

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

1152

# 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 Westleigh Farms  
other names/site number Cole Porter House 103-079-47016-17

### 2. Location

street & number 2107 South Frances Slocum Trail N/A  not for publication  
city or town Peru  vicinity  
state Indiana code IN county Miami code 103 zip code 46970

### 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] 8-8-03  
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:

<input type="checkbox"/> entered in the National Register. <input type="checkbox"/> See continuation sheet.	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> determined eligible for the National Register <input type="checkbox"/> See continuation sheet.	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> determined not eligible for the National Register	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> removed from the National Register	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> other, (explain:)	_____	_____

Westleigh Farms  
Name of Property

Miami IN  
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property  
(Check as many boxes as apply)

Category of Property  
(Check only one box)

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

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

Number of Resources within Property  
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
8	1	buildings
0	0	sites
0	6	structures
1	0	objects
9	7	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

AGRICULTURE/SUBSIST Animal Facility

AGRICULTURE/SUBSIST Agricultural

AGRICULTURE/SUBSIST Storage

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC: Single Dwelling

AGRICULTURE/SUBSIST Animal Facility

AGRICULTURE/SUBSIST Agricultural Outbuilding

AGRICULTURE/SUBSIST Storage

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

19th & 20th c. REVIVALS: Classical Revival

MID-19th c.: Gothic Revival

OTHER: Bank Barn

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation CONCRETE

walls BRICK

WOOD: Weatherboard

roof ASPHALT

other STONE

WOOD

Narrative Description

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

Name of Property

County and State

**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.)

**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE \_\_\_\_\_

AGRICULTURE \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Period of Significance**

1913-1952 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Dates**

1913 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Person**

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

\_\_\_\_\_

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Architect/Builder**

Unknown \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**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 # \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary location of additional data:**

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

Name of repository: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Westleigh Farms  
Name of Property

Miami IN  
County and State

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 17 acres

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

1	16	583840	4509680	3	16	584220	4509500
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
2	16	5840000	4509810	4	16	584020	4509380

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 Andrew M. Halter, Intern; Suzanne Stanis, Director of Education  
organization Historic Landmarks Foundation of Indiana date 05-01-2002  
street & number 340 West Michigan Street telephone 317/ 639-4534  
city or town Indianapolis state IN zip code 46202

### 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 Alice F. Cole/ Joanne Cole Kubesch, Cole Limited Partnership #1  
street & number 2107 S. Frances Slocum Tr./ 1325 S. Frances telephone 765/ 473-5872; 765/  
city or town Peru state IN zip code 46970

**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.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 7 Page 1

### Westleigh Farms Miami County, Indiana

**Summary:** Westleigh Farms Historic District is located about four miles southeast of Peru (2107 South Frances Slocum Trail) in Miami County. This seventeen-acre property on the eastside of Frances Slocum Trail, atop a rise above the Mississinewa River, consists of eight contributing buildings, one contributing object, six non-contributing structures, and one non-contributing building. (Photo #1) The buildings represent the core of Westleigh Farms, where Angus cattle and grain are the principle farming activities. The centerpiece of the farmstead is an imposing gambrel roof transverse frame/basement barn and an impressive Classical Revival brick farmhouse, both built circa 1913. Other resources in the district include the following buildings: power house/garage, a calving barn/shop with gambrel roof, brick tenant's house, a summer kitchen, wood frame chicken house (non-contributing), wood frame machine and lubricant sheds; structures: four steel grain bins (non-contributing), a swimming pool (non-contributing), tennis court (non-contributing); and one object: wrought iron fence. With its wrought iron fence and sloping fields, the picturesque setting resembles a designed landscape. The properties are obviously linked by their proximity and related agricultural functions. The properties retain integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association. Consequently, the farmstead continues to reflect its period of development in the second decade of the twentieth century.

**Elaboration:** Westleigh Farms is readily visible from Frances Slocum Trail, from which it is accessible by two entrances: the first a gravel driveway which goes directly to the tenant's house and barns; the second through wrought iron gates, on a curving black top driveway leading to the main house. A swimming pool and tennis court are located southeast of the house. In addition to the maple, pine, and oak trees found within the district, James O. and Alice Cole added dogwood, West Virginia Cucumber trees and a cherry tree into the landscape. Keyed to the site map, the contributing properties are as follows:

A. Classical Revival Farmhouse:

Constructed circa 1913, the Porter-Cole House has an essentially rectangular, although asymmetrical, plan with a two-story east wing. This large imposing version of the Classical Revival style is quite rare in rural Miami County. (Photo #2) Built of brick with a concrete foundation, the home is topped by a side-gabled roof with asphalt shingles. Two hipped dormers emerge from the roof on the west (main) façade, flanking the gabled central pavilion. The west elevation is dominated by four Ionic columns, which support a full-height entry portico topped by a balustrade. The cornice line throughout the building has boxed eaves with a wide, plain frieze. The moderate overhang of the portico has dentils. The corners are ornamented with brick quoining. The house has four brick chimneys: one flush with the north facade gable, one flush with the south facade gable, one on the south intersecting gable, and one interior on the east facade.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number   7   Page   2  

### Westleigh Farms Miami County, Indiana

The entrance portico is accessed from a central flight of concrete steps centered in the west façade. The entrance is slightly off center to the left of a triple window unit. The entrance is rather simple and understated when the overall design is taken into consideration. The doorway is slightly recessed into a round arch with two small double-hung sash windows directly above. To the left of the entrance is a triple window unit with an oriel window unit directly above. Triple windows appear on this elevation, one per floor, on each side of the entrance portico. A double window is also located on the first floor near the southwest corner. All first floor windows have brick radiating voussoirs with limestone keystones and springers; the lintels are also limestone. Second floor windows have plain surrounds with limestone lintels.

The south facade exhibits three-over-three double-hung sash windows. All have plain flat wood surrounds with the exception of two small centrally located second floor windows that have limestone keystones. The main body of the house is delineated by brick quoins. An intersecting gabled wing joins the house flush with the wall of the main body of the house. The south facade of the wing has been altered on the first floor by the addition of a small picture window. Ghost lines also indicate the removal of a window to the east of the picture window. A brick flush chimney is also part of the south facade of the wing.

While the primary façade shows great symmetry, the east facade is largely asymmetrical. (Photo #3) The primary features of the east elevation are a projecting gabled two-story wing, and a flat-roofed two-story sunroom. The sunroom is encased with four-over-four double-hung windows on all sides. The sunroom is half the width of the first floor; the remaining open portion of the first floor roof acts as a balcony, looking out onto the pool and tennis courts. An iron railing encloses the balcony. To the south is a two-story projecting side-gabled wing that houses the food preparation areas on the first floor. A basement entrance also appears on the southeast facade. Ghost lines indicate the removal of a small window above the basement door. Another basement entrance is located north of the sun porch.

The primary feature of the north elevation is a one-story wing containing a screened-in porch and porte-cochere. (Photo #3) Brick piers support the porte-cochere. Inside the screened porch on the first floor of the north facade is a side entrance with a transom. Flanking the door are two three-over-three double-hung sash windows with flat brick headers and limestone sills. The second floor has two eight-over-one double-hung sash windows flanking three centrally located casement windows. The casements have limestone sills and keystones. The third floor features two six-over-one double-hung sash windows with flat brick headers and limestone sills.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 7 Page 3

### Westleigh Farms Miami County, Indiana

The interior of the house has been substantially maintained throughout eighty-nine years of ownership by the Porter and Cole families. The interior contains 9,000 square feet including a full basement. The ceiling height on all floors is twelve feet. The interior is finished in lath and plaster walls and heavy oak woodwork. (Photo #4) White oak is used extensively on all doors, door and ceiling moldings, baseboards, foyer ceiling beams, fireplace mantel, cabinetry, and hardwood floors throughout.

The interior of the house consists of seven bedrooms (five on the second floor, one on the third floor, and one in the basement), four bathrooms, one half bath, parlor, living room, dining room, kitchen, two butler's pantries, mud-room, sunroom and a screened-in porch. The third floor has one bedroom connected to a large open room, more than likely a ballroom, with built-in cabinetry surrounding the perimeter of the room and a storage room extending in the service area wing. The basement consists of five rooms: laundry, bathroom and a bedroom for staff, and two storage rooms.

The first floor is entered from the center foyer with oak beams running the length of the foyer's ceiling. (Photo #4) An open staircase, featuring an oak banister and newel posts rendered in a reserved fashion of the Classical Revival style, connects the first floor with the second floor foyer. A landing with a sitting area adjacent to the staircase is halfway between the two floors; it is met with another rise which leads to the second floor foyer. A service stairway leads from the hallway, adjoining the kitchen to second and third floors.

The east-west living room is located on the extreme north side of the house. (Photo #5) The fireplace surround mimics that of the door and window surrounds. All first floor rooms are trimmed with massive oak ceiling and baseboard moldings. The dining room is located in the southwest corner of the first floor. (Photo #6) It contains a fireplace directly opposite that of the living room, centered between two windows. The chandelier and sconces are from Cole Porter's Waldorf-Astoria apartment. Two butler's pantries are adjacent to the kitchen. Each contains built-in oak cabinetry and provides access to the dining room.

The second floor consists of five bedrooms, three bathrooms, and a sunroom. (Photo #7) All second floor rooms are trimmed with oak ceiling and baseboard moldings in addition to door and window surrounds, like those found on the first floor. The fireplaces are more reserved and rendered in a smaller scale than those found on the first floor. (Photo #8)

The third floor is accessed only by the rear stairway. A storage room is located in the southeast corner of the third floor directly across from a bedroom. The bedroom is connected by double doors to a large open room, more than likely a ballroom. The perimeter of the large open room is

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 7 Page 4

### Westleigh Farms Miami County, Indiana

surrounded by built-in cabinetry. A partition has been constructed in the center of the room that is approximately five and one half feet tall, half the wall height, creating a second space for a bedroom. The woodwork is similar to that of the second floor, although slightly restrained.

The basement is accessed from an enclosed stairway adjacent to the service stairway. It consists of five rooms, which include a laundry room, a bathroom and bedroom for staff, and two storage rooms.

A tennis court enclosed by chain link fence and swimming pool enclosed by a wooden privacy fence are adjacent to the southeast corner of the house.

B. Powerhouse/Garage: (Photo #9) Adjacent to the house is a powerhouse/garage. Rectangular in shape, this building is built of brick with a concrete foundation. A gabled jerkin-head roof shingled in slate tops the building. A shed dormer, consisting of two, four-light single-sash windows, emerges from the roof on the north and south elevations. Fenestration on the first floor consists of six-over-six double-hung windows. The west facade window has a brick segmental arch header; all other first floor windows have flat stone headers. The windows in the gable ends of the second floor are four-over-two double-hung sash. A brick chimney extends several feet beyond the roofline on the west elevation; a root cellar is attached to the east elevation. Pipes transport hot water to the house via a steam heating system located in the garage.

C. Westleigh Barn: (Photo #10) Located north of the house, sitting majestically atop a rise above the Mississinewa River, the barn is centered within the farm complex. Constructed circa 1913, this twentieth century transitional barn incorporates the elements of the transverse frame and basement barn plans. The barn dominates the landscape of the farm. Its size allows it to be visible for several miles in any direction. Typical of gambrel roof barns, which evolved at the first part of the twentieth century, the Westleigh barn's open span in the loft provided ample storage space for hay. The Westleigh barn rests on a natural stone foundation with concrete added in places for additional support. The foundation on the west elevation is concrete. The basically identical north and south elevations are accessed by earthen ramps and give the barn its transverse frame design. Large sliding doors on both elevations open onto the first floor. A hay hood in the gable end dominates the north façade. The west elevation is dominated by large black letters spelling WESTLEIGH FARMS.

The basement and first floor of the west elevation have seven, four-light, single-sash window units that tilt back into their casements at the top to provide ventilation while keeping the rain out. Originally, there were two sliding doors, one wood and the other a metal replacement, on each end of the west elevation. During the restoration/renovation during the fall of 2001, five doors built in



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 7 Page 5

### Westleigh Farms Miami County, Indiana

original style, with hand-wrought black findings, were added to permit all five bays to be used for implement storage. The only opening on the east elevation is a shed dormer originally used to transport hay into the loft.

The barn is topped by a gambrel roof covered in metal. A gabled monitor section rises from the center of the roof. Interior support timbers came from J. O. Cole's holdings in Omar, West Virginia, as well as from this farm. These vast timber resources made it possible for the barn to be of a heavy timber construction, but include more progressive elements such as the transverse frame design and the gambrel roof. The siding for the barn is sawn, likewise another progressive feature. The basement contains stalls for cows that provided milk for the farm. The bents on the first floor are composed of four vertical saw-cut posts that are pin-framed with mortise and tenon joints making three aisles. To allow more overhead room, the girt of the center aisle was elevated four feet during the 2001 renovation. Originally girts composed of 2 x 12 joist boards supported the hay mow floor with 1 x 4 boards making the haymow deck. To permit easier storage of modern equipment, the haymow was removed during the 2001 renovation. Rather than labor-intensive square bales of forage, the Westleigh cattle herd is now fed with 1,200 pound round bales.

D. Calving Barn/Shop: (Photo #11) Like the transverse frame barn the calving barn has a gambrel roof covered in metal. A shed addition has been placed on the west elevation to accommodate a workshop. This transverse frame building rests on a concrete foundation. Aside from the hay hood, the north elevation is dominated by two large sliding doors: one at ground level, the other directly above. The shop may be entered two ways: through either a pair of sliding doors that contain a four-light single-sash unit, one in each door; or to the right through a smaller, primary entrance. The west elevation has four, four-light single-sash units and a brick chimney that extends above the roofline from the coal stove used to warm a corner of the shop during winter projects.

The interior is constructed in the same manner as the larger barn. However the interior arrangement is different; consisting of an open bay setup, which can be broken into a series of six pens. Directly above is a large haymow. To better ventilate the haymow and prevent spontaneous combustion of freshly cut hay, Omar Cole designed the side walls to end about three feet below the overlapping eaves.

E. Tenant's House: (Photos #12-13) This circa 1870 one and one-half story brick gable-front cottage has a conservatively styled decorative vergeboard alluding to the Gothic Revival in its front gable. The building rests on a stone foundation. Attached to the south elevation is a one-story porch with a shed roof that is supported by tapered posts. This area has been enclosed as a screened-in porch. The gabled roof is covered with asphalt shingles.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 7 Page 6

### Westleigh Farms Miami County, Indiana

The main entrance is centered in the west façade. A gabled roof supported by knee-braces covers the concrete stoop. The fenestration consists of six-over-six double-hung sash windows, one to each side of the entrance; and a tall narrow, six over-six double-hung sash window, centered above the entrance in the gable. These windows have brick segmental arch headers, stone sills, and non-original metal awnings. The east elevation is similar to that of the west except for the windows. The only windows on the east are a pair of single double-hung sashes left of the entrance and a large double-hung sash window centered in the gable. The fenestration on the north elevation consists of two, six-over-six double-hung sash windows, one near each corner, and a smaller single double-hung window near the center.

Although the main entrance is on the west façade, the south elevation is more public, with a concrete sidewalk leading to the screened-in porch with a floor of the same material. The entrance is located in the southeast corner. Tapered posts rest on masonry piers separated by a balustrade, which is a variation of the stretcher bond.

To the east of the tenant house is a small frame building composed of car siding, known as the summer kitchen. A non-contributing frame chicken shed is located northeast of the house.

#### F. Miscellaneous Resources

Additional contributing farm buildings include a frame lubricant shed and a frame tractor shed. Four grain bins east of the tractor shed are non-contributing structures.

Westleigh Farms contains contributing resources, all dating from the second decade of the twentieth century, within their original setting. Because alterations have been few and relatively minor and the setting is largely unchanged, the farm possesses sufficient evocative power to suggest the period during which all of the properties were constructed.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number   8   Page   7  

### Westleigh Farms Miami County, Indiana

**Summary:** Westleigh Farms, located about four miles southeast of Peru, Miami County, is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A in the area of agriculture, and Criterion C in the area of architecture. The 17-acre tract contains an exceptional grouping of early twentieth century agricultural buildings, which constitute the nucleus of an 800-acre farm. The resources reflect the innovation, ingenuity, and taste of their progressive farmer-builder, J. O. Cole. While the centerpiece of the district is the imposing Classical Revival style farmhouse, Cole also built a transverse frame design barn with a gambrel roof, smaller barn with a gambrel roof, powerhouse/garage, and tenant's cottage. All remain intact and well preserved. Cole built the bank barn and farmhouse for his daughter, Kate Cole Porter, and her husband, Samuel Porter, a local pharmacist. The Classical Revival farmhouse, rendered in brick with limestone trim, displays such hallmark features of the style as a large portico supported by Ionic columns with a pediment and dentiled cornice; an entablature below the main roof featuring a wide frieze band wrapping into the gable; and boxed eaves and cornice returns in the gables.

Westleigh Farms is a representative example of a progressive farm from the first part of the twentieth century. After making his fortune during the California Gold Rush, James O. Cole returned to Peru, Indiana and purchased this property. Cole invested in rich farmland at the confluence of the Wabash and Mississinewa Rivers, some of which he purchased from the Miami Indians. He began construction on Westleigh Farms circa 1913 for his daughter Kate Cole Porter, mother of Broadway composer and songwriter Cole Porter. Porter used the farm as his home base during his visits back to Indiana. During a 1936 interview Kate Cole Porter said that Porter did some of his composing at Westleigh Farms "because it's so quiet." Porter wrote over 1500 songs for Broadway productions, movies, and television. Some of his songs include "Night and Day," "Anything Goes," and "Don't Fence Me In." After the death of Kate Cole Porter in 1952, Cole Porter asked his first cousin, Washington D. C. attorney James O. Cole, and his wife Alice, to take over Westleigh. Alice Cole continues to reside there today.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number   8   Page   8  

### Westleigh Farms Miami County, Indiana

**Narrative:** Albert A. Cole, great-grandfather of Cole Porter, came with his family from Connecticut to Peru, Indiana, in 1834. His son, James O. Cole, was six at the time. Albert Cole was a soldier under Andrew Jackson and an engineer on the Wabash-Erie Canal before he became a distinguished lawyer and judge and the co-owner of a dry-goods store, Cole and Bearss. J. O. attended the Peru Collegiate Institute and for a time worked as a clerk in a local store. In 1850 J. O. decided to seek his fortune in the California Gold Rush where he spent the next decade. He came to realize that, rather than panning for gold, he could make more money by setting up a general store, selling water, and constructing a flume and dam. In 1860, he returned to Indiana and married Rachel Henton. After the wedding they returned to California and settled in Brandy City. Two years later, Rachel Cole gave birth to a daughter, Katie. In 1865 Rachel gave birth again, this time to a son, Louis.<sup>1</sup> Cole amassed a considerable amount of money in California, which he invested not only in Indiana farmland but in acres of West Virginia forests as well. When the timber was exhausted, the land was found to have rich deposits of coal and oil.<sup>2</sup>

On April 9, 1884, Kate Cole married Samuel Fenwick Porter, at her parents' house. Sam Porter had migrated as a young man from Vevay, an Indiana town on the Ohio River.<sup>3</sup> Porter moved to Peru, Indiana, and went on to become a druggist, "his business profited and he expanded and later became the city's leading druggist, owning and operating three stores." Kate Cole Porter died at age ninety on August 2, 1952, at which time Cole Porter's first cousin, James O. Cole, and his wife Alice began their residency at Westleigh Farms.

Cole Porter was born on June 9, 1891 in Peru, Indiana. Porter began his education at the public schools in Peru, Indiana; and at the age of twelve attended Worcester Academy, a boarding school in Worcester, Massachusetts, followed by Yale University, New Haven, Connecticut. Over the years Cole made annual pilgrimages to Westleigh Farms at Christmastime.

---

<sup>1</sup> Louis Cole was educated in Peru schools and at Notre Dame University and assisted in the management of his father's immense lumber interests at Cincinnati. Eventually he married a Cincinnati girl, and the couple had four children: Louis, Omar, Kate, and Samuel. Source: William McBrien, *Cole Porter: A Biography*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1998.

<sup>2</sup> J. O. Cole died on February 3, 1923 and was referred to in the *Peru Republican* as "one of the wealthiest citizens of northern Indiana." Source: *Ibid.*, 25.

<sup>3</sup> Sam Porter's father and paternal grandfather were both farmers, his father having the distinction of serving in the Indiana House of Representatives, and his grandfather, of serving as a captain in the War of 1812. Source: *Ibid.*, 28.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 8 Page 9

### Westleigh Farms Miami County, Indiana

Cole Porter married Linda Lee Thomas, originally of Louisville, Kentucky, on December 12, 1919 in Paris, France.<sup>4</sup> Throughout the Porters' marriage they lived in Paris, New York City, Hollywood, and Buxton Hill and Williamstown, Massachusetts. Linda died at their apartment in the Waldorf Towers on May 20, 1954 and was buried in the Cole family plot at Mount Hope Cemetery in Peru, Indiana. Cole Porter died at St. John's Hospital in Santa Monica, California on October 15, 1964 from multiple health problems. His body was also returned to Peru, and placed with those of the rest of his family in Mount Hope Cemetery. Cole Porter single-handedly provided the words and music for thirty-three stage musicals, numerous films and a television production. Porter wrote over 1,000 songs, which include "Begin the Beguine," "Night and Day," "You Do Something to Me," "I Get a Kick Out of You," and such memorable shows as *Kiss Me Kate*, *Anything Goes*, and *Can-Can*.

**Architectural Significance:** According to the McAlesters, whose *Field Guide to American Houses* surveys the impact of different architectural styles across the nation, the Classical Revival style was dominant for domestic building throughout the country during the first half of the twentieth century. The residence at Westleigh Farms exhibits the identifying characteristics of a full-height portico with Ionic columns and a symmetrical main facade.

Facades dominated by classical columns were a central feature of the Greek Revival style of the early 1800s. By mid-century these styles had largely been replaced by designs based on medieval (Gothic Revival) or Renaissance (Italianate) prototypes. In 1893, however, there was a sudden rekindling of interest in Classical designs, sparked by Chicago's World's Columbian Exposition, whose main attraction was a great White City featuring monumental, classically inspired buildings. Thus arose the Neoclassical movement, which in its highly-decorated Beaux Arts version, became for many decades the favored style for large public buildings and inspired a renewed taste for column-dominated house facades that persists to this day.

Architects of the early classically inspired houses faced the complicated problem of constructing subtly shaped columns on site out of logs, brick, or stone. Most avoided the problem by using simple square columns or by opting for flat pilasters on the front wall. During the Classical Revival period, in contrast, columns of both wood and stone could be ordered in all sizes from the catalogs of large building-supply companies. These columns were topped by decorative capitals that were mass-produced in cast composite materials rather than painstakingly carved out of wood or stone.

The gable-front house, as demonstrated in the tenant's cottage, is rectangular in plan and most commonly one-and-one half stories in height. Gable-front houses developed into a popular house

---

<sup>4</sup> Prior to her marriage to Porter she was married to Edward R. Thomas, who owned, among other publications, the *New York Morning Telegraph*. Source: *Ibid.*, 56.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 8 Page 10

### Westleigh Farms Miami County, Indiana

type during the Greek Revival era when American buildings were designed to be reminiscent of Greek temples. Gable-front houses were found in rural areas as well as in towns. The type's suitability to narrow-fronted lots in expanding urban areas made it a popular house type, as did its adaptability to a variety of styles. While linear-plan houses have gable ends forming the sides rather than the front of the house, on a gable-front house, the principal façade is a gable end. The tenant's cottage takes its detail from the Gothic Revival style as demonstrated in the decorative vergeboard.

Farm buildings—their sizes, shapes and how they are arranged on the landscape—often were unique physical expressions of their owners' needs, desires and traditions. These needs, desires and traditions were often tempered by such things as available finances, the type of building materials available locally, and of course by climate and topography. In 1913 when James O. Cole began constructing the properties that today constitute Westleigh Farms, there were exactly 2,360 farms in Miami County.<sup>5</sup> Probably none of them came close to resembling Westleigh Farms with its distinctive combination of Classical Revival home, gambrel roof barns, powerhouse/garage, and tenant's cottage. The Westleigh Farms properties are clearly related by their architecture and dominate the landscape as the nucleus of a progressive farmstead in north central Indiana in the early twentieth century. A high level of craftsmanship was obviously involved in their construction. In addition, the properties are well-preserved and retain integrity. As a group, they are significant under Criterion A for their agricultural contributions, and Criterion C in the area of architecture.

In the United States, farming at the subsistence level required few if any outbuildings. In general, the number of outbuildings increased but remained small and specialized as farming evolved from subsistence into a more market-oriented economy. These early, specialized outbuildings included such things as hay barns, corncribs, livestock shelters and storage sheds and over time were likely to grow to resemble "a small crowded village." By the last half of the nineteenth century, however, many farmers were constructing relatively large, multipurpose barns as advocated by writers like Byron D. Halsted in his 1881 *Barns, Sheds and Outbuildings*: "The old custom was to build small barns, to add others on three sides of a yard, perhaps of several yards, and to construct sheds, pigpens, corn houses, and such minor structures as might seem desirable. Compared with a well arranged barn, a group of small buildings is inconvenient and extremely expensive to keep in good repair."<sup>6</sup>

In general, these larger barns were of two basic types: general purpose or feeder barns, and two-story basement or dairy barns. In the first type, the barn was used for the storage of crops and to

---

<sup>5</sup> *Thirteenth Census of the United States*. Volumes IV and V, Agriculture Part I and II, Washington D.C.: U.S. Census Office, 1912, 479.

<sup>6</sup> Byron D. Halsted, editor, *Barns Plans and Outbuildings*, New York: Orange Judd Company, 1881; reprinted as *Barns, Sheds and Outbuildings*, Brattleboro, Vermont: The Stephen Greene Press, 1977, 13.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 8 Page 11

### Westleigh Farms Miami County, Indiana

house farm vehicles and miscellaneous items. In the second type, cattle were typically housed in the basement with hay stored upstairs. In a variation of the two-story basement barn type, exemplified by the Westleigh Barn, an earthen ramp is created so that both levels can be entered from grade.<sup>7</sup> The exposed basement permitted the storage of livestock, while the upper levels created space for equipment and hay. It may be surmised that due to the vast lumber holdings of the Cole family, the barn demonstrates traditional heavy timber construction with the more modern elements of a gambrel roof and transverse frame design.

As farms grew in size and more hay was needed for greater numbers of livestock, one way to increase the loft capacity was to substitute a gambrel roof, distinguished by two slopes—one gentle, one steep. The word gambrel comes from a word for the hock or hind leg of a horse, which is roughly the same shape as half the profile of the roof. Rare on barns before the middle of the nineteenth century, gambrel roofs became extremely popular after agricultural journals and books on progressive farming endorsed them.

**Agricultural Significance:** As livestock breeding expanded rapidly in Indiana during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, crop rotation and other modern agricultural techniques were widely promoted. As progressive farmers during the years when agriculture became increasingly scientific, the Porters were clearly receptive to the improved techniques recommended by the U. S. Department of Agriculture and touted in farm journals and handbooks. Westleigh Farms itself is evidence of the owner's receptiveness to modern agriculture methods. The buildings are well sited on the landscape, taking advantage of the contours; their spatial relationships to one another seem well balanced and anything but random. The buildings are neat, attractive and, in the case of the bank barn, striking as well.

At the time of the 1910 census there were no paved roads in Miami County but there was a good road system. The location of Westleigh Farms along a public road just four miles from the markets of Peru, the county seat, was ideal for the practice of agriculture as a business. The principal crops were corn, wheat, oats, and grasses of various kinds for hay and pasturing.<sup>8</sup> Corn was the most important crop in all parts of the county. Peru was the principal market for all of Miami County's surplus farm products. The total population of the county in 1910 was 29,350.<sup>9</sup>

---

<sup>7</sup> Michael J. Auer, "The Preservation of Historic Barns," Preservation Brief 20, Washington D.C.: U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Preservation Assistance Division, 1989, 2-3.

<sup>8</sup> *Thirteenth Census of the United States*. Volumes IV and V, Agriculture Part I and II, Washington D.C.: U.S. Census Office, 1912, 497.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, 479.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number   8   Page  12 

### **Westleigh Farms Miami County, Indiana**

In 1910, the typical farm in Miami County was well-improved and well-equipped. Woven wire fences and cross fences were common. The farmhouses were modern with surrounding lawns and shade trees. There was usually a home orchard and a well-kept garden. Other improvements typically included one or more large, neatly-painted barns, hog houses, poultry houses, a garage and other buildings. Farms ranged in size from a few acres to several hundred acres but there were few larger farms. The most common size for a farm in Miami County was 97 acres. At 800 acres, Westleigh Farms was larger than average for the county.<sup>10</sup>

Architecturally, Westleigh Farms stands as an excellent example of an early twentieth century farmstead in its original setting. Within the seventeen acre nucleus encompassed by the National Register nomination boundaries, the Classical Revival farmhouse, gambrel roof transverse frame barn, gambrel roof barn, powerhouse/garage, and tenant's cottage are similarly interesting, unique properties reflecting the times and circumstances of their original construction.

---

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., 479.



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 9 Page 13

**Westleigh Farms  
Miami County, Indiana**

### **Bibliography**

- Arthur, Eric and Dudley White. *The Barn: A Vanishing Landmark in North America*. New York: Dover Publications Inc., 1988.
- Grafton, David. *Red, Hot & Rich: An Oral History of Cole Porter*. New York: Stein and Day Publishers, Inc., 1987.
- Halsted, Byron D. *Barns, Sheds and Outbuildings*. Brattleboro, Vermont: The Stephen Greene Press, 1977.
- McAlester, Lee and Virginia. *A Field Guide to American Houses*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1986.
- McBrien, William. *Cole Porter: A Biography*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1998.
- Noble, Allen G. and Richard K. Cleek. *The Old Barn Book*. New Brunswick, New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 1997.
- Noble, Allen G. *Wood, Brick and Stone: Volume Two: Barns and Farm Structures*. Amherst, Massachusetts: University of Massachusetts Press, 1984.
- Noble, Allen G. and Hubert G. H. Wihelm. *Barns of the Midwest*. Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, 1995.
- Thirteenth Census of the United States*. Volumes IV & V, Agriculture, Parts I & II. Washington: U. S. Census Office, 1911.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number   10   Page   14  

### Westleigh Farms Miami County, Indiana

**Verbal Boundary Description:** Beginning at a point near the junction of the southeast edge of the paved drive for 2107 South Frances Slocum Trail and the northeast edge of Frances Slocum Trail (roadway); said point being 3 feet outside the iron fence, commencing south 600 feet along wrought-iron fence to an intersection of said fence and a woven wire fence. From this point commencing eastward 395 feet along the woven wire fence to another intersection with a woven wire fence. Commencing northward 690 feet at this intersection, along a woven wire fence, to an intersection with an east-west woven wire fence. Continuing eastward 370 feet, past the barn and along said fence to the next intersection of a north-south woven wire fence. Continuing northward 153 feet along said fence to a point of intersection with an east-west woven wire fence. At this point commence westward 158 feet along said fence to the next intersection with a north-south woven wire fence; commencing north along said fence 385 feet to the next intersection of an east-west fence. At point of said fence commence west and continue 610 feet to an end post; at said post continuing south 605 feet along right-of-way to point of beginning.

**Boundary Justification:** The boundary includes all of the extant properties constructed by the Porter family dating from the second decade of the twentieth century. Because alterations have been few and relatively minor and the setting largely unchanged, the district possesses sufficient integrity to suggest the period during which all of the properties were constructed. The fences specified in the boundary description divide the pasture areas from those occupied by humans.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number Photos Page 15

**Westleigh Farms  
Miami County, Indiana**

### Photographs

The following information is the same for all photographs:

Westleigh Farms  
2107 South Frances Slocum Trail  
Peru, Miami County, Indiana  
Unknown #1; Marsh Davis #2-13  
October 2001  
Historic Landmarks Foundation of Indiana, Indianapolis, Indiana.

### List of photographs

- Photo 1. Aerial view of Westleigh farms showing the relationship of the buildings.
- Photo 2. West (main) elevation of the Samuel and Kate Cole Porter home, facing northeast.
- Photo 3. North and east elevations of the Samuel and Kate Cole Porter home, facing southwest.
- Photo 4. Porter home entrance hall view, facing northeast.
- Photo 5. Porter home living room view, facing northwest.
- Photo 6. Porter home dining room view, facing south.
- Photo 7. Porter home landing and second floor foyer view, facing southeast.
- Photo 8. The Cole Porter bedroom, facing southeast.
- Photo 9. South and east elevations of the powerhouse/garage, facing northwest.
- Photo 10. West elevation of the Westleigh Barn, facing east.
- Photo 11. North and west elevations of the calving barn/shop, facing southeast.
- Photo 12. West (main) and south elevations of the tenant's house, facing northeast.
- Photo 13. South and east elevation of the tenant's house, facing northwest.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

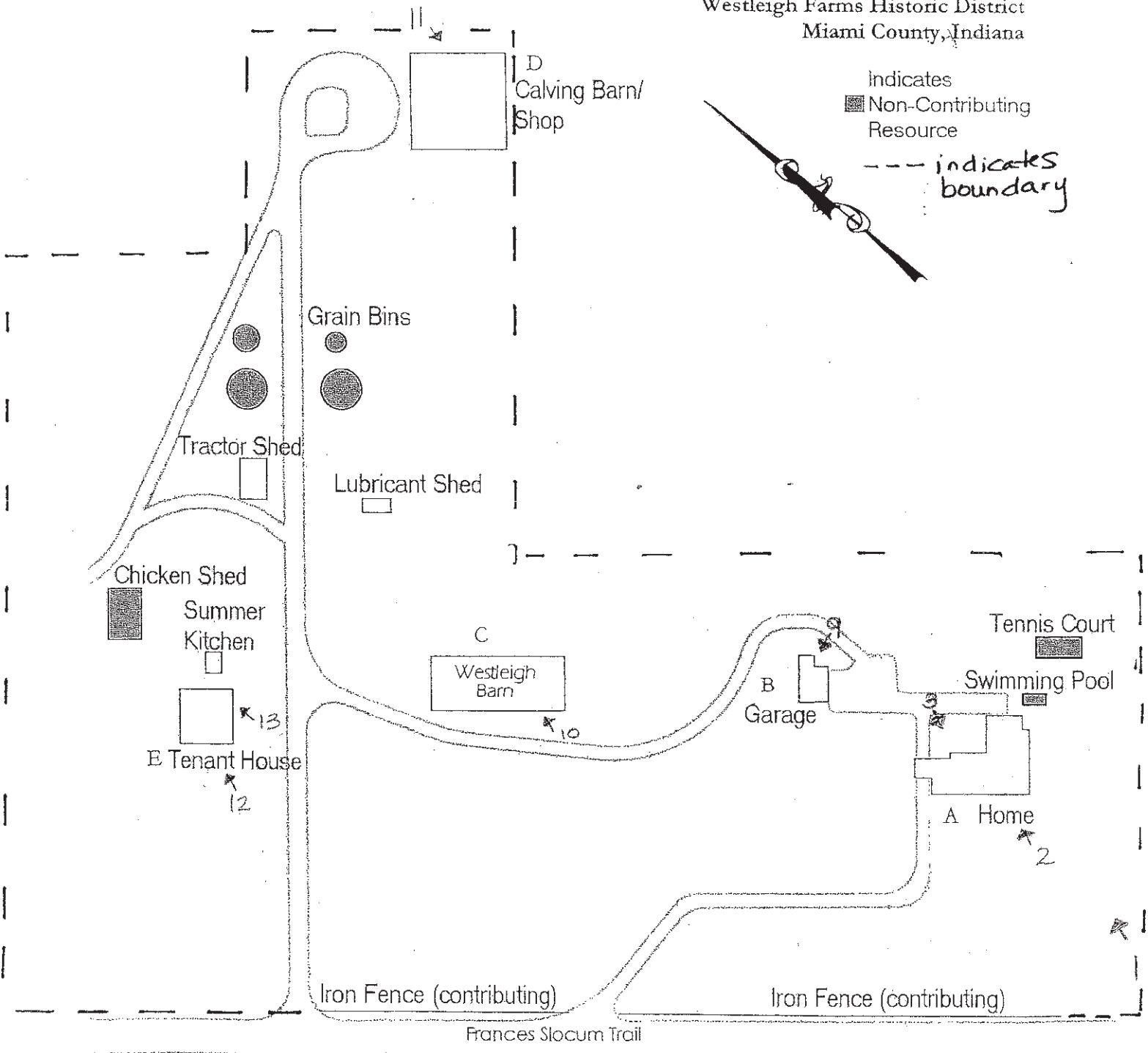
# NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number Maps Page 16

Westleigh Farms Historic District  
Miami County, Indiana

Indicates  
■ Non-Contributing  
Resource

--- indicates  
boundary



# WESTLEIGH FARMS

## Property Owner

Note – property consists of 17 acres of land consisting of main house with 6 acres of land and 11 acres of land with tenant house and 4 farm buildings.

A) Owner of 6 acres and main house:

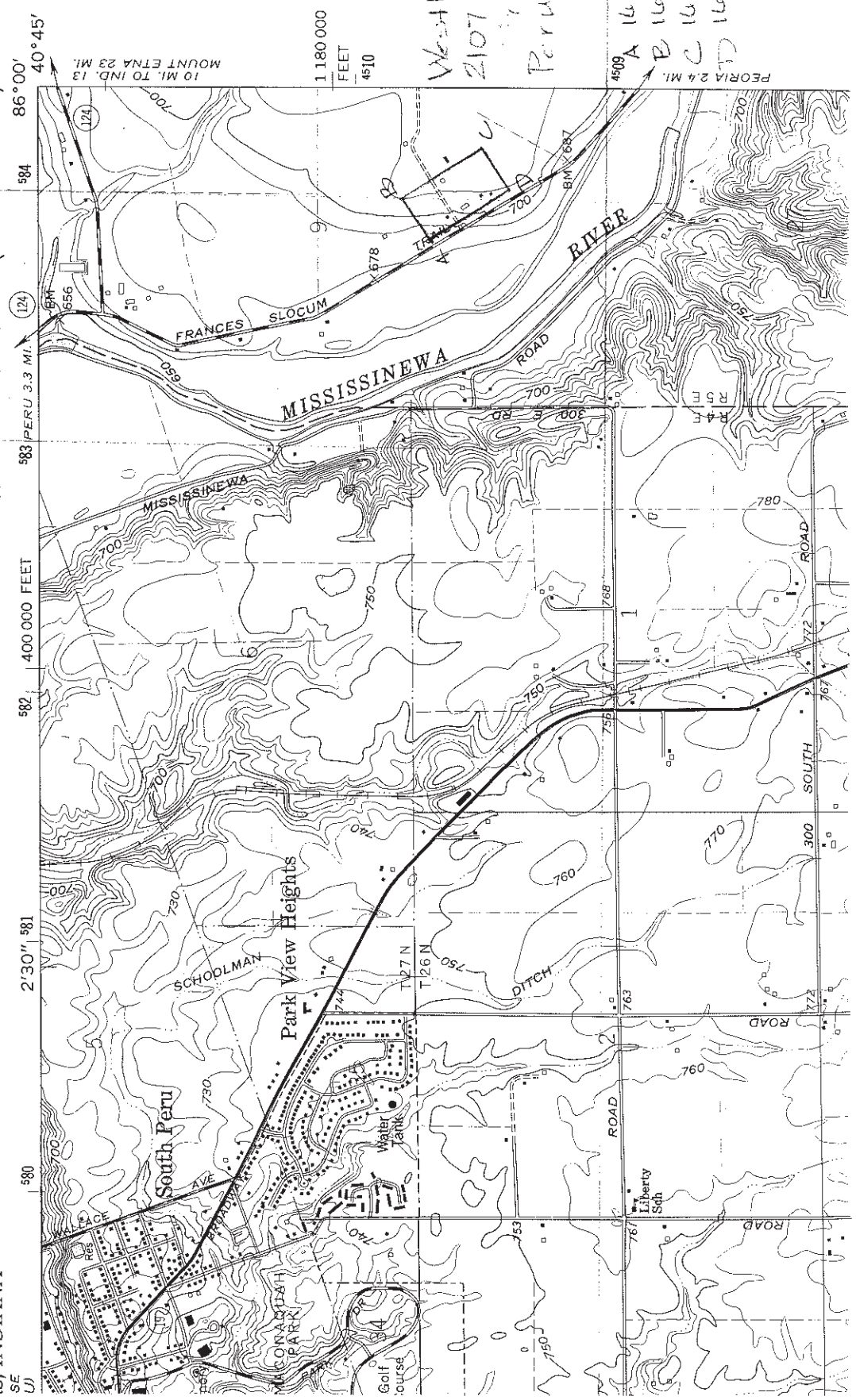
Name: Alice F. Cole  
Street: 2107 South Frances Slocum Trail  
City: Peru  
State: Indiana  
Zip Code: 46970  
Phone: (765) 473-5872

B) Owner of 11 acres with tenant house and 4 farm buildings:

Name: Joanne Cole Kubesch – Partner  
Organization: Cole Limited Partnership #1  
Street: 1325 South Frances Slocum Trail  
City: Peru  
State: Indiana  
Zip Code: 46970  
Phone: (765) 473-6584

BUNKER HILL QUADRANGLE  
 INDIANA—MIAMI CO.  
 7.5 MINUTE SERIES (TOPOGRAPHIC)

INDIANA  
 NATURAL RESOURCES  
 DEPARTMENT  
 COLUMBUS, INDIANA



Wattleigh Farms  
 2107 Frances Slocum  
 Road  
 Peru, IN

A	16	582840	4509680
B	16	584000	4509810
C	16	584220	4509500
D	16	584420	4509280

3885 IN SW (RICHMOND)  
 10 MI. TO IND. 13  
 MOUNT ETNA 23 MI.