water-powered mill constructed of a hewn wood frame on a stone foundation with a mill pond to its north and race to the south. This mill was probably built in the 1840s or 1850s by the Smiser family, and was being operated by the Scull family to manufacture work clothes when it was purchased by Harcourt. He converted the mill into a seed drill factory and began shipping his product by wagon to the closest railroad terminal, then located at St. Paul, Indiana. From there the drills were distributed to Ohio, Kentucky, Kansas, Illinois, Iowa, Missouri and Indiana. Many of the early drills were sold directly through regional salesmen but eventually all were sold through wholesale distributors such as H.T. Conde of Indianapolis.

Production of the Harcourt Drill seems to have peaked in the early 1880s. Between July 24 and September 24 of 1883, 550 drills were manufactured and shipped from this site. During this period the drill factory employed around 10-12 men, most of whom lived in houses scattered about the surrounding countryside. This area along the Flat Rock River contained several small grist and sawmills, as well as such cottage industries as tanners, blacksmiths, and brickmakers. The only large scale industries in Rush County were concentrated in Rushville. Rushville was not a significant manufacturing town in 1888 but it did boast a large furniture factory and several other manufacturing shops, one of which was a seed drill factory. This drill factory was established by A. N. Norris, and it seems to have sustained a rapid increase in production after Harcourt's operation burned in 1893. Between 1880 and 1890 Harcourt's factory was probably one of the larger single employers in Rush County, an area which was economically dominated by independent farms.

It was during this prosperous time that Harcourt built the nominated house on one acre he purchased just east of the mill. He constructed the house to accommodate his family, to demonstrate his success, and possibly to provide adequate space for feeding his factory workers, which are said to have eaten in the oversized dining room. This new house took the place of an older residence, a segment of which remains as a storage building west of 500 W.

Although the site of the drill factory is immediately adjacent to the nominated property and remains under the same ownership, the house and its earlier outbuildings are the only obvious physical remainder of this industry. Subsequent tree growth and erosion since the mill fire in 1893 have made the exact location of the mill foundations impossible to document without archeological excavation.

The Harcourt House is a regionally-significant example of a relatively unaltered adaptation of the Second Empire mode to local design and building technologies. The structure was identified as one of Rush County's most

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 3

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significant farmhouses in the 1988 Historic Sites and Structures Inventory conducted by Historic Landmarks Foundation of Indiana for the Indiana Division of Historic Preservation and Archaeology. This house reflects the increasingly sophisticated tastes of late 19th century rural Indiana, which were spurred by greater contact with urban centers made possible by improving transportation and communication networks. In this case the owner made regular personal visits to trade centers such as Cincinnati, conducted trade throughout the region and subscribed to several national periodicals. However, the design, materials, and construction techniques used to build this house were similar to those used in building typical pattern book vernacular houses of the late nineteenth century in the region. Park Washburn constructed the carpenter-builder house in 1880-81 following the form of a scale model he had constructed based on the particular special needs of the owner. Mr. Washburn was a flour and saw mill owner in Moscow, Indiana, who probably built several houses in that community which exhibit similar cladding characteristics. The doors, window sashes, and decorative wood trim were manufactured by the Rushville Sash Company located in the county seat. The rough lumber used in the house was cut in the general vicinity and sawn at the builder's mill.

There is no evidence that the builder had any architectural training or skills in drafting but rather he seems to have worked closely with the owner to develop a construction model, then used standard supply and construction techniques to build the structure. The designer's limited knowledge of high style design resulted in a blend of elements from the Second Empire and Eastlake styles with vernacular features. Two evident vernacular modifications of his design are the low-pitched, unflared mansard roof and the rather awkward organization of the interior plan, which lacks the clear hierarchy of space usually found in high-style Second Empire interiors. This house provides an outstanding, intact example of the blend of high style and vernacular construction which resulted from the region's increasing awareness of urban culture.

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

Alexander, Mary M. Sketches of Rush County. Rushville: Jacksonian Publishing Co., 1915.

Andry, Robert L. American Agricultural Implements; a Review of Invention Development in the Agricultural Implement Industry in the United States. Chicago: Robert L. Andry, 1894.

Arnold, Eleanor, ed. Rush County Sesquicentennial Edition History. Rushville: Rush County Sesquicentennial, Inc., 1972.

Boring, H. Opal. (present owner of house and granddaughter of James Harcourt) Interview on April 8, 1988.

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 2

UTM References

A 

1	6
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6	2	5	9	5	0
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4	3	7	3	5	4	0
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 Zone Easting Northing

C 

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B 

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 Zone Easting Northing

D 

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See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description A tract in Rush Co., Orange Twp., Indiana, as follows: Starting at a point at the southeast corner of CR 750S and 500W, where the right of ways of said roads intersect, proceed east on the south right of way of CR 750S for 209', thence south 209', then west 209', to the east right of way of CR 500W. Turn north along this right of way, follow for 100'.

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The boundary includes the acre purchased by Harcourt to erect the 1881 house as well as several outbuildings directly associated with the Harcourt property during the 19th century. Non-contributing acreage is not included in the boundary.

See continuation sheet

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title William G. Taft  
 organization Historic Landmarks Foundation of In. date October 20, 1988  
 street & number 3402 Boulevard Place telephone 317/926-2301  
 city or town Indianapolis state Indiana zip code 46208

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number 9 Page 1

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Bibliography:

Boring, H. Opal. "James Franklin Harcourt." Typed manuscript,  
date unknown.

Gary, A. L. and E. B. Thomas, ed. Centennial History of Rush County.  
Indianapolis: Historic Publishing Company, 1921.

History of Rush County, Indiana. Chicago: Brant and Fuller, 1888.

Indiana Historic Sites and Structures Inventory: Rush County Interim Report.  
Indianapolis: Historic Landmarks Foundation of Indiana for the Indiana  
Division of Historic Preservation and Archaeology, 1988.

Interview with Peter Cousins, Curator, Agriculture and Industry Group,  
Henry Ford Museum, Dearborn, Michigan. January 24, 1988.

Noble, Allen G. Wood, Rock and Stone: The North American Landscape Vol. 2.  
Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1984.

The Promoter: Rushville Today. Louisville: Johnson and Campbell, 1899.

United States Patent, "J.F. Harcourt of Moscow, Indiana, Improvement on  
Wheat-Drills." Patent No. 59,595 dated November 13, 1866.

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 10 Page 1

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Verbal Boundary Description-continued

Thence turn west and cross CR 500W, following this line for 200'. Thence turn north and proceed for 200'. Thence turn east and follow for 175', until the west right of way of 500W is encountered. Follow the west right of way of 500W south to a point in line with the south right of way of 750S. Turn east and continue to the point of origin. Also refer to enclosed map.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 10 Page 2

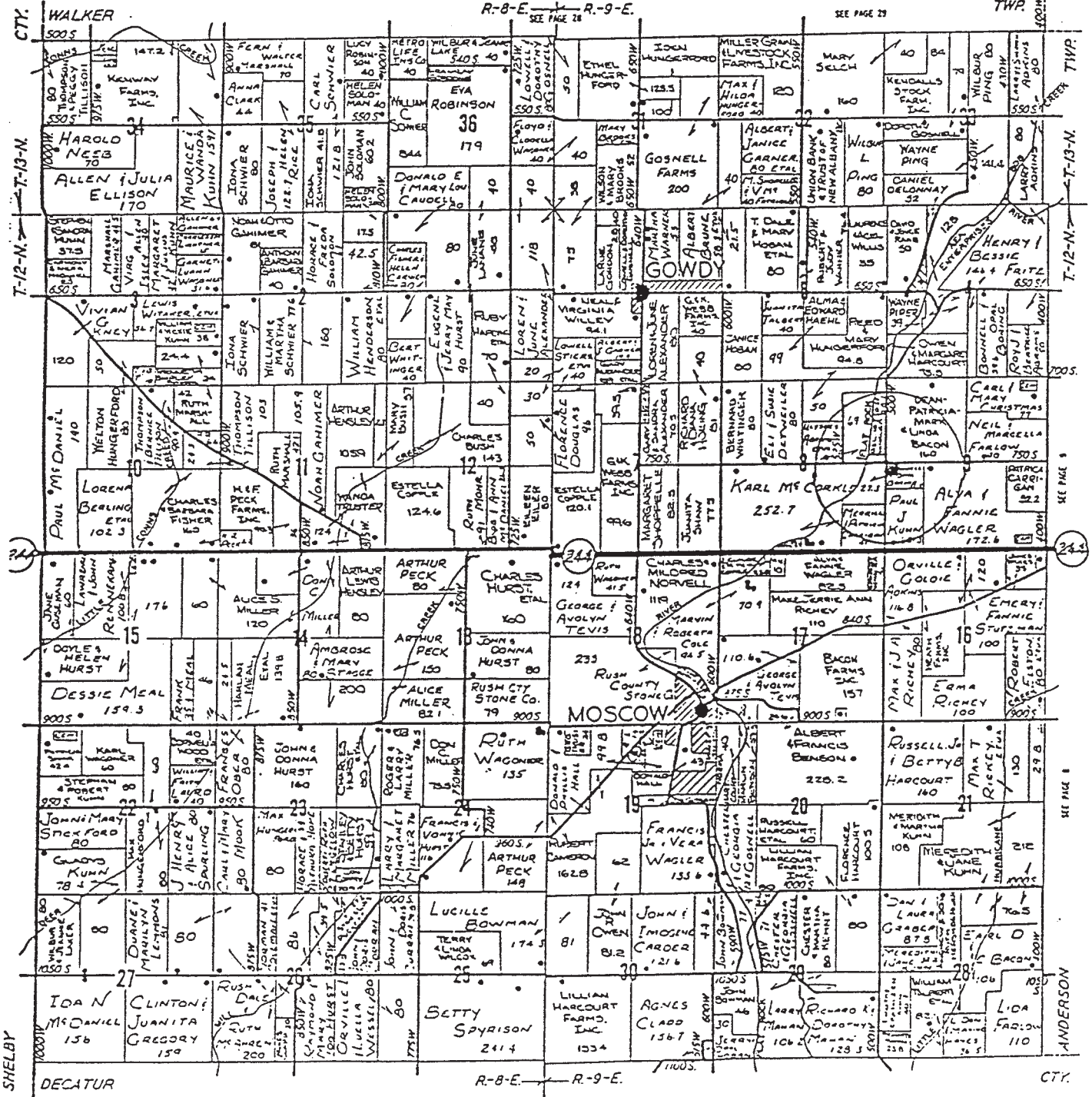
TOWNSHIP 12&13-N. RANGE 8&9-E.



## ORANGE



- LEGEND**
- FEDERAL, STATE or INTERSTATE HIGHWAYS
  - COUNTY or TOWNSHIP ROADS
  - RAILROADS
  - WATERWAYS
  - CANAL
  - LEVEE
  - CEMETERY
  - INCORPORATED CITY, VILLAGE or BURROUGHS
  - SMALL TRACTS
  - SUBDIVISIONS
  - DWELLING or FARM UNIT





JAMES HARCOURT  
HOUSE  
RUSH CO., IN  
16 625 950 4373540

(MILROY)  
3962 IV NW

INTERIOR-GEOLOGICAL SURVEY WASHINGTON D C - 1966  
628000m E.

ROAD CLASSIFICATION

- Heavy-duty
- Medium-duty
- Light-duty
- Unimproved dirt
- U. S. Route
- State Route

1 MILE



1 KILOMETER

VERTICAL SCALE  
1 INCH = 10 FEET  
N SEA LEVEL



QUADRANGLE LOCATION

380 MANILLA, IND.  
N 3930 - W 8530/7.5

1960

AMS 3863 II SE-SERIES V851

NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS  
SURVEY, WASHINGTON, D. C. 20242  
AL RESOURCES, INDIANAPOLIS, INDIANA  
AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST