

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

For NPS use only

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

received FEB 23 1984

date entered

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

1. Name

historic Cotton-Ropkey House

and/or common Ropkey House

2. Location

street & number 6360 West 79th Street

N/A not for publication

city, town Indianapolis

N/A vicinity of

state Indiana

code

018

county

Marion

code

097

3. Classification

Category

district
 building(s)
 structure
 site
 object

Ownership

public
 private
 both
Public Acquisition
 in process
 being considered
N/A

Status

occupied
 unoccupied
 work in progress
Accessible
 yes: restricted
 yes: unrestricted
 no

Present Use

agriculture
 commercial
 educational
 entertainment
 government
 industrial
 military
 museum
 park
 private residence
 religious
 scientific
 transportation
 other:

4. Owner of Property

name Mr. and Mrs. F. Noble Ropkey

street & number 6360 W. 79th Street

city, town Indianapolis

N/A vicinity of

state Indiana 46278

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Marion County Recorder's Office

street & number City-County Building

city, town Indianapolis

state Indiana

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

Survey report for
title Indianapolis/Marion County

has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date September 21, 1977

federal state county local

depository for survey records Indianapolis Historic Preservation Commission

city, town Indianapolis

state Indiana

7. Description

Condition

excellent
 good
 fair

deteriorated
 ruins
 unexposed

Check one

unaltered
 altered

Check one

original site
 moved date _____

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Cotton-Ropkey House is located on the north side of West 79th Street in a semi-rural area of northwest Marion County. Access to the house and grounds is by way of a private drive which runs north from 79th Street (Photo 5) past the west side of the house to a north-facing garage attached to the northwest corner of the building (Photo 6). The principal orientation of the house is to the south.

The style of the house is transitional, with characteristics of the Greek Revival and Italianate styles. A two-story building of timber frame construction, the house has clapboard siding and a hip roof. The structure is three bays (principal facade) by four bays wide. The main part of the house is cube-like in form. The principal facade, which faces south, is unaltered except for the removal of a one-story, one-bay portico shown in an 1892 photograph (Photo 1). There are additions to the house which include an attached garage on the west (Photo 2), and a screened porch and wing on the east side of the building (Photo 7). The garage replaced a spring house on the same location in 1937. The garage originally featured a full length, screened porch (Photo 4) which was enclosed in 1947 (Photo 8). The screened porch on the east side of the house was added around 1958 and was enclosed in 1980 (Photo 9).

Windows in the main part of the house are double-hung with six lights in each sash (Photo 4). Many of the original blown-glass panes remain. First story windows have pedimented heads. Second story windows have flat heads which abut the frieze of the house. Each window has a pair of louvered shutters hung on cast hinges. The main entrance is located on the east bay of the principal facade. On each side of the door is a side-light and above it, a rectangular transom (Photo 8). The door opening is flanked by a pair of pilasters which support an entablature. There is a similar entrance, without side-lights, in the north bay of the west side (Photo 4).

The chimney is of brick laid in common bond and is plain except for a double row of projecting bricks near the top. It protrudes from the west hip of the roof next to the ridge. There is an early weather vane/lightning rod marked "Electra" at the top of the house.

Surrounding the main part of the building is a plain boxed cornice supported by paired scroll brackets. The number of paired brackets was reduced in 1937 (Photos 1 and 5) during the building's first remodeling by the current owner. The dentils which further articulated the cornice were removed at the same time.

There are nine rooms in the original section of the house. Two wings have been added; the west wing (containing the garage) in 1937, and the east wing in 1980, making a total of 13 rooms at present. First-story floors are of random width ash and oak. Second-story floors are of poplar. The walls have heavy hair plaster which is painted.

Access to the second floor is by way of a formal winding stairway (Photo 10) located along the east and north walls of the living room. The stairway features ash stair treads, and a turned newel post and spindles which support a beautiful cherry railing. Midway between the first and second floors, the stairway turns left and is cantilevered out from the wall, creating a light and airy effect (Photo 11).

The only other building currently on the site is a wood barn located north of the house (Photo 3). The barn was built in 1927 to replace an older barn which occupied the same site.

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600–1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/ humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900–	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		

Specific dates ca. 1850 **Builder/Architect** Unknown

Statement of Significance (~~in one paragraph~~)

The Cotton-Ropkey House is historically significant because of its association with 19th-century farmer Isaac Cotton, who was prominent in Pike Township, Marion County, and Indiana politics. It is also significant as a good example of a transitional house with elements of both the Greek Revival and Italianate styles, and of a Marion County farmhouse of the mid-19th century.

John Cotton, a prosperous farmer, bought the property where the house is located in 1848 and probably built the farmhouse soon afterward. His son, Isaac, lived in the house from 1856 to 1890. An early graduate of the Marion County Seminary, Isaac taught school during the winter and farmed during the summer. He raised fine-wool sheep and bees, serving for a time as president of the Indiana Bee-Keepers' Association. He was also a member of the Swine-Breeders' and Wool-Growers' Associations of Indiana.

Politically, Isaac Cotton was long active, serving as Pike Township Clerk and tax assessor for the three northernmost townships in Marion County. Isaac also served as a delegate to the Indiana State Legislature in 1858, 1859, and 1880. During the Civil War, he acted as the township's enrolling commissioner for the first draft. He later received a commission as a lieutenant in the Indiana Legion, a local militia organized primarily to prevent disorder, repel invaders, and enforce the draft.

Isaac lived in the house until he and his wife sold it in 1890 to their son, Henry. Two years later, it passed out of the family's hands and had several owners until 1937, when it was purchased by the Ropkeys.

9. Major Bibliographical References

See Continuation Sheet

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property Approximately 5.7 acres

Quadrangle name Zionsville

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References

A

1	6	5	6	2	1	3	0	4	4	1	6	2	9	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 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 Mr. and Mrs. F. Noble Ropkey

organization N/A date September 7, 1978

street & number 6360 W. 79th Street telephone 317/632-5446

city or town Indianapolis state Indiana 46278

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 J. M. Redman

title Indiana State Historic Preservation Officer date February 15, 1984

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

J. Melores Byan
Keeper of the National Register

Entered in the National Register date 3/22/84

Attest: _____ date _____

Chief of Registration

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Continuation sheet Cotton-Ropkey House

Item number 9

Page 1

Biographical Sketches of Members of the Indiana Legislature, Elected November 12, 1880,
Indianapolis, O. N. Hasselman, 1880.

Century Old Houses (pamphlet), Pike Township Historical Society, n.d.

Indiana Architectural Foundation, Indianapolis Architecture, Indianapolis: Hilltop
Press, 1975.

Sulgrove, B. P. History of Indianapolis and Marion County, Indiana. Philadelphia:
L. H. Everts & Company, 1884.

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Continuation sheet Cotton-Ropkey House

Item number 10

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Part of the East Half of the Southwest Quarter Section 23, Township 17 North, Range 2 East in Marion County, Indiana, more particularly described as follows:

Commencing at the Southwest corner of said Half Quarter Section; thence North 00 degrees 02 minutes 16 seconds East along the West line of said Half Quarter Section 35.01 feet; thence North 83 degrees 25 minutes 05 seconds East along the North line of land described in Deed to the State of Indiana, recorded as Instrument #67-33585 in the Office of the Recorder of Marion County, Indiana 90.00 feet to the POINT OF BEGINNING; thence North 00 degrees 02 minutes 16 seconds East parallel to the said West line 40.00 feet; thence South 83 degrees 25 minutes 05 seconds West 39.66 feet; thence North 00 degrees 02 minutes 16 seconds East parallel to the said West line 418.79 feet; thence North 88 degrees 39 minutes 33 seconds East parallel to the South line of said Half Quarter Section 579.92 feet; thence South 00 degrees 00 minutes 52 seconds West 152.00 feet; thence South 00 degrees 04 minutes 30 seconds West 244.30 feet to the said North line; (the next four courses being along said North line); thence South 86 degrees 22 minutes 16 seconds West 177.09 feet; thence South 01 degrees 20 minutes 37 seconds East 45.00 feet; thence South 88 degrees 39 minutes 33 seconds West parallel to the said South line 291.00 feet; thence South 83 degrees 25 minutes 05 seconds West 74.20 feet to the POINT OF BEGINNING, containing 5.748 acres, more or less.