

FINAL

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 for individual properties and districts. See instructions in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Nicholson-Rand House  
other names/site number 097-066-80118

2. Location

street & number 5010 West Southport Road N/A  not for publication  
city or town Indianapolis N/A  vicinity  
state Indiana code IN county Marion code 155 zip code 46221

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, 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 36CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant  nationally  statewide  locally. (  See continuation sheet for additional comments.)  
[Signature] 5.2.03  
Signature of certifying official/Title \_\_\_\_\_ 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 for additional comments.)  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of certifying official/Title \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau \_\_\_\_\_

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:  
 entered in the National Register.  See continuation sheet. \_\_\_\_\_ Signature of the Keeper \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Action \_\_\_\_\_  
 determined eligible for the National Register  See continuation sheet. \_\_\_\_\_  
 determined not eligible for the National Register \_\_\_\_\_  
 removed from the National Register \_\_\_\_\_  
 other, (explain:) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

5. Classification

Ownership of Property  
(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property  
(Check only one box)

- building
- district
- site
- structure
- object
- landscape

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	1	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
1	1	Total

Name of related multiple property listing  
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed  
in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC: Single Dwelling

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC: Single Dwelling

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

MID-19th c.: Gothic Revival

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation BRICK

walls WOOD: Weatherboard

roof ASPHALT

other WOOD

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
B removed from its original location.
C a birthplace or grave.
D a cemetery.
E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
F a commemorative property.
G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographic References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

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

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

1876

Significant Dates

1876

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Nicholson, David

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
Other State agency
Federal agency
Local government
University
Other

Name of repository:

Nicholson-Rand House  
Name of Property

Marion IN  
County and State

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 2 acres

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1 16 564680 4390150  
Zone Easting Northing

2

3  
Zone Easting Northing

4

See continuation sheet

### Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

### Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Glory-June Greiff  
organization \_\_\_\_\_ date 10-14-2002  
street & number 1753 South Talbott telephone 317/637-6163  
city or town Indianapolis state IN zip code 46225

### Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

#### Continuation Sheets

#### Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

#### Photographs

Representative **black and white** photographs of the property.

#### Additional items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

### Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name Robert Mork  
street & number 5010 West Southport Road telephone 317/ 821-0706  
city or town Indianapolis state IN zip code 46221

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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Nicholson-Rand House

MARION COUNTY IN

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION

Located in Decatur Township in the southwest corner Marion County, the Nicholson-Rand house sits across Mann Road from open fields to the east earmarked to be acquired by Southeastway Park, and so to a degree the house retains some sense of its original setting amidst farmland. White River borders these fields on the east. West of the house along Southport Road are a few individual houses of recent construction, sited individually on large lots. To the immediate north and to the south there are individual houses, most of them of modest size and recent construction, on large lots. There is a circa 1910 American Foursquare across Mann Road to the southeast.

The Nicholson-Rand house, now at 5010 West Southport Road at the northwest corner of Southport and Mann roads (the main entrance actually faces Mann Road), was originally located approximately one half mile north at 6510 Mann Road, at its junction with Mills Road. In the late 1990s, the house was threatened with demolition by its then-owner, who wished to develop the entire site as a suburban housing tract and accompanying retail structures. In 1997 Historic Landmarks Foundation of Indiana (HLFI) moved the house to its present location in order to save it from being torn down. The house is oriented on its current site just as it was originally. The two-acre plot at present is barren, but the new owner plans extensive and appropriate landscaping. There is a recently built garage on the site, immediately southwest of the house. HLFI painted the house with a two-color scheme (gold with deep blue trim), as advocated by nineteenth century proponents of the Gothic Revival style in rural dwellings, Alexander Jackson Davis and Andrew Jackson Downing, whose pattern books clearly influenced the building's design.

The house originally had what was presumably a summer kitchen topped with an ornate cupola attached on the southwest, which subsequent owners enlarged and remodeled into a garage, probably in the 1940s. This part of the house was not saved, although the owner salvaged the cupola and plans eventually to rebuild the kitchen addition as it once was.

The two-story house is built on an asymmetrical T-plan, with a gabled roof lavishly decorated with metal cresting and pinnacles at each gable end. Originally slate, the roof is now covered with asphalt shingles. There are two corbeled chimneys and a third, which has been truncated (see photo 1). Characteristic of the style, exposed rafter tails peep from beneath the projecting overhang, which is supported by decorative

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brackets (see photo 6); each gable end features quatrefoil-patterned bargeboards and crossbraces. Above the second story window beneath each gable end is a diamond-shaped attic vent, and the siding around it is board-and-batten, in contrast to the clapboard siding elsewhere on the house. A total of five gabled dormers each feature bargeboard tracery stylistically similar to the main gables. The two on the east facade have metal finials.

The windows boast their original shutter blinds, especially notable since several on the second floor have pointed (triangular) arches. The windows are one-over-one wood frame, double hung sashes. Many still have their original glass. The first-story windows feature small awning-like hoods supported by brackets. Presently, nearly all the windows are boarded, but the owner intends to keep all the original windows intact.

The main east facade (see photos 1,2) on Mann Road contains two gabled dormers south of the east gable end. Nestled in the ell is a porch with chamfered posts and scrollwork brackets sheltering the main entrance. To the south of the porch is a large bay window, which is characteristic of the Gothic Revival style (although usually not as wide), but this was added in the early 1940s, possibly earlier. It is conceivable that the original was a bay window that was simply enlarged at this time. Beneath the gable end on this facade the window treatment is particularly fanciful (photo 3), featuring a scrollwork balcony beneath the second-story window, supported by brackets that extend down onto the top of the first-story windows.

The north facade (see photos 2,4) once contained the main entrance, removed about sixty years ago and carefully remodeled with attention to keeping original detail. The entrance had been beneath a recessed porch, which was enclosed in the remodeling and sided like the rest of the house. A small window presently in the east wall may have been salvaged and remodeled from the east-facing wall originally beneath the recessed porch.

The west elevation, the rear of the house (see photos 4,5), features three gabled dormers centered above a long porch with a hipped roof, supported by posts with modestly decorated brackets. From the porch, flanking a large window, are two entrances into the house. All these openings are presently boarded.

Beneath the gable end on the south elevation (see photo 5) are two small triangular arch windows with shaped shutter blinds flanking the

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center window on the second story, similar to those on the north elevation. The three windows on the first floor are asymmetrically placed, the westernmost one being narrower than the other two. The space between the easternmost and center windows is greater, owing to the presence of the chimney within.

Along with its mosaic tile floor (photo 7) in three rooms, the interior of the house retains a surprising amount of its original woodwork, including most of the chamfered door and window surrounds, crown molding, and baseboards (see photos 8,9). With a few exceptions, all the downstairs doorways boast transoms (photo 8); the ceilings are over ten feet high. The transom over the north exterior door on the west side has the builder's initials, "D" and "N," etched in the glass. The front hall features an ornate stairway (photos 9,10) with carved beading, walnut bannister, elaborately turned balusters, and decorated risers; just as impressive in its own right is the steep back stair (photo 11) in the southwest corner of the house, which despite its humble role boasts decorated risers, turned balusters and newel post, and a serpentine bannister.

Original plaster ceiling medallions, each one unique, remain intact (see photo 12), and there are two extant fireplaces, one with a wooden mantel on the south wall of the double parlor in the northwest corner of the house, and one with a cast iron mantel in the front parlor at the northeast. The front hall and staircase are between these two rooms; the east entrance is to the south of the stairs. A bathroom, installed about sixty years ago, is located north of the hall in the space where the recessed porch and entrance once was. To the south of the front hall is the dining room, which contains the bay window in the east wall. West of the dining room is the kitchen. The present dining room and kitchen were originally one room, and both still have the original clay tile floor, as does the front hall. The remaining floors are wood, some of which appears to be maple. West of the kitchen, at the southwest corner of the house, are the sinuous backstairs going upwards from a small back hall, which also features a tile floor in a less extravagant pattern. An exterior door opens to the west onto the back porch; likely, it originally entered the kitchen wing.

As was typical, the upstairs rooms are more modest than those downstairs, but still with ceilings well over nine feet high. There are four bedrooms upstairs, plus a bathroom on the north side that appears to have been part of the original plan. The bedroom on the south may be reached from the back stairs and is separate from the rest, obviously a servant's quarters.

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The house, having stood empty and neglected for several years, is in the early stages of renovation and most of the rooms are in a very primitive state or filled with construction materials at present. The rewiring and plaster repair underway on walls and ceilings has exposed the impressive construction of the house; it is solidly framed of yellow poplar with full-dimension two-by-twelve joists with two-by-six studs in the exterior walls, generally on sixteen-inch centers. The rafters are two-by-six.

NARRATIVE STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Despite the fact that the Nicholson-Rand house has been moved (out of necessity in order to save it from being demolished in 1997), its architectural significance is such that it remains eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion C, for it embodies the distinctive characteristics of American Gothic Revival architecture as advanced by Alexander Jackson Davis and Andrew Jackson Downing in the mid-nineteenth century. The house stands only a half mile south of its original location and retains its original orientation, and it lost very little of its integrity when it was moved, save for the one-story kitchen on the southwest. The house is a stunning example of the American form of Gothic Revival architecture promoted by Andrew Jackson Downing for rural dwellings and appears to be the best example in the whole of Marion County, which was noted in 1977 and 1987, respectively, by architectural surveyors from the Indianapolis Historic Preservation Commission and Historic Landmarks Foundation of Indiana (HLFI). It was HLFI that later moved the house in order to preserve it. Indeed, very few nineteenth century Gothic-influenced dwellings of any sort survive in the county; only four country houses remain--one of which is brick and thus not directly comparable.<sup>1</sup> The Nicholson-Rand house is clearly the most ornate and yet the most representative of the Davis-Downing ideal.

Even the most cursory glance through the pattern books of Andrew Jackson Downing, the influential landscape architect and arbiter of style of the mid-nineteenth century, reveals that the Nicholson-Rand

<sup>1</sup>The brick Gothic house stands on Frye Road in Franklin Township; the two other frame dwellings are a cottage on Shelbyville Road in the same township and an altered Stick-influenced farmhouse on South Rural Street in Perry Township. There is a small, very fine Gothic Revival cottage on Central Avenue in the Herron-Morton Historic District in Indianapolis, but it was built as a suburban dwelling in its day, not a country house.



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Nicholson-Rand House

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house could easily serve as an illustration of the type of house Downing encouraged for a rural dwelling. He advocated a "truth in architecture" approach, thus, for example, the visible rafter tails that keep the viewer in mind of the building's underlying structure and the fanciful scrollwork that highlights the qualities of the wood of which the house is built, as opposed to treating it as a material inferior to stone. Downing celebrated the picturesque and asymmetrical, along with the use of tracery and carving as ornamentation, now made affordable with the recent development of the scroll saw. As can clearly be seen from the narrative description, the Nicholson-Rand house embodies Downing's ideas. This is an American version of the Gothic Revival influence as disseminated by Downing, built with native materials. Its asymmetry, picturesque window treatments, projecting eaves, decorated rafter tails and brackets, board-and-batten siding beneath the gables, lacy bargeboard, the multitude of dormers, the entrance porch with its chamfered posts and scrollwork brackets, the shape of the chimneys--all are typical of Downing's illustrations of country houses. Still relatively rural today, this house in 1876 was at least two to three hours from downtown Indianapolis by horseback or wagon over some twelve miles of winding dirt roads. The nearest railroad depot was at Valley Mills, a half hour ride--or an hour's walk--away.

In many ways Downing's principles anticipated several elements of Craftsman houses, and even the work of Frank Lloyd Wright, as noted by architectural historian Vincent J. Scully, Jr. in a number of his writings and lectures. It is certainly reasonable to assume that the builder of the house, contractor and stonemason David Nicholson, was quite familiar with the popular books of Downing. Although *Cottage Residences* first appeared in 1842, subsequent editions appeared with regularity over the next three decades. Downing's *The Architecture of Country Houses* came out in 1850, shortly before Nicholson arrived in America, and went through eight additional printings through subsequent decades. It is possible, too, that Nicholson gathered ideas from any of a multitude of other pattern books that proliferated in the 1860s and 1870s. The popular works of architect and engineer George E. Woodward, for example, whose designs to a great degree follow the lead of Davis and Downing may have influenced Nicholson. Woodward's *Architecture and Rural Art*, in two volumes, his *Country Homes* and *Woodward's National Architect* all came out in the 1860s and were reprinted numerous times. Elements of Nicholson's house are present in several patterns in each of Woodward's books, but the general influence still appears to derive from Downing.

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Apart from its obvious Downing influences, what contributes to this house's intriguing past is that it seems likely that some of the materials incorporated were identical to those being used in the Marion County Courthouse under construction. David Nicholson was a prominent stone mason and partner in the business of Scott and Nicholson, which was contracted to do the stone construction work of the massive new Marion County Courthouse designed by Isaac Hodgson. Its cornerstone was laid in 1872. Whether Nicholson purchased extra materials or was given overruns--or whether he saw them being installed in the courthouse and decided he would like the same for the house he was building for himself--is unknown. But local lore for over fifty years after spoke of wagonloads of material carted from the courthouse building site. The colored tile of the floors in three rooms of the house is the same as was in the courthouse, and the interior woodwork is similar.

David Nicholson (1823-1899) was born in Dumfriesshire, Scotland, where he learned his trade as a stone mason. He came to the United States--to Indianapolis--in 1852, soon entering into partnership with a fellow countryman, Adam Scott, who had also learned his trade in his homeland. Their stone yard, originally on Delaware between Washington and Maryland (which, had it remained there, would have been very convenient for their work on the courthouse), was located from at least 1860 on Kentucky Avenue near the old Greenlawn Cemetery, just southwest of downtown. Nicholson and Scott both lived in houses in close proximity to their business, at least into the 1870s. Nicholson's wife Marion died in 1870, and it appears he soon married again, which may have provided the motivation to build a fine new house in the country near the villages of West Newton and Valley Mills. The house was completed in 1876--the same year as the courthouse, which was formally dedicated in 1877--but the marriage apparently ended in divorce.

After laboriously working for years to complete the house, Nicholson sold the property to Allison C. Remy (1837-1918) in 1879. Remy was a Marion County Commissioner who had just that year completed his three-year term. A few years earlier, in 1875, he had built the Remy Hotel on the southwest quadrant of the Circle in downtown Indianapolis. The sale may effectively have been a trade; in any case, Nicholson ultimately became the proprietor of the hotel (which became the Brunswick Hotel), and Remy the owner of the house and land in Decatur Township. Remy owned several other parcels in the near vicinity on the opposite side of Spring Valley Road (today, Mann Road), totaling about 370 acres. He was a prominent horseman and raised champion trotters. It is uncertain whether Remy lived in Nicholson's recently built

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dwelling, although one reference in Sulgrove's 1884 History of Indianapolis suggests that he may have for a time. But apparently Remy rented it out to a succession of tenants (perhaps farm managers) during at least part of the 1880s. Ownership of the house over the next decade is unclear, although at one point William H.H. Miller, United State Attorney General under President Benjamin Harrison and his former law partner, is said to have lived in the house, although only family history supports this seemingly unlikely contention.

About 1903 John Lindsay Rand and his wife acquired the house and property, probably from Remy, but possibly from a subsequent owner. The Frank Copeland family was renting the house at the time, and continued to live there for another year, while they were having another house built for themselves. The Rands moved to the area in order to be closer to their only surviving child, daughter Florence, who was married to prominent Indianapolis attorney Wymond Joe Beckett. Beckett himself owned considerable farm acreage in the vicinity, but he and his wife lived in Indianapolis. The Rands lived in the house for the remainder of their lives, then Florence Beckett inherited the property in 1926. The combined Beckett farm encompassed about six hundred acres. The house was then rented to the manager of the farm's dairy operation, and later in the 1930s, to other tenants. The son of Wymond and Florence, Joe Rand Beckett, an attorney like his father, moved into the house about 1940 and lived there with his wife Mary Ann until his retirement in the late 1950s, at which point the Becketts donated the farm to Depauw University. They continued to live in the house for a time, alternating with a home in Florida. Beckett died in Florida in 1977, whereupon his wife returned to Indiana, living out her days in Greenwood until her death in 1996. Ultimately the university had sold the house and it ended up with an out-of-state owner who wanted the property for residential and commercial development. In 1997 HLEFI stepped in to save the house, and when the owner could not be persuaded to alter his plans, the organization found an available parcel about a half mile down Mann Road and moved the house to its present site.

Although a building's being moved from its original site will usually render it ineligible for listing in the National Register, this magnificent house, which would have been destroyed had it been left in its former location, is of a relatively rare style and is a splendid example of its type. Despite the fact that the Nicholson-Rand house has been moved, it is only a half mile south of its original location, on the same road, and set at its original orientation. Its architectural significance is great enough that it still remains

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Nicholson-Rand House

MARION COUNTY IN

eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion C, for the Nicholson-Rand house embodies the distinctive characteristics of rural American Gothic Revival architecture as advanced by Alexander Jackson Davis and Andrew Jackson Downing.

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GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

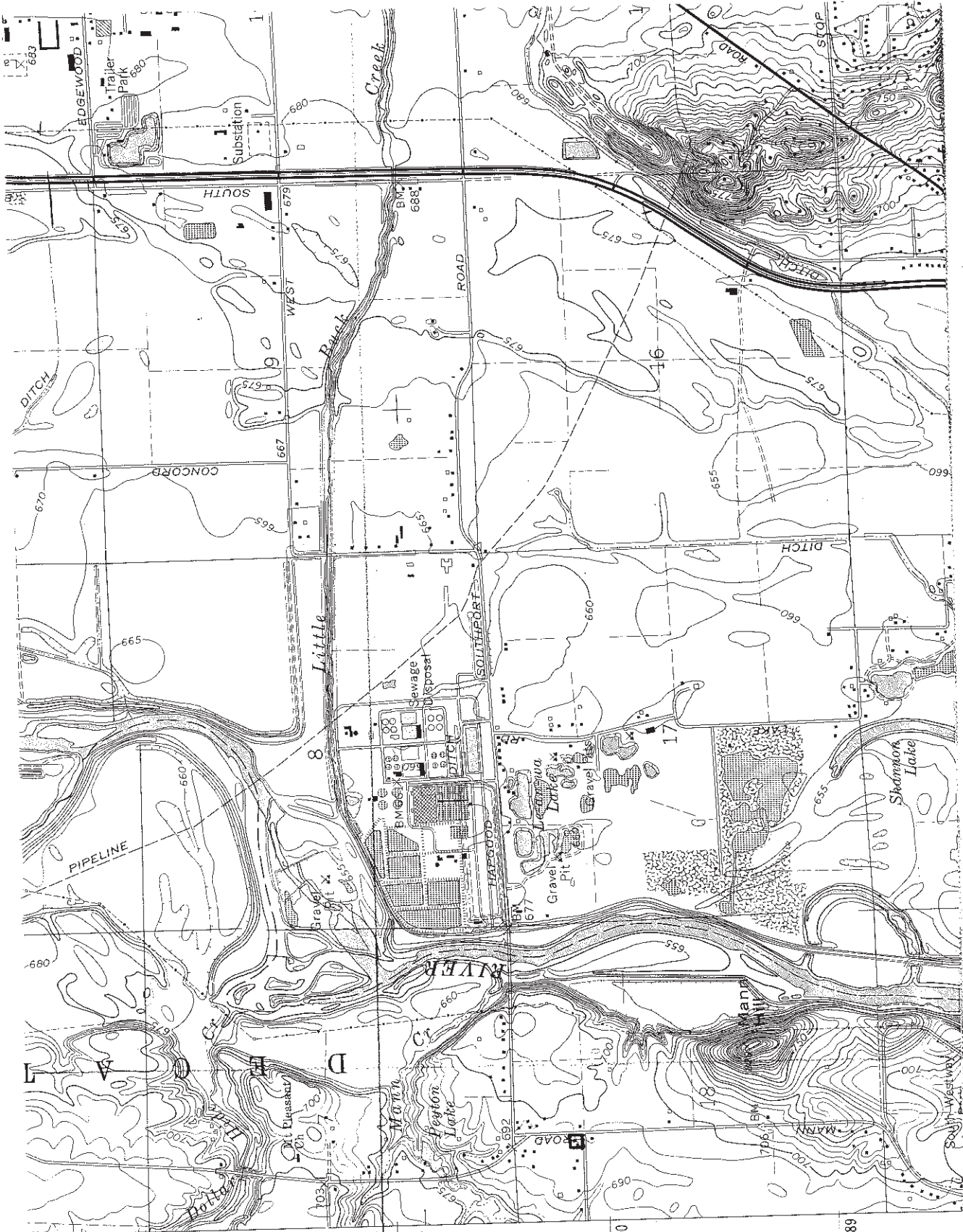
Verbal Boundary Description

Part of the Northwest Quarter of Section 18, Township 14 North, Range 3 East of the Second Principal Meridian, in Marion County, Indiana, more particularly described as follows:

Beginning in the center of the Mars Hill and Spring Valley Road, now Mann Road, at the point which is 697.95 feet south of a point in the north line of said quarter section, which is 1320 feet east of the northwest corner of said quarter section; thence west parallel with the north line of said quarter section 250.95 feet; thence south parallel to the center line of Mann Road 347.16 feet to a point in the center of Southport Road; thence east along the center line of said road and 6 parallel to the north line of said quarter section 250.95 feet to the center line of said Mann Road, thence north along said center line of Mann Road 347.16 feet to the place of beginning.

Boundary Justification

Encompasses the boundaries of the property to which this resource was moved.



NICHOLSON - RAND HOUSE  
 10 504680  
 4 4390150