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NATIONAL REGISTER

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 Colter, Ben, Polygonal Barn

other names/site number Reinhart Barn

2. Location

street & number .6 mi S of Piqua Road on eastside of IN 101  N/A  not for publication

city or town Pleasant Mills  vicinity

state Indiana code IN county Adams code 001 zip code 46733

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 36 CFR 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.)

*Robert L. Roberts*

2/13/93

Signature of certifying official/Title

Date

Indiana Department of Natural Resources

State of 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.
- determined eligible for the National Register  See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register.
- removed from the National Register.
- other, (explain:)

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

*Patricia Andrews*

4/2/93

Colter, Ben, Polygonal Barn  
Name of Property

Adams Co., IN  
County and State

**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(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

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

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

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

Round and Polygonal Barns of Indiana

**Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register**

0

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

AGRICULTURE/animal facility

AGRICULTURE/storage

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Current Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

AGRICULTURE/storage

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

OTHER/six-sided barn

**Materials**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation CONCRETE

walls WOOD

roof ASPHALT

other \_\_\_\_\_

**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.

**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions)

AGRICULTURE

ARCHITECTURE

**Period of Significance**

c.1907-1936

**Significant Dates**

c.1907

**Significant Person**

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

**Cultural Affiliation**

**Architect/Builder**

Colter, Ben

**Narrative Statement of Significance**

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

**9. Major Bibliographical 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:

Historic Landmarks Foundation of Indiana

Colter, Ben, Polygonal Barn  
Name of Property

Adams Co., IN  
County and State

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property Less than 1 acre

### UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1 

1	6	6	8	2	1	5	0	4	5	1	8	3	8	0
Zone	Easting				Northing									

2 

Zone	Easting				Northing									

3 

Zone	Easting				Northing									

4 

Zone	Easting				Northing									

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 Jerry McMahan

organization Historic Landmarks Foundation of IN date November 11, 1991

street & number 340 W. Michigan St. 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 Ray and Nancy Reinhart

street & number Rt. 7, Box 162 telephone \_\_\_\_\_

city or town Decatur state IN zip code 46733

**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 Colter Polygonal Barn  
Adams Co., IN

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The Ben Colter (Reinhart) six-sided barn is located in rural Adams County, near Pleasant Mills, Indiana, just off of SR 101 and is surrounded by large, mature trees and an open field to the east. Built c.1907 by Ben Colter, the barn is reached via a short gravel drive off SR 101 and the site is completed by a garage and house, both located south of the barn and considered non-contributing structures. This simple six-sided building retains integrity of location, design, setting, workmanship, feeling and association. Integrity of materials has been compromised by replacement of original wood shingle roof with asphalt shingles.

The six-sided, two-storied barn with the long axis oriented north/south, is topped by a sectional cone roof and a six-sided silo that penetrates the roof and becomes a cupola. The silo/cupola is then capped by a sectional cone roof. There is a drive-through shed attached to the south side of the barn, which at first glance, gives the barn a rectangular look. This shed is actually composed of two parts with the eastern or rear portion sloping from the main roof and the western half reaching only the story and one-half height. Both shed roof sections slope gradually until approximately five feet from the south edge of the barn when the slopes are dramatically increased. Apparently, the sheds were added at the same time, sometime around 1915 and were constructed as hog shelters. The original balloon frame construction is anchored by poured concrete pilings and the floor is dirt.

The roof surfaces of the cupola/silo, main barn and shed are covered in asphalt shingles that replace the original wood shingle roof. There is a slight overhang to the eaves which reveal the exposed rafters of the roofing system. The wall surfaces are covered in the original vertical wood siding that is in good condition.

The main facade or west elevation (Photo 1) is composed of a large central doorway on the west face of the hexagon and a smaller doorway centered on the attached shed. It should be noted that the juncture of the hexagonal barn and the attached shed is very smooth and not readily apparent. Both of these openings are covered with large sliding doors mounted on overhead tracks, with the doors themselves being composed of vertical wood planks that match the barn's walls.

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service****National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 7 Page 2 Colter Polygonal Barn  
Adams Co., IN

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Continuing to the south facade, there is a small sliding door on the west end of this elevation, again composed of the typical vertical wood siding. There are no other openings on the south facade. The east elevation is made up of the shed and the east side of the hexagon, which is similar to the west facade. Like the west, the juncture of hexagon and shed is a smooth line but unlike the west, the doorway through the shed becomes a large, uncovered opening. The west side of the hexagon contains one small, human-sized opening centered on the wall surface. There is infill siding around this doorway, apparently repair work to replace damaged siding.

The northeast side of the hexagon (Photo 2) contains another large opening that is off-center to the southeast. This opening, extending over one story in height, probably was covered by a sliding door but the door is no longer present. Finally, the northwest facade contains no openings.

The interior of the barn (see floor plan) is unusual and interesting, like the exterior configuration. The balloon frame construction is immediately visible with stick lumber comprising the walls, coupled with square posts at the juncture of each of the six wall sections. The floor joists of the upper level are also revealed, running from east to west and supported at the barn's center by the silo and surrounding posts. The roofing system is also composed of stick lumber and was originally sheathed in lath and wood shingles. Central support for the roof is offered by the silo with the roof rafters terminating in order for the silo to penetrate the roof.

Entering the lower level via the large door on the northeast and moving around the structure counter-clockwise, there are bins built into the wall of the northwest, followed by the doorway on the west, a solid wall on the southwest, a door on the southwestern end of the southeast wall, the small door on the west and finally, the large entrance door. The center of the area is occupied by the circular wooden stave silo that is surrounded by a feed alley and four support posts on the north side (Photo 3 and 4). There are pens located from the silo to the south walls while the area north of the silo is left relatively open. The shed on the south is divided into two areas, the drive-through on the

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

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section number   7   Page   3   Colter Polygonal Barn  
Adams Co., IN

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north and pens on the south. Originally, the south side housed horses, the east sheltered cattle, the north contained sheep and hogs were placed in the southern sheds.

The upper level is reached by way of a ladder that is located next to the support posts just north of the silo. Ascending the ladder to the upper level reveals an interesting arrangement of floor heights. The area just inside of the northeast door is open, facilitating the loading and unloading of hay to the hay mow on the upper level and thus explaining the extra height of the northeast door. Suspended on poles above the open space and located some four feet higher is more upper level hay storage area (Photo 5). This higher floor area extends roughly from the midpoint of the barn to the west walls. All of the upper levels were originally intended for the storage of hay and straw.

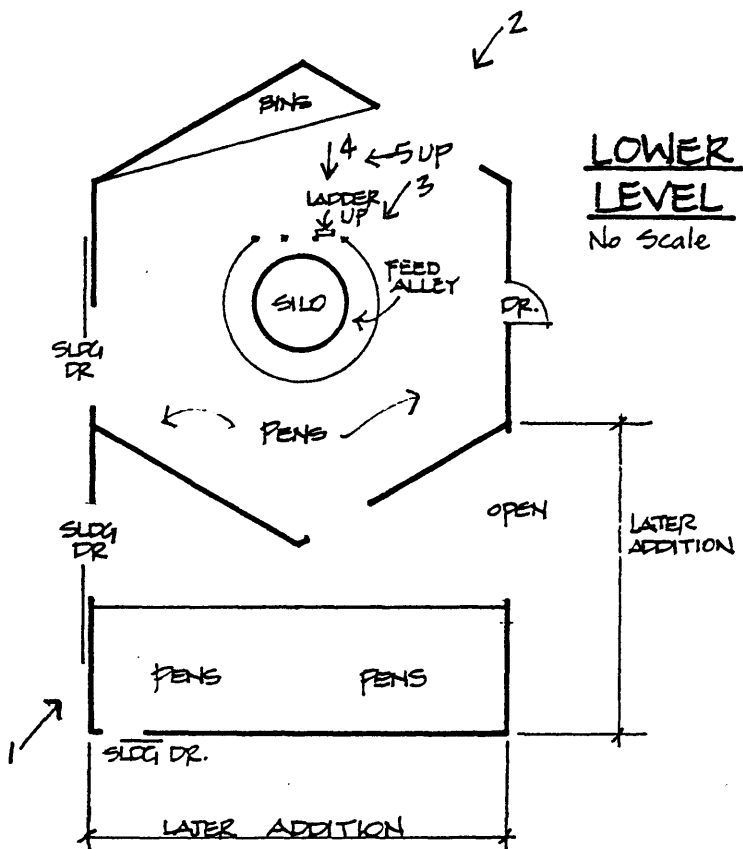
Most of the interior fabric of the Colter (Reinhart) barn is still present although the structure is mainly used for storage today. So few changes have occurred that it is possible to envision what this barn must have been like over eighty years ago.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

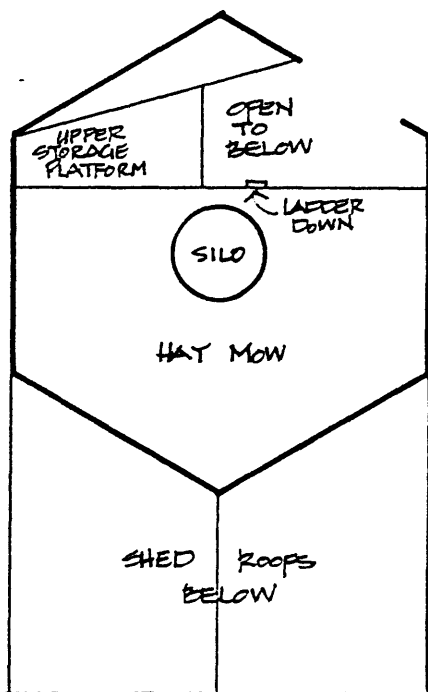
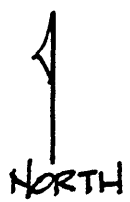
National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 4

Colter Polygonal Barn  
Adams Co., IN



LOWER LEVEL  
No Scale



UPPER LEVEL  
No Scale

COLTER (REINHART) BARN

c.1907 6-SIDED  
ADAMS COUNTY, INDIANA  
ST. MARY'S TOWNSHIP

↑<sub>1</sub> = Photographic key



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 5 Colter Polygonal Barn  
Adams Co., IN

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The Ben Colter (Reinhart) barn, located in St. Mary's Township of Adams County, Indiana, is significant for its association with the development of round and polygonal barns in Indiana (see historic context, "Round and Polygonal Barns of Indiana.") The barn is a direct link to the agricultural development that occurred in the state from 1850 to 1936 (and beyond) and has changed little since its construction c.1907 with the exception of the hog barn attachments that were added in 1915. The period of greatest significance of the barn was from c.1907 to 1936 when round and polygonal barns lost their popularity. Finally, by 1936, round and polygonal barns were considered obsolete and the last round structure was built in the state to replace a 1915 round barn that had burned (Grant County, Richland Township, extant).

The owner and builder of the barn was Ben Colter, a local banker, school teacher and saw mill operator. Mr. Colter built the house in 1900, followed by the barn and other outbuildings in this rural location only a few miles from the Ohio border. Legend has it that Colter constructed the walls of the barn on the ground and then hoisted them into place with a post placed in the barn's center, in the midst of the central wood stave silo. Colter housed horses on the lower level south, cattle on the lower level east, sheep on the lower level north, storage on the lower level west and the upper level was a hay mow for hay and straw.<sup>1</sup>

Ben Colter added hog barns on the east in 1915 and created more storage space for animals in addition to a drive-through from north to south. Although this was a change to the original structure, the additions have acquired significance of their own through time. Ben Colter and his family retained ownership of the farm and barn until 1940 when the property was sold to Mae Musser. Ms. Musser maintained the barn until selling to Glen Everett in the 1980s. Everett in turn sold the barn and surrounding property to the current owners, Ray and Nancy Reinhart, in 1989.<sup>2</sup>

The Colter Barn illustrates that the construction of polygonal barns continued even after the appearance of the circular barn in agricultural construction. The belief that central-plan barns improved farming efficiency remained popular until the mid-1930s. However, many farmers did not build circular barns to avoid patent infringements. The Colter barn illustrates how the building technology of balloon framing, first introduced

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

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 8 Page 6 Colter Polygonal Barn  
Adams Co., IN

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to centralized barn construction with circular barns, continued to be used in later polygonal barns to open up the interior.

The Ben Colter (Reinhart) barn was one of three six-sided barns that were constructed in the state of Indiana. The other two were built in Morgan County's Washington Township and Putnam County's Franklin Township. The Morgan County example is still standing while the Putnam County barn has been torn down. Like the Colter barn, the Morgan County example has had its original roof replaced by asphalt shingle.

The Colter (Reinhart) barn is thus a rare example of a polygonal barn, being one of the two remaining examples of the hexagonal shape. Interestingly, only three of the 119 round and polygonal structures built in the state were hexagons, with all three being built after the turn of the century and maybe a response to skirting patent rights that were newly conferred on Littleton, McNamee and Duncan (1905). The barn has the essential physical features that it possessed at the time of its period of significance, from c.1907 to 1936. It thus satisfies the registration requirements for integrity established in multiple property listing. The building has aged but has not been significantly altered since its erection in c.1907 and therefore serves as a link to the development and history of agriculture in Indiana.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 7 Colter Polygonal Barn  
Adams Co., IN

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### ENDNOTES

1. John Hanou, Research compiled on Indiana's round and polygonal barns from 1986 to present. Archived at Historic Landmarks Foundation of Indiana, 340 West Michigan Street, Indianapolis, IN 46202.
2. Nancy Reinhart, owner of the Colter (Reinhart) barn, Decatur, Indiana. Interview by Jerry McMahan, 25 October 1991.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section number   9   Page   8   Colter Polygonal Barn  
Adams Co., IN

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**BIBLIOGRAPHY**

Hanou, John. Research compiled on Indiana's Round and Polygonal Barns from 1986 to present. Archived at Historic Landmarks Foundation of Indiana, 340 West Michigan Street, Indianapolis, Indiana 46202

Intensive architectural survey of Indiana's round and polygonal barns, conducted June to August, 1991.

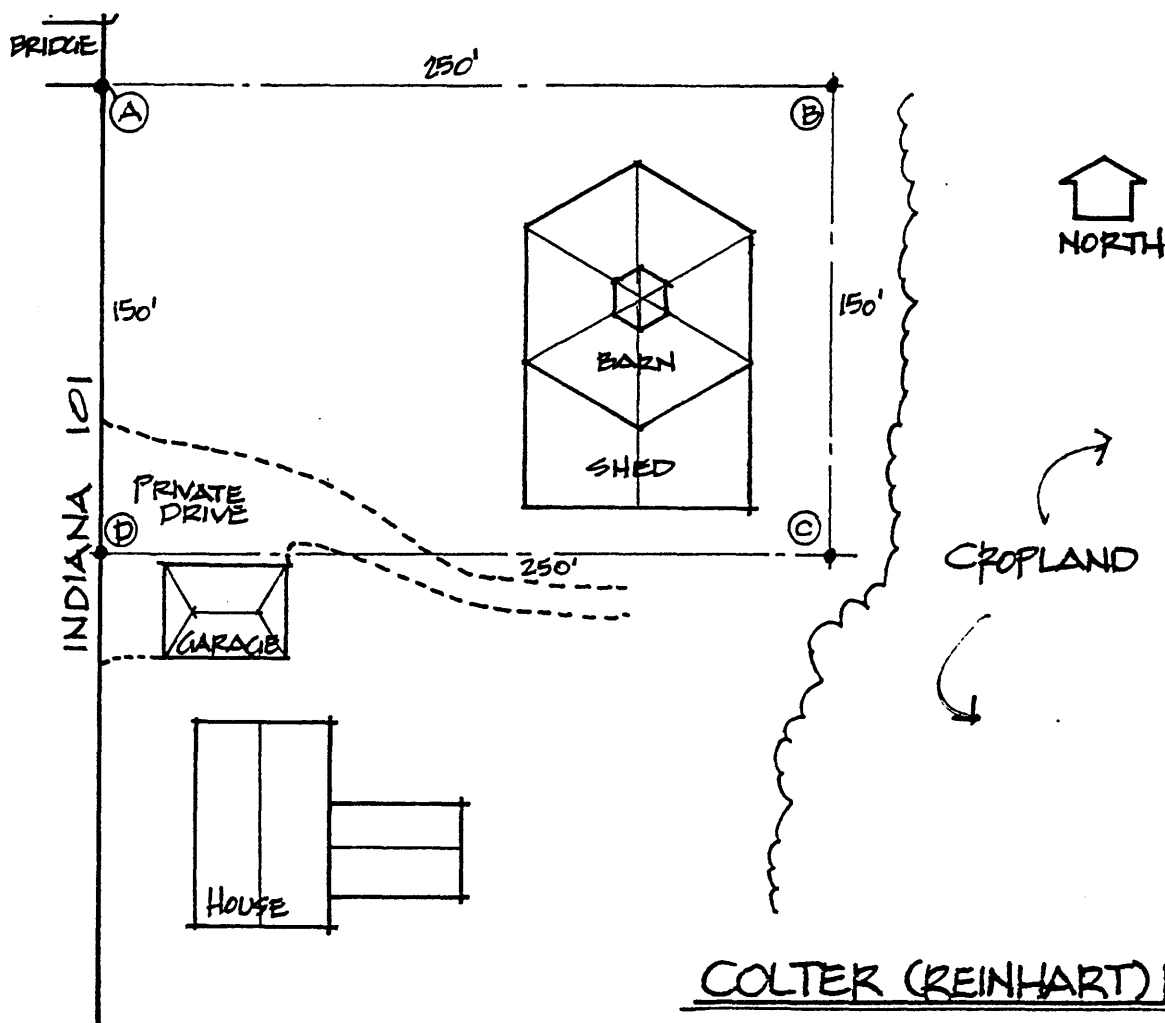
Reinhart, Nancy. Owner, Colter (Reinhart) Barn, Decatur, Indiana. Interview by Jerry McMahan, 25 October 1991.

Soike, Lowell J. Without Right Angles, The Round Barns of Iowa. Des Moines, IA: Iowa State Historical Department, Office of Historic Preservation, 1983.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 10 Page 9 Colter Polygonal Barn  
Adams Co., IN



## COLTER (REINHART) BARN

### SITE PLAN

NO SCALE

c. 1907      6-SIDED  
ADAMS COUNTY, INDIANA  
ST. MARY'S TOWNSHIP

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

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 10 Page 10 Colter, Ben, Polygonal Barn  
Adams Co., IN

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Verbal Boundary Description

The Colter (Reinhart) Barn is located in the SWNW Section 16, T27N-R15E of St. Mary's Township, Adams County, Indiana. Referring to the site plan, beginning at the southeast edge of the small bridge on Indiana 101, proceed east 250 feet to Point B. At a ninety degree angle, proceed south 150 feet (Point C) then 90 degrees west for 250 feet (Point D). Follow the east side of Indiana 101 to the point of beginning (Point A).

Boundary Justification

The immediate area of the barn is a part of a larger acreage. Some of the acreage has been excluded from the nomination and the above boundary includes the property necessary to demonstrate the historic significance of the Colter (Reinhart) barn.