

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form

See instructions in How to Complete National Register Forms  
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic William N. Thompson Residence

and/or common Old Governor's Mansion

2. Location

street & number 4343 North Meridian Street N/A not for publication

city, town Indianapolis N/A vicinity of congressional district

state Indiana code 018 county Marion code 097

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
	N/A	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name John C. Klein

street & number 4343 North Meridian Street

city, town Indianapolis N/A vicinity of state Indiana

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Marion County Recorder

street & number City-County Building

city, town Indianapolis state Indiana

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title N/A has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records N/A

city, town state

## 7. Description

**Condition**  
 excellent     deteriorated     unaltered     original site  
 good     ruins     altered     moved    date N/A  
 fair     unexposed

### Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The William N. Thompson residence, located in the 4300 block of North Meridian Street, is situated in what has traditionally been regarded as one of the most prestigious residential areas in Indianapolis. The house, built on a two acre site, was constructed in the Georgian Revival style in 1920. Basically rectangular in plan, the house consists of a large, two-story central block with a hipped slate roof, with small, one-story wings at the north and south ends. The entire structure is built of buff colored brick over wood stud walls.

The main (west) facade of the building is symmetrical, consisting of five bays with the middle bay containing the main entry. A large porch runs across this entire facade, with a heavy carved limestone balustrade and limestone steps. The main entry boasts an elliptical portico with classical detail, and has sidelights and a transom surrounding the large, six panel door. The remaining four bays on the ground floor level contain large windows, each surmounted by an arched fan-light. On the second story of this facade, each bay contains a window with its own private wrought iron balcony. There are also three large dormers in the attic area of this facade, and two chimneys at the southern end of the building. The small, one story wing at the north end of the house contains the breakfast room, while the south wing contains a solarium. Both of these wings (like the porte cochere on the east facade) have flat roofs with wrought iron railings.

Just inside the main entry is a large (15' x 32') formal entry hall. A central staircase from this room leads to a landing, which contains a door giving access to the deck area above the porte cochere. Twin flights of stairs continue up from this landing to the second floor. The highlight of the second floor is the master bathroom, which measures 15' x 5'. The ceiling of this room consists of a large, arched stained glass window, illuminated by a skylight. The use of stained glass and Rockwood tile in three of the bathrooms of this house are a result of a remodeling done by the second owner in 1927.

The property is separated from Meridian Street, one of the city's busiest thoroughfares, by a brick and wrought iron fence some 300 feet long. At either end of this fence is a gate and driveway leading to the main entry, and to the porte cochere at the rear of the building. Decorative elements on the lawn in front of the house include shade trees, ornamental trees and shrubs, and a circular gravel garden on an axis with the main entry of the house. To the east (rear) of the house is a four car garage with servants' quarters. This structure is also of buff colored brick with a hipped slate roof.

The symmetrical placement of the gates, driveways, and gravel garden, reflecting the symmetry of the house itself, gives the west facade of the house a formal air which lent itself well to the structure's later use as a Governor's Mansion.

## 8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> industry	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates 1920

Builder/Architect Frank B. Hunter

### Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The William N. Thompson residence is significant because of the industrial and political prominence of its residents. Built in 1920 for the president of the Stutz Motor Car Company, the house was later sold to James Henry Trimble, an oil company executive. In 1945 Trimble's widow sold the property to the State of Indiana, which used it as the Governor's Mansion from 1945 to 1970. As such it was the home of seven Indiana governors, and was frequently the scene of receptions and dinners for dignitaries visiting the state.

The house was designed by architect Frank Baldwin Hunter for William N. Thompson in 1920. Thompson had worked at the G. F. Whitmer Lumber Company and the American National Bank before joining his father's firm, the Central Chair Company of Indianapolis. He spent fourteen years as secretary/treasurer of this firm and its successor, the Indianapolis Chair and Furniture Company. In 1914 he left this position to enter the automobile industry, joining the Stutz Motor Car Company as a purchasing agent. He was later sales manager for this firm, and finally became president and general manager in 1919. He also was an organizer and director of the Frontenac Motor Company. In 1927 Thompson sold the house to James H. Trimble and moved to Van Nuys, California, where he died in 1952.

James Henry Trimble, the second owner of the house, was born in Iowa in 1867. He had been quite successful in the lumber industry in Iowa and Illinois, but sold all of these interests before moving to Indianapolis in 1910. He founded the Western Oil Reserve Company in 1911 and was also president of the Columbus Oil Company of Columbus, Ohio, a large gasoline retailing firm. Trimble lived in the house until his death in 1937. In 1945 his widow sold the property to the State of Indiana.

The State of Indiana used the residence as a Governor's Mansion from 1945 to 1970. During this period, seven governors lived in the home: Ralph F. Gates; Henry F. Schricker; George Craig; Harold W. Handley; Matthew E. Welsh; Roger D. Branigin, and Edgar D. Whitcomb.

As the residence of Indiana's first family for twenty-five years, the house was elevated to the status of a well-recognized landmark, and remains so today on this busy thoroughfare.

AGENCE NOT VERIFIED  
UTM NOT VERIFIED

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

Brown, Paul Donald, editor. Indianapolis Men of Affairs. Indianapolis: American Biographical Society, 1923.  
Indiana Biographical Service, a collection of newspapers clippings. Indianapolis: Indiana State Library

See continuation sheet

# 10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property 2.5 Acres

Quadrangle name Indianapolis West

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

### UMT References

A 

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

B 

Zone			Easting				Northing							

C 

Zone			Easting				Northing							

D 

Zone			Easting				Northing							

E 

Zone			Easting				Northing							

F 

Zone			Easting				Northing							

G 

Zone			Easting				Northing							

H 

Zone			Easting				Northing							

### Verbal boundary description and justification

See attached continuation sheet

### List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state N/A code county code

state code county code

# 11. Form Prepared By

name/title John C. Klein

organization

date June 8, 1980

street & number 4343 North Meridian Street

telephone 283-1835

city or town Indianapolis

state Indiana 46205

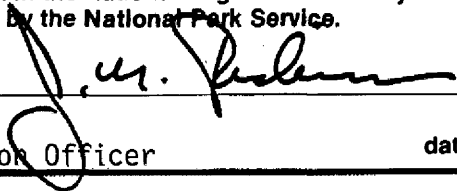
# 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national  state  local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature



title Indiana State Historic Preservation Officer

date 4-19-82

For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register  
Entered in the National Register

for  Keeper of the National Register

date 6/1/82

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

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

**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**



Continuation sheet Wm. N. Thompson Resident

Item number 9

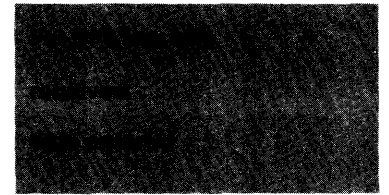
Page 1

Hubbard, Kin, editor. A Book of Indiana. Indianapolis: Indiana Biographical Association. 1929

Rabb, Kate Milner, and William Herschell, editors. A History of Marion County. Dayton: Historical Publishing Company. 1924.

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Wm. N. Thompson Residence

Continuation sheet Old Governor's Mansion

Item number 10

Page 2

A strip of land on the west side of Lot 16 in William Hannaman's addition to the City of Indianapolis in the northwest quarter of Section 13, Township 16 North, Range 3 East, as per Plat Book Three, page 187, in the office of the Recorder of Marion County, Indiana, and more particularly described as follows:

Beginning at the northwest corner of the brick fence at 4343 North Meridian Street; running thence east along the property line to the east edge of said property (approximately 298'); thence south parallel with the east line of Meridian Street a distance of 300' to the southeast corner of said property; thence west approximately 298' to the southwest corner of the brick fence; thence north along the west edge of the brick fence approximately 300' to the place of beginning.