

### NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE:	Kansas	
COUNTY:	Ellis	
FOR NPS USE ONLY		
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE	

**1. NAME**

COMMON: George Grant Villa

AND/OR HISTORIC:

**2. LOCATION**

STREET AND NUMBER: Five miles south and two miles east of Victoria on secondary roads, NE 1/4, Sec. 8, T 15 S, R 16 W

CITY OR TOWN: Victoria vicinity

STATE: Kansas 67671      CODE: 20      COUNTY: Ellis      CODE: 051

**3. CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <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 (Specify)

**4. OWNER OF PROPERTY**

OWNER'S NAME: William Baier

STREET AND NUMBER: Rural Route

CITY OR TOWN: Victoria      STATE: Kansas 67671      CODE: 20

**5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.: Register of Deeds

STREET AND NUMBER: Ellis County Courthouse

CITY OR TOWN: Hays      STATE: Kansas 67601      CODE: 20

**6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE OF SURVEY: Survey of Historic Sites and Structures in Kansas

DATE OF SURVEY: 1957       Federal     State     County     Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS: Kansas State Historical Society

STREET AND NUMBER: 120 West Tenth Street

CITY OR TOWN: Topeka      STATE: Kansas 66612      CODE: 20

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE:	Kansas
COUNTY:	Ellis
ENTRY NUMBER	
DATE	

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7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (If known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The George Grant Villa located on a hill southeast of Victoria, Kansas, is a two-story rectangular residence in the Vernacular style measuring 26 feet wide and 36 feet long. The walls are two feet thick and constructed of rough-faced limestone blocks quarried about 150 yards north of the house. The stone blocks are uniform in height and are laid in regular horizontal courses. No special decorative treatment is employed on the stone masonry. The roof is a steeply pitched gable with broad sheltering overhangs. Decorative wood brackets support the roof overhang at the building corners and the gable ridge. Windows on both the first and second floors are of the four-light double-hung style. The window sills are projected smooth stone blocks slightly wider than the window openings. Each window head is enhanced by a decorative curved stone lintel with a projecting keystone. The lintel stone wraps partially down the jamb on each side. A semicircular window is located in each gable end. A large one-story porch wraps around the north, east, and west facades. The porch roof is supported by tapered wood columns resting on stone piers. Groups of three wood columns are used at the porch corners.

Contemporary accounts of the building compare it to an English country house. The large front door on the north was designed to lead into a wide front hall running the length of the villa. On the east side Grant had a 12 by 22 foot dining room; on the west side, one small room for a living room and another for a music room. The same basic floor plan was followed upstairs. Grant's large study occupied the west side and two bedrooms the east side. Underneath there was a full basement; Grant planned to install a hot air furnace on one side and a wine cabinet on the other. The interior woodwork was of white pine as were the floors. The open stairway patterned after the English style was built of walnut. Grant furnished the house with walnut furniture which is still in the possession of his heirs but not in the house, which his heirs sold in 1897.

There was originally a frame ell attached to the south which housed the kitchen. This was removed when two large rooms were added in 1912. The same type stone was used as for the original section. One second story room, which was centered over the two added to the first floor, was also added in 1912. The east and west sides of that room were of wood covered with metal while the south wall was stone.

The original interior walls have not been altered; however, one of the small first floor rooms has been partitioned. The original woodwork remains and some of the doors and window glass are also original. Tin-covered ceilings were installed around 1912. The large double doors on the north front have been closed off because of the cold north winter winds. The present porch, which is the same size and shape as the original, was built in the 1930's after the original had been damaged by a storm. George Grant had French windows built into the walls covered by the large porch, but the size of these window openings was reduced.

(see continuation sheet)

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Continuation Sheet) No. 1

STATE	
Kansas	
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Ellis	
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(Number all entries)

7. One other building built for George Grant remains on the grounds-- the west half of the stone barn located about 50 yards southeast of the villa.

The front part of the house looks much as it did originally while the addition to the south does not detract greatly from the appearance of the structure.

8. they had in England. Hired overseers managed most of the estates, so their owners had an abundance of free time for social activities and sports such as cricket, hunting and boating. Many of the young remittance men were regular patrons of the saloons in nearby Hays.

The colony survived prairie fires, droughts, severe winters, and other hardships during its early years and reached its peak about 1876-1878. A steady trickle of new colonists had continued over the years, and by 1878 it is estimated that several hundred were living in the Victoria vicinity. (Few lived in the town; most preferred to live on their country estates.) By 1878 many of the early colonists seem to have tired of the frontier life. Some were returning to England for lengthy visits or to remain. Grant, who was in ill health, realized that his dream of a great British colony was lost, along with his fortune. The aristocratic British, concerned more with sport and pleasure than the operation of their farms and ranches, did not have the determination to endure hardships. Grant's death April 28, 1878, erased the moving spirit of the colony. Life did continue for a time as it had, but by 1880 the colony had begun to disintegrate. Many of the remittance men had their allowances stopped when word reached their families of their activities in the saloons at Hays. Others simply tired of the hardships of the plains and returned to England or sought more favorable locations elsewhere in the United States.

Margaret Grant, a niece who had taken care of George Grant in his last days, inherited a major portion of his ranch and in 1897 sold the villa and surrounding land to Mr. and Mrs. Moritz Baier. Their son, William Baier, became the owner in 1935. The Baiers doubled the size of the original barn by constructing a large frame and stone addition to the east in 1901-1902. About ten years later three rooms were added to the south of the villa. A number of small stone outbuildings were also constructed by the Baiers.

The Victoria colony of George Grant, even though it failed, represents a unique episode in Kansas history--an attempt to transplant a bit of England to the plains of Kansas. George Grant was also the first man to import purebred Aberdeen Angus cattle into the United States. His home, which remains basically in its original condition, is nominated to the Register because of his importance and because it is one of only two or three original buildings of the Victoria colony.

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Continuation Sheet) No. 2

STATE	
Kansas	
COUNTY	
Ellis	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

(Number all entries)

9. Currer, D., Scotch Enterprise in America (Edinburgh, Colson and Son, 1873), 22 p.
- Daugherty, Charles M., "The Jolly West," Tradition, v. 2, no. 3 (March, 1959), pp. 31-43.
- Ellis County News, September 21, 1950--February 1, 1951.
- English Enterprise in America (Edinburgh, John Lindsay, 1874), 24 p.
- "Fabulous Plans for Developing Victoria Made by George Grant," Hays News, April 3, 1955.
- "George Grant, First to Bring Angus to Kansas," Hays News, October 8, 1942.
- Graham, I. D., "George Grant, First Importer of Aberdeen Angus Cattle in the United States," Thirty-second Biennial Report of the Kansas State Board of Agriculture (Topeka, State Printer, 1941), pp. 201-204.
- "Hard-riding Redcoats Put Gay Touches on Kansas Plains," Kansas City Star, March 11, 1928.
- History of the State of Kansas (Chicago, A. T. Andreas, 1883), pp. 1290, 1294.
- Raish, Marjorie Gamet, Victoria, The Story of a Western Kansas Town, Fort Hays Kansas State College General Series, no. 12 (Topeka, State Printer, 1947).
- Salina Herald, June 21, 1873.
- "Three Remain Who Knew Glory of Victoria Colony Fifty Years Ago," Hays News, November 11, 1929.
- United States Biographical Dictionary, Kansas Volume (Chicago, S. Lewis and Co., 1879), pp. 733, 734.
- "Victoria--Gay Englishmen, Serious Russians," Great Bend Tribune, April 27, 1958.
- "Victoria's Remittance Men Made Life Gay in the Roaring 70's," Hays News, June 22, 1950.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

3. SIGNIFICANCE			
PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian	<input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century	<input type="checkbox"/> 18th Century	<input type="checkbox"/> 20th Century
<input type="checkbox"/> 15th Century	<input type="checkbox"/> 17th Century	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 19th Century	
SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) <span style="float: right;">1873-1874</span>			
AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal	<input type="checkbox"/> Education	<input type="checkbox"/> Political	<input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning
<input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> Engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)
<input type="checkbox"/> Historic	<input type="checkbox"/> Industry	<input type="checkbox"/> Science	<u>Western settlement</u>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> Invention	<input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Art	<input type="checkbox"/> Literature	<input type="checkbox"/> Theater	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> Military	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Communications	<input type="checkbox"/> Music		
<input type="checkbox"/> Conservation			
STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE			
<p>The George Grant Villa southeast of Victoria is one of a few original structures remaining from the Victoria colony established in 1873. George Grant (1822-1878) was a Scottish-born London silk merchant. His business acumen was demonstrated by two successful ventures: (1) in 1861 he learned of the worsening condition of Prince Albert, consort of Queen Victoria, promptly cornered the London supply of black crepe, and made a fortune after the Prince's death; (2) in 1867 his firm purchased most of the silk at the Paris Exposition and sold it in London at a huge profit.</p> <p>When his doctor advised him to slow down, Grant decided to buy a country estate. Reportedly unable to find a suitable one in England, he visited Canada and the United States in 1872. While crossing Kansas on the Kansas Pacific railroad, he was impressed by the lush grasslands east of Hays and apparently at this time formulated his plan for a colony. In October, 1872, he made his first land purchase from the railroad of 25,000 acres at \$2.00 an acre. Other purchases followed; various sources estimated his holdings a short time later at from 69,000 to 100,000 acres at an average price of 88 cents.</p> <p>Grant and his first group of 30 colonists arrived at Victoria station on May 18, 1873. Most were of English or Scottish nobility; some were remittance men, younger sons of English nobility sent off to America to live on a monthly allowance from the family. Some were the so-called "small farmers" of England who were attracted by the possibilities of huge estates. Grant viewed the whole project as a business venture, a chance to make another fortune, and accordingly priced his land from \$4.00 to \$20.00 an acre. The minimum purchase was one section. With this first group Grant also brought along the finest saddlehorses, draft horses, sheep, and shorthorn cattle, including four Aberdeen Angus bulls. (His plans to develop vast herds of purebred sheep and cattle on his ranch were not the success he had hoped for.)</p> <p>An important London architect, R. W. Edis, was brought to Kansas to lay out plans for a city worthy of the name Victoria. He also designed various buildings, including Grant's own home. Grant's Villa was probably constructed about 1873-1874 by a man named Shields. It became one of the centers of social activity for the British colonists, who tried to observe the same social customs and behavior patterns as</p>			

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

"Along the Kansas Pacific--The Victoria Colony," Topeka Commonwealth, June 17, 1876.  
 "At Old Victoria," Topeka Capital, September 17, 1910.  
 "An Authentic Original History of Victoria...", Hays Daily News, November 6, 1955.  
 Baier, William, "Victoria Man Resides in Grant's Famed Villa," Hays Daily News, June 25, 1967.  
 "British Capital in America--the Great Purchase by Mr. Grant," Edinburgh (Scotland) Courant, December 31, 1872.

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	LATITUDE		LONGITUDE
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds
NW	° ' "	° ' "	°	'	"
NE	° ' "	° ' "	38	46	04
SE	° ' "	° ' "	°	'	"
SW	° ' "	° ' "	99	07	08

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 2-3 acres

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE: Richard Pankratz, Planner  
 Charles Hall, Architectural Consultant

ORGANIZATION: Kansas State Historical Society      DATE: October 27, 1971

STREET AND NUMBER: 120 West Tenth Street

CITY OR TOWN: Topeka      STATE: Kansas 66612      CODE: 20

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison 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. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National  State  Local

Name Nyle H. Miller  
 Nyle H. Miller

Title Executive Director, Kansas State Historical Society

Date December 29, 1971

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

ATTEST:

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Keeper of The National Register

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

SEE INSTRUCTIONS