

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 10-9000a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

Historic name Brenner Vineyards Historic District
Other name/site number Adam Brenner & Jacob Brenner Farmsteads

2. Location

Street & number Mineral Point and 95th Roads not for publication
City or town Doniphan vicinity
State Kansas Code KS County Doniphan Code 043 Zip code 66002

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.)

Ce 4/6/05
Signature of certifying official/Title Kansas State Historical Society Date

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 commenting 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. Linda McClelland Signature of the Keeper 5/24/05 Date of Action
 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:)

Brenner Vineyards Historic District
Name of Property

Doniphan County, Kansas
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	
7	4	buildings
1		sites
		structures
		objects
8	4	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

N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter Categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC / single dwelling

AGRICULTURE / processing

RELIGION / religious facility

AGRICULTURE / storage

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

RELIGION / religious facility

DOMESTIC / single dwelling

WORK IN PROGRESS

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

MID-19TH CENTURY / Gothic Revival

OTHER / vernacular

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

Foundation: STONE

Walls: BRICK

WOOD, STONE

Roof: ASPHALT, METAL, WOOD

Other:

Narrative Description

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

Brenner Vineyards Historic District
Name of Property

Doniphan County, Kansas
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)

- 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 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)

AGRICULTURE

Period of Significance

1860-1912

Significant Dates

1867

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Unknown

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:

Kansas State Historical Society

Brenner Vineyards Historic District
Name of Property

Doniphan County, Kansas
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of Property Approximately 4.9 acres

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1

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 Susan Jezak Ford
Organization Citysearch Preservation Date August 23, 2004
Street & number 3628 Holmes St. Telephone 816-531-2489
City or town Kansas City State Missouri Zip code 64109

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 SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

Name See continuation sheet
Street & number _____ Telephone _____
City or town _____ State _____ Zip code _____

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 2 Page 1

**Brenner Vineyards Historic District
Doniphan County, Kansas**

2. Location

The district is located in two parcels in Section 5, Township 5 South, Range 21 East in Doniphan County, Kansas. The South Parcel contains approximately 4.5 acres and is located approximately 3/10 mile southwest of the intersection of Mineral Point and 95th Roads. The North Parcel contains 4/10 of an acre and is located approximately 3/10 mile northwest of the intersection of Mineral Point and 95th Roads.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 7 Page 2

**Brenner Vineyards Historic District
Doniphan County, Kansas**

Architectural Description

The Brenner Vineyards Historic District (circa 1860-1911) is located on the west edge of the town of Doniphan, Doniphan County, Kansas. The district is nominated to the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A in the area of AGRICULTURE, for its association with the vineyards that were developed in Doniphan County in the late 1800s.

The proposed district is a discontinuous district located in rural northeastern Kansas. The district is comprised of two parcels of land in Section 5 of Wayne Township (Township 5 South), Range 21 East. One parcel, approximately 4.5 acres, encompasses eight buildings associated with the Jacob Brenner winery, two buildings associated with St. John the Baptist Church, and the City of Doniphan road that separates the church from the winery. The second parcel, four-tenths of an acre, includes two buildings and one site associated with the Adam Brenner winery. As is typical for rural properties, some of the buildings associated with the wineries have suffered from lack of maintenance or have been altered. Several retain their original form and all retain their placement.

The district is located atop two hills west of the town of Doniphan, Kansas. The two parcels encompassing the district are approximately two-tenths of a mile apart. This portion of Doniphan County, Wayne Township, is situated atop bluffs that once descended to meet the Missouri River. The rolling hills made the area a good location for the acres of vineyards planted by Adam and Jacob Brenner, and later Jacob's son, George Brenner.

Doniphan County is situated in the extreme northeast corner of Kansas. According to A.T. Andreas' 1883 *History of the State of Kansas*, the county was comprised of 25 percent bottomland, 84 percent rolling prairie and timberland that included black walnut, hickory, oak and cottonwood. In 1883, 242,560 acres of land in Doniphan County, about 60 percent, was under cultivation. Doniphan is the southernmost town within the county. An 1858 description was printed in the 1882 *Historic Plat Book of Doniphan County, Kansas*:

Doniphan is situated on the Missouri River, thirty miles above Fort Leavenworth, at the great bend of the river, exactly midway between the mouth of the Kaw and the Kansas and Nebraska boundary line. It is situated near the confluence of Independence Creek a short distance above the mouth, and thus furnish good natural road beds, with easy grades, in every direction in the interior of the county. The valleys through which the river runs embrace large districts of the finest bottom land in the west.¹

The Missouri River changed course in 1891 after a flood, leaving the town landlocked.

¹ *Historic Plat Book of Doniphan County, Kansas* (Chicago: J.S. Bird, 1882), 39.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 7 Page 3

**Brenner Vineyards Historic District
Doniphan County, Kansas**

The district today reflects the agrarian farmsteads of the Brenner families, as well as remnants of the vineyards they founded. The district consists of 11 buildings and one site, all built between 1860 and 1910. The district is comprised of eight contributing buildings or sites and four non-contributing buildings. It should be noted that one primary building within the district, the Jacob Brenner House, is considered non-contributing due to the application of non-historic siding. The removal of this siding would make the house eligible for consideration as a contributing building.

Inventory

The following properties are included in the proposed historic district:

SOUTH PARCEL

1. St. John the Baptist Church, 1867-1868, Contributing

The two-story church is constructed of soft red brick, with a limestone foundation and a wood shingle roof. The cruciform building measures 25 feet wide by 77 feet long. Side gables project from the gabled roof in the chancel area. The church is built in a simple vernacular design with Gothic detailing evident in the pointed arched windows and the pointed brick corbelling under the cornice. The entrance to the church is on the east side of the building, placed within a square bell tower that rises above the one-and-a-half-story roof. The double wood entrance doors are topped by a stained-glass transom with a Gothic arch. A smaller Gothic double-hung window is placed directly above this entrance. Four double-hung stained glass windows are placed on the north and south sides of the nave. The north and south sides of the chancel each has two 9/9 clear double-hung windows with Gothic arched transoms. All windows have stone sills and arched brick lintels. Two brick chimneys project from either end of the chancel and a stucco-clad chimney projects from the southwest corner of the nave. A cistern is located south of the church. The church is in excellent condition.

Doniphan County was the first Kansas location for Benedictine missionaries, who soon moved to Atchison. This brick church was built as a replacement for Doniphan's first Catholic church, constructed in 1856 and destroyed by fire in 1863. Adam Brenner donated the two-acre block for this church, which is now the oldest Catholic church in Doniphan County and one of the oldest in Kansas. It is located adjacent to the Jacob Brenner home. It housed a lending library in the 1860s and 1870s. The building originally measured 26 by 50 feet; the cross gable wing measuring 24 by 36 feet was added around 1868. The stained-glass windows replaced clear glass in 1892, and in 1909, frescoes were added to the interior. The church appeared in the December 1955 issue of *Life* magazine, photographed by Gordon Parks.² The church was redecorated in 1962 and new pews, altar and lectern were added with an electric heating system in 1965. St. John the Baptist Church never had a residing full-time priest, but was provided visiting priests from the Benedictine Abbey in Atchison. The parish ceased operations in 1991 and became a station church, approved for special masses such as weddings and funerals.

² "A Cloistered Life of Devotion," *Life*, 26 December 1955, 122-123.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 7 Page 4

**Brenner Vineyards Historic District
Doniphan County, Kansas**

2. Guest house, circa 1947, Non-contributing.

The church's guest house, located approximately 20 feet west of the church, is a concrete block building that measures roughly 25 feet by 25 feet. A central brick chimney fronts the house's south façade and a small gabled overhang shelters the entrance. The building has a front gable asphalt roof with an eastern shed garage extension. Two windows are located on each of the south, north and west sides. The east overhang contains two privies on the north side. The house is in good condition.

The guest house was built around 1947 to accommodate visiting priests.

3. Jacob Brenner House, 209 Lone Star Road, circa 1860, Non-contributing.

The Jacob Brenner House is located south and slightly west of the church and faces east toward Lone Star Road. The one-and-a-half-story house has brick walls clad in wood clapboards, currently topped with fiberboard siding installed around 1992. The Gothic Revival house measures approximately 42 feet wide and 28 feet deep. It has a stone foundation and a side-gabled asphalt roof. The house's east façade has a slightly off-center entrance, a single wood door surrounded by a pieced transom and sidelights, sheltered by a small wood porch with a shed roof. A gabled dormer with a 6/6 window is placed above this entrance. The south portion of the house is somewhat longer than the north portion and a shed addition has been attached to the rear of the building. All of these changes likely took place before 1900. Windows in the north and south sides of the house on the first story and in the peaks of the side gables have 6/6 pane configurations. Brick chimneys project from the center of the gable and the northwest corner of the roof; a stucco-clad chimney projects from the southwest corner of the roof. A cistern is located west of the building. The house is in good condition.

It is likely that Jacob Brenner began building this house shortly after his arrival in Doniphan in 1860. The house has received several alterations and may have expanded circa 1900, when Brenner's youngest son, Nicholas, is listed in the federal census as the head of the household. Non-historic siding was added to the house around 1992, but the building retains its historic form. The house has been vacant since 1994.

4. Jacob Brenner Winery, circa 1875, Contributing.

The winery building is located approximately 75 feet west of the Jacob Brenner House. The two-story building measures roughly 30 feet wide by 22 feet deep. The frame building is covered in clapboards, has a side gable metal roof and a stone foundation. The building's façade faces east and is three bays wide, consisting of window openings on the first and second story in bays one and two and a door and window in bay three. A one-story shed extends from the rear of the building. The building's 10-foot-tall basement wine cellar is visible from the north side of the building. The building is in fair condition.

Jacob Brenner began planting his vineyards in 1864 and it is likely that this building was constructed once he was assured that his agricultural endeavors would be successful. The John Louis Huss family moved to the

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 7 Page 5

**Brenner Vineyards Historic District
Doniphan County, Kansas**

property in the 1930s and used the building as a granary. A north section of the building was demolished in the 1940s and the north wall was clad in salvaged siding. The metal roof was also added to the building during this building period.

5. Brenner Barn, circa 1895, Contributing.

The Brenner Barn sits 100 feet southeast of the Jacob Brenner House. The frame one-and-a-half-story building measures approximately 35 feet wide by 45 feet long. It has a stone foundation and a gable asphalt roof (added in the early 1990s) with a hay hood in the south façade. The frame of the barn is joined by wood pegs and clad in wide vertical siding, formerly board and batten siding. The interior's second-story flooring is extant, although first-story stalls have been removed. The building is in fair condition.

Jacob Brenner's family chartered the Jacob Brenner Wine Company in 1892, after his death. The capital stock in the company was \$25,000 and it is likely that a substantial amount of money was invested in the property at this time. The barn's design and materials are consistent with those found in Kansas during the 1890s.

6. Brenner Corncrib, circa 1895, Contributing.

The corncrib, located just west of the barn, is an open-slatted structure that measures approximately 12 feet wide by 20 feet deep. The walls of the crib slant inward to the base of the structure. The corncrib rests above the ground on stone and brick supports and has walls that angle outward. The gable roof is covered in wood shingles. The building is in good condition.

It is likely that the corncrib was built after the death of Jacob Brenner. Slant-sided corncribs, ideal for small harvests, were common throughout the United States in the late 1800s.³

7. Huss Chicken House, circa 1963, Non-contributing.

The chicken house measures approximately 32 feet wide and 16 feet deep. It is constructed of brick, once coated with concrete. The building's entrance is in the south elevation. Three window openings are also located in this side of the building and an additional window opening is located in the west side. The building's shed roof is covered with asphalt shingles. The building is in good condition.

The Huss family built this chicken house around 1963.

³ Allen G. Noble and Richard K. Cleek, *The Old Barn Book*, (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1997), 156.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 7 Page 6

**Brenner Vineyards Historic District
Doniphan County, Kansas**

8. Pump House, circa 1875, Contributing.

The shed measures approximately 12 feet square. It is clad in horizontal clapboards and has a gable asphalt shingle roof. The entrance to the building is in the east side and a single window opening is located in the south elevation. The building is in fair condition.

This building is one remaining of two that originally housed machinery that pumped the gallons of water needed for wine production. The farmstead's well is located near the creek south of the district. The pipes that ran from the well to the pump house were removed and salvaged during World War II. The Huss family used the building as a chicken house. It is currently used as a storage shed.

9. Huss Privy, circa 1992, Non-contributing.

A privy, measuring four feet square, is located northwest of the Jacob Brenner House. The building is constructed of wood chipboard and rests on a concrete foundation. It is clad in wide fiberboard siding and the shed roof is covered with asphalt shingles. The building is in excellent condition.

James Huss built this privy around 1992.

NORTH PARCEL

10. Adam Brenner Smokehouse Ruins, circa 1860, Contributing.

The stone walls of the former smokehouse are 18 inches thick and are constructed of rough-cut stones. The remains of the building measure approximately 16 feet wide and 20 feet deep, with the former entrance in the east side. This side of the building has a doorway with a wood lintel, surrounded by two narrow window openings. An arched stone crescent is located in the gable end above the doorway. This arch and the north window opening are now filled with brick. The building has no roof and a section of the north wall has collapsed. The building is in ruins.

It is likely that Adam Brenner constructed this building shortly after arriving in Doniphan County in 1860.

11. Adam Brenner House Site, circa 1860, Contributing.

The site of the Adam Brenner House is now fronted by a concrete pad measuring approximately 16 feet by 16 feet. This pad, likely from the early 1900s, served as an entry area to the home. The house site is located between the former smokehouse and former Adam Brenner winery. The brick home, built around 1860, was destroyed by fire in 1960.

Adam Brenner likely began construction on his house shortly after he and his family arrived in Doniphan County in 1857. The house was a two-story brick building of vernacular design with minimal detailing and a

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 7 Page 7

**Brenner Vineyards Historic District
Doniphan County, Kansas**

truncated hip roof. A full front porch spanned the east façade of the building, supported by painted posts and topped with a second-story balustrade. The house may have increased in size to accommodate Brenner's ten children. The house's appearance was updated at some point, and the 2/2 double-hung windows on the façade were replaced with 1/1 windows. The new center second story window had diamond panes in the upper sash. The simple posts supporting the front porch were replaced with Ionic columns and dentil trim may have been added to the cornice. The eight-room house, eventually owned by Adam Brenner's son, Frank, was destroyed by fire in the fall of 1960.⁴

12. Adam Brenner Winery Ruins, circa 1875, Contributing.

The remains of the Adam Brenner winery occupy the northernmost location within the district. The ruins measure approximately 24 feet by 64 feet. The upper floor of the winery is constructed of soft brick and the foundation is stone. The building's remaining brick walls are three-deep thick. The south wall of the building has central doorway, surrounded by a boarded over doorway on the west and a window opening on the east. It is likely that the north wall had a similar window and door configuration. The westernmost portion of the north wall has been reconstructed in concrete block. The east wall of the winery consists of two former window openings in the upper level and the basement entrance opening to the wine cellar. The cellar walls are 20 inches thick and support a barrel vault ceiling approximately 15 feet tall. A steel I-beam has been inserted above the basement entrance to stabilize the building. One-third of the brick floor of the upper level is laid in a herringbone pattern and two-thirds is in a running bond. A new wood gable roof clad in green metal was built over the west end of the ruins around 1995. The last portion of the building's original roof blew off in 1997. A stone wall, three feet tall, extends south of the winery for approximately 48 feet.

The Adam Brenner winery was constructed around 1875, approximately ten years after Brenner began his Doniphan County vineyards. The taxed value of the farmstead sharply increased during this year. The remaining section was once attached on the west to a three-story building. The cellar of the building held 16 casks that each contained 1000 gallons of wine. The Prohaska family used the winery building as a cattle barn in the 1950s.

⁴ "Fire Razes Historic Home," *The Kansas City Times*, 29 October 1960.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 8 Page 8

**Brenner Vineyards Historic District
Doniphan County, Kansas**

Statement of Significance

The Brenner Vineyards Historic District is associated with vineyards established in Doniphan County in the 1860s. The buildings are located on two parcels of land on the outskirts of Doniphan, located in the southeast corner of Doniphan County. The district is nominated to the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A in the area of AGRICULTURE, for its association with the vineyards that were developed in Doniphan County in the late 1800s. The district is a physical reflection of the prosperity of the vineyards and the support that they provided to the community.

Adam and Jacob Brenner came to Kansas in 1857 and 1860 and set to the business of settling their families near the town of Doniphan. They planted vineyards on the hills that reminded them of their homeland in Germany. The Brenner family eventually established wineries that produced thousands of gallons of wine and brandy every year. Even with the restrictions of prohibition, the Brenner vineyards survived by specializing in medicinal and sacramental wines.

The town of Doniphan did not thrive and its population quickly subsided. The Brenner brothers died in the early 1890s, and their businesses were liquidated by 1912. The district includes the extant wineries and farmstead buildings of Adam and Jacob Brenner. In addition, the district also includes St. John the Baptist Catholic Church, built on land generously donated by Adam Brenner and sustained by the Brenner families. The district is the visible reminder of a family business that once held promise for the town of Doniphan.

Doniphan and Its Surroundings

The village of Doniphan, Kansas was once a major winemaking center of the Midwest. Its humble beginnings date to 1852, when Josephus Utt, an agent for the Kickapoo Indians, erected a trading hut near the bank of the Missouri River. Two years later on November 11, 1854, the organizers of the Doniphan Town Company met in St. Joseph, Missouri to elect company officers. The Doniphan town site was surveyed the following spring by James F. Forman, located on Sections 4 and 5 in Township 5 South, Range 21 East. Town lots were sold in 1855, some for as high as \$2000 and building soon commenced.⁵

The town was ideally located, known by boatmen as an excellent steamboat landing. The government land office moved to Doniphan in 1857, but only remained there for a year before moving to Kickapoo. The outlook remained optimistic, described in 1859 by abolitionist and pioneer editor James Redpath in his *Handbook to Kansas Territory*.

"Doniphan, it is admitted by every one, has the best rock-bound landing, and the best townsite on the Missouri river any where above St. Louis. It has running through it a fine stream of water, which by a trifling outlay which will soon be expended, can be made to flow through five of the

⁵ P.L. Gray, *Gray's Doniphan County history: A record of the happenings of half a hundred years* (Bendena, Kan.: The Roycroft Press), 1905.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 8 Page 9

Brenner Vineyards Historic District
Doniphan County, Kansas

principal streets. A wealthy company has been chartered for the construction of a railroad for St. Joseph, through Doniphan, for Topeka, connecting the Kansas and Missouri rivers. The stock is subscribed - ten per cent paid in. That part of it from St. Joseph to Doniphan will be completed as soon as the connection is made with Hannibal. Lots can be purchased at Doniphan on more liberal terms than at any other town on the Missouri. We say to the emigrant, come to Doniphan; believing as we do, that it is destined to be the great emporium of the upper Missouri. The population is about one thousand."⁶

Doniphan's early topography was described in *The Kansas Chief*:

Doniphan stands where the corkscrew Missouri makes a sharp turn to the west, and is hurled back upon itself by a huge wooded bluff. To the north and south rise heavily timbered bluffs, dipping to form the level bottom on which the town lies nestled from the prevailing storm-currents of winter. Behind it are fertile fields, magnificent vineyards and numerous farms in a high state of cultivation.⁷

Doniphan's population supported the Free State movement, much to the agitation of its neighbors in nearby St. Joseph, Missouri. James Lane, one of the Free State Party's most significant if controversial leaders, settled in Doniphan in 1857. He became a member of the town company and platted an extensive addition to the town site, "Lane's Addition." He did not stay long and moved on to Leavenworth two years later.⁸

Doniphan mushroomed in population and construction. Two large warehouses were built along the wharf that could accommodate 15 boats a day. The 40-room St. Charles Hotel was erected in 1857. The boom did not last long and by the late 1860s businesses began moving away, some to Atchison, seven miles to the southwest. The town survived, likely due to its rich agricultural surroundings. The struggle to endure began, but Doniphan caught a glimpse of hope in 1870 when the Atchison & Nebraska Railroad pulled into the town's new depot. That year, the population reached 1245 residents. The town became well known as a grain port. Adam Brenner, later the founder of Doniphan Vineyards, built an \$18,000 grain elevator with a capacity of 40,000 bushels. The elevator, full of grain, caught fire in 1872 and burned to the ground. Only \$3000 in insurance was recovered, so it was not rebuilt.⁹ In 1882, the town had a school, three churches, three stores, two saloons, one hotel, two or three boarding houses, two blacksmith shops, one shoe shop, one harness and saddle maker, two drugstores, two physicians, one butcher, one printing office and four wine cellars.¹⁰

The death of Doniphan came one night in 1891. Prior to that year, the Missouri River had gradually eroded its banks at the Doniphan landing. The river quickly rose one night in June that year, and within hours, swept away thousands of yards of railroad track. As the waters retreated and a new southern channel was formed, sand and

⁶ Gray.

⁷ "Doniphan One Of Oldest," *The Kansas Chief*, 5 May 1932.

⁸ *Historic Plat Book of Doniphan County, Kansas* (Chicago: J.S. Bird, 1882), 40.

⁹ "Doniphan—The Victim of a River's Caprice," *The Kansas City Star*, 6 July 1911.

¹⁰ *Doniphan Weekly News*, Vol. 1, No. 3 (24 March 1882), 3.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 8 Page 10

Brenner Vineyards Historic District
Doniphan County, Kansas

mud sealed the ends of the waterway near Doniphan, leaving the town without a railroad or a river.¹¹ Where steamboats once docked was now an inland village beside a large pool of water. The railroad rebuilt two miles to the west and by 1911, the town was described by *The Kansas City Star* as “desolate and almost deserted.”¹²

In 1949, Doniphan had a grocery store, filling station and a school building, but only approximately 50 residents.¹³ The Army Corps of Engineers emptied Doniphan Lake in the 1950s. As late as 1954, commercial buildings still stood in the town, although few businesses were still present. The two-story brick former general store was still used by the Doniphan Masonic Lodge.¹⁴ The town has since declined and currently has a population of less than 50 people.

The Brenner Vineyards

Jacob and Adam Brenner, brothers, were born in Deidesheim, Bavaria, the heart of Germany’s wine country. Both brothers and their families were both settled in Kansas by 1860. They each began their own winery in Doniphan County and remained there for their lifetimes, raising families and producing wine.

Adam Brenner was often referred to as the “father of Doniphan” and had the largest wine-making enterprise. He arrived in the area in 1857 and began working in general merchandising and as a grain shipper. He is listed in the 1860 federal census as a merchant and in the 1870 census as a commission merchant. In 1867, he built Doniphan’s grain elevator, the first built in Kansas. The elevator was destroyed by fire in 1872 and was never rebuilt. In 1865, he began setting out his vineyards in Doniphan County, encouraged by the Kansas State Horticultural Society. He began with three acres, increasing his crop yearly until he was the proprietor of 450 acres, 75 devoted to the largest vineyard in the state, which he named Doniphan Vineyards. He built a two-story brick warehouse on the south end of Doniphan’s Main Street. This building had a frontage of 42 feet and was 65 feet deep, accommodating business offices, as well as bottling and packing rooms. The cellar held five casks that each contained 2000 gallons of wine, five additional casks that each held 1500 gallons and many smaller casks that held 500 to 1000 gallons. The entire cellar held 30,000 gallons of wine.¹⁵ Adam Brenner also had a large cellar near his home, approximately one-half mile from town. His personal cellar contained 16 casks, each filled with 1000 gallons of wine.¹⁶

Adam Brenner, born in 1824, was married to Leah Hoffman in Fairfield, Iowa in 1852. The couple had five children—Anna, Eby, Martha, Charles and Catherine (Kittie). Leah, born in 1828, died in 1865. Adam married Martha Foreman in 1866. The couple had six surviving children—Frank, Bertha, Arthur, Mollie, Adelaide and Keifer. According to the 1885 Kansas state census, Adam Brenner owned 450 acres worth \$12,000. He raised

¹¹ “The Formation of Doniphan Lake,” *Transaction of the 24th and 25th Annual Meetings of the Kansas Academy of Science*, Vol. XIII, 1893: 47.

¹² “Doniphan—The Victim of a River’s Caprice,” *The Kansas City Star*, 6 July 1911.

¹³ “Doniphan Village Twice Site of Once-Thriving Community” *Atchison Daily Globe*, 11 December 1949, 5.

¹⁴ “History Textbook Contains Incidents About Doniphan” *Atchison Daily Globe*, 24 December 1954.

¹⁵ This building is no longer extant.

¹⁶ *Atchison Daily Globe*, 2 August 1885, p. 4.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 8 Page 11

**Brenner Vineyards Historic District
Doniphan County, Kansas**

40 acres of winter wheat, 25 acres of spring wheat, 40 acres of corn and 40 acres of oats. He had 100 apple trees and 12 cherry trees. 75 acres were devoted to vineyards, producing 300 gallons of wine that year. His livestock that year included two cows and three horses. Adam was also very musical and at one time traveled with a concert company playing the cornet and flute. He is credited with organizing and teaching the first band in Doniphan.



Adam Brenner Farmstead, circa 1880

Jacob Brenner, born in 1816, came to Doniphan in 1860. He is listed in the 1860 federal census as a grape grower and in the 1870 census as a farmer. He was married in Deidesheim, Bavaria in 1841 to Barbara Raufer, also born in 1816. The couple had five surviving children—George, Adam, Margaret, Mary and Nicholas. Jacob Brenner acquired 40 acres south of his brother's farmstead. As an experiment, he planted 200 vines on 15 acres he named Central Vineyards because it lay between the vineyards of his brother Adam and his son George. His first 100 gallons of wine encouraged him to continue and increase production. George Brenner's operation was smaller than those of his brother and son, but well recognized and substantial in its own right. His wine cellar, located adjacent to his house, had a storage capacity of 10,000 gallons. He is listed in the 1885 Kansas state census as owning 30 acres worth \$1000. Fifteen of the acres were planted as a vineyard that year, and he also had 25 apple trees and three cherry trees. His livestock that year included one cow and three horses.

Wines from the Brenner vineyards were promoted as superior and highly rated. Advertisements for the wines boast of their superiority over "ordinary wines" brought to the Doniphan area. Jacob produced wines from the grapes of Virginia Seedling, Dry Catawba, White and Red Concord and the Taylor Bullit, exclusive to the Central Vineyards. Together, the Brenner vineyards grew 25 varieties of grapes, primarily the Concord, Salem,

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 8 Page 12

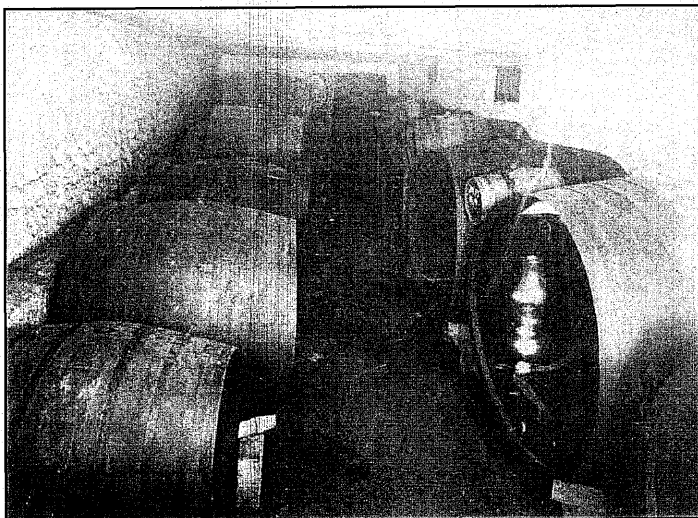
**Brenner Vineyards Historic District
Doniphan County, Kansas**

Goethe, Martha and Elvira. Much of Adam's wines were shipped throughout the Midwest and to the east coast. Demand for the products was high and a transfer wagon made one or two trips a day to Atchison hauling products to be shipped by the railroad.

A May 1872 article from the *Doniphan Herald* tells of a visit to the wine cellars to the Brenners:

We visited the wine cellars of the Brenners this week, and to say that we enjoyed the sparkling fluid from the 1,000-gallon cask, would not half express our delight in that visit. Such delicious wines are not found elsewhere in the United States. Those Brenner wines are getting a reputation not to be excelled anywhere in the country. Hermann has heretofore claimed the laurel in wines, but Doniphan now so far surpasses her in quality that Hermann must stand aside. It will be observed that the wine went to the Herald editor's head in short order.¹⁷

The vineyards of Adam, Jacob and George employed dozens of workers for every harvest. Adam's large operation hired more than 100 workers during some harvests, in addition to a year-round staff. Due to the restrictions of prohibition, the wines of both brothers were promoted as specially made for medicinal and sacramental purposes.¹⁸ Andreas' *History of the State of Kansas* states, "The medicinal qualities of the wines and brandies manufactured at these vineyards have long been known and their reputation is worldwide. The orders received daily, suffice to keep every one connected with this immense establishment fully employed."¹⁹



Casks in Doniphan Vineyards Cellar

¹⁷ P.L. Gray.

¹⁸ Kansas outlawed the manufacture and distribution of alcohol in 1880, 40 years before national prohibition went into effect. A loophole in the law allowed alcohol to be sold for medicinal purposes.

¹⁹ *History of the State of Kansas* (Chicago: A.T. Andreas, 1883).

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 8 Page 13

**Brenner Vineyards Historic District
Doniphan County, Kansas**

Adam and Jacob Brenner were able to circumvent the restrictions of Kansas' prohibition due to the fact that their businesses produced wine for medicinal and sacramental purposes. The anti-temperance attitudes of northeastern Kansas' German community also likely assisted their production.

Prohibition in Kansas was rooted in the territory's settlement by citizens from northeastern states, where temperate attitudes were common. The Free State movement was intrinsically tied to an opposition to liquor. Sales of the product were banned in Lawrence and Topeka as early as 1855²⁰ and dramshop laws were passed and revised during the state's early years. Restrictions were frequently protested by the German community and ignored or violated in many areas. An 1879 amendment to the Kansas constitution proposing that "The manufacture and sale of intoxicating liquors shall be forever prohibited in the State, except for medical, scientific and mechanical purposes" was trounced in Doniphan County.²¹ Indeed, the German-American community, heavily concentrated in nearby Atchison and Leavenworth, provided the most organized opposition to prohibition. Yet the amendment passed, introducing a new measure to the state and the country—constitutional prohibition.

Inconsistent attitudes continued to prevail, especially in the rural German community around Doniphan. These attitudes and the Brenner's promotion of their product for selective purposes undoubtedly helped the vineyards to succeed.

Doniphan began declining as a town by the mid-1880s. An article from the *Atchison Daily Globe* in August 1885 warns the traveler of the poor roads leading to Doniphan and laments the unsuitability of the river landing. Many fine houses and stores were left, the article goes on to note, but it was not expected that more would ever be built. "The greatest objects of interest in the locality are the extensive vineyards belonging to George and Adam Brenner, which, to an eye used to look upon corn as the only legitimate crop, present a remarkable appearance. Imagine yourself lost in 75 acres of grapes. The vines are planted in rows four or five feet apart, and a wire fence is strung along each row, for them to climb on. The ground between the rows is cultivated as for corn, and every care is taken of the vines, which, though hardy, require much attention to thrive well."²²

When the red and white grapes were ripe, a "perfect herd of boys"²³ would gather them in buckets. Avenues through the vineyards allowed wagons to pass to collect the grapes, which were then taken to the presses. The resulting juice was placed in the large casks within the Brenner cellars. In all, the vineyards of Adam, Jacob and George Brenner produced 150,000 gallons of wine annually during peak production.

The Brenner vineyards had a positive impact on the Doniphan community and sustained the town into the 1880s. Doniphan schools in the 1800s never opened until late September, so that pupils could help with the harvest. When the town's Catholic church burned in 1863, Adam Brenner donated a two-block tract for

²⁰ Robert Smith Bader, *Prohibition in Kansas* (Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 1986), 16.

²¹ Bader, 60.

²² *Atchison Daily Globe*, 2 August 1885, p. 4. George Brenner's vineyards, south of those owned by his father, Jacob, are no longer extant and are therefore not included in this nomination.

²³ *Ibid.*

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 8 Page 14

Brenner Vineyards Historic District
Doniphan County, Kansas

construction of the new one, which was completed in 1867. The Brenner family was frequently acknowledged as the leading support and mainstay of St. John Church and Doniphan.

Adam Brenner moved his family to Atchison in 1885 and died there on February 5, 1890 of apoplexy, likely a stroke. Jacob Brenner died at his Doniphan home of pneumonia on Feb. 4, 1891, 364 days after his brother. His funeral was held in St. John the Baptist Catholic Church. Adam's sons, Charlie, Frank and Keifer, took over his business. Jacob's business was taken over by his son, Nicholas. During 1893, Doniphan County had 454 acres of vineyards and produced more than 61,000 gallons of wine.²⁴

The Jacob Brenner Wine Company was chartered in May 1892. The directors and shareholders were Jacob's widow and living children—Barbara Brenner, Mary Brenner, Adam Brenner, Nicholas Brenner and Margaret Brandner. The capital stock of the corporation was \$25,000.²⁵ Nicholas Brenner became responsible for the Company. He is listed in the 1900 federal census as a wine grower and the head of the household. His mother, Barbara, is listed as the landlady and his brother, Adam, is also listed as living at the farm. The farm is recorded as owned free of any mortgage. The enterprise was not a success and the company was liquidated in August 1912. Jacob Brenner's widow, Barbara Brenner, died in 1906 at her Doniphan home. Her obituary stated, "She was one of the oldest residents of Wayne Township and among the most highly respected."²⁶ The Jacob Brenner farm changed hands several times; it was eventually seized by the Doniphan County sheriff and then sold to the National Life Insurance Company in 1936. John Louis Huss and his wife, Margaret, bought the property in 1946. The couple farmed and raised five sons there. John Louis Huss died in 1983 and Margaret Huss died in 1994. The property is now divided by their estate, with James Huss as the keeper and primary owner.

Descendants of Adam Brenner chartered the Doniphan Vineyards Wine Company in August 1893, with Charles Brenner, Martha Brenner and Frank Brenner as directors. The \$50,000 capital stock was divided between Charles Brenner, Martha Brenner, Kate Brenner, Frank Brenner and Arthur Brenner. Frank Brenner is listed in the 1900 census as the head of his household, married to Clara, and a farmer of a mortgaged property. Martha Brenner, wife of Adam, is listed as living in Atchison County that year in a mortgaged house and employed as a capitalist. Her six other children were living with her. In the 1905 state census, Martha Brenner and five of her children are listed again as living on the farm near Doniphan, which was mortgaged. By 1910, Frank Brenner was working as a mail carrier in Wayne Township. The Doniphan Vineyards Wine Company forfeited its charter in December 1911. Adam's widow, Martha, died in 1924 in Atchison. The property was sold to Joseph and Rose Marie Prohaska in 1943 and then sold to Edward and Marie Ford in 1965. The eight-room brick Adam Brenner house burned in 1960.²⁷ In the newspaper story in *The Kansas City Times*, it was identified as "the Frank Brenner house." The farm passed to the Ford's children in 1981. Edwin Dennis Ford now owns the bulk of the farmstead but the portion containing the Adam Brenner house site, winery and smokehouse was purchased by Robert and Kathleen (nee Ford, daughter of Edward and Marie Ford) Nourie in 1996.

²⁴ *Report of the Kansas State Board of Agriculture for the Year Ending December 31, 1893* (Topeka: Press of the Hamilton Printing Company, 1894), 44.

²⁵ Charter document filed with the State of Kansas. It should be noted that the spelling for Nicholas Brenner is frequently Nicolaus.

²⁶ *Weekly Kansas Chief*, 18 January 1906, 8.

²⁷ "Fire Razes Historic Home" *The Kansas City Times* 29 October 1960.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 8 Page 15

Brenner Vineyards Historic District
Doniphan County, Kansas

The Brenner Vineyards Historic District retains its integrity in location, setting and design. The extant buildings serve as a physical reminder of a long-gone history, when Doniphan was the center of prosperous vineyards. The wineries of Adam and Jacob Brenner played a significant role in forming and supporting the town of Doniphan from the 1860s through the very early 1900s. Despite a century of economic decline, remnants of the Brenner farms remain. The district contains a considerable reminder of their success in the extant farm buildings and the well-preserved church attended by their families. These remaining buildings contribute to the district's unique sense of time and place in Kansas history.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 9 Page 16

**Brenner Vineyards Historic District
Doniphan County, Kansas**

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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 9 Page 17

**Brenner Vineyards Historic District
Doniphan County, Kansas**

Newspaper Articles:

"Died. Jacob Brenner..." *The Atchison Daily Champion*, 6 February 1891.

The Atchison Daily Globe:

"Yesterday a GLOBE reporter..." 25 September 1882, p. 4.

"Adam Brenner, the Doniphan..." 5 February 1895, p. 3.

"The man who starts..." 2 August 1885, p. 4.

"Adam Brenner..." 5 February 1890, p. 1.

"Jacob Brenner died..." 5 February 1891, p. 4.

"Doniphan Village Twice Site of Once-Thriving Community." 11 December 1949, p. 5.

"Once Famed Wine Center." 19 March 1950, p. 13.

T.E. Garvey. "Doniphan Once a Busy Town." 5 March 1953.

T.E. Garvey. "Doniphan Once Grape Center." 8 March 1953, p. 6A.

"History Textbook Contains Incidents About Doniphan." 24 December 1954.

"Doniphan One Of Oldest." *The Kansas Chief*, 5 May 1932.

"Doniphan—The Victim of a River's Caprice." *The Kansas City Star*, 6 July 1911.

"Fire Razes Historic Home." *The Kansas City Times*, 29 October 1960.

"Mrs. Barbara Brenner..." *Weekly Kansas Chief*, 18 January 1906, p. 8.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 10 Page 16

**Brenner Vineyards Historic District
Doniphan County, Kansas**

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Huss, James. Interview by author. By telephone, 11 July 2004; by telephone, 6 August 2004; Atchison, Kansas, 16 July 2004.

Kansas State Censuses: 1885, 1905.

Noble, Allen and Cleek, Richard K. *The Old Barn Book*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1997.

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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 10 Page 18

**Brenner Vineyards Historic District
Doniphan County, Kansas**

UTM References

North Parcel: 15/321010/4390010

South Parcel: **A** 15/320940/4389760, **B** 15/321140/4389760, **C** 15/321140/4389700, **D** 15/321050/4389700,
E 15/321050/4389620, **F** 15/320940/4389620

Verbal Boundary Description

The Brenner Vineyards Historic District includes the following areas:

North Parcel: A parcel commencing at the northeast corner of the southeast quarter of Section 5, Township 5 South, Range 21 East, then south 1051.84 feet and west 2337.11 feet to the point of beginning; then proceed northwest 107.39 feet, northeast 172.13 feet, southeast 108.96 feet, southwest 186.61 feet to the point of beginning.

South Parcel: The south parcel is delineated by the polygon whose vertices are marked by the following UTM reference points: **A** 15/320940/4389760, **B** 15/321140/4389760, **C** 15/32140/4389700, **D** 15/321050/4389700, **E** 15/321050/4389620, **F** 15/320940/4389620.

Boundary Justification

This discontinuous district includes the extant buildings historically associated with the Brenner Vineyards. The South Parcel includes the buildings associated with Jacob Brenner's family and the adjacent property associated with St. John the Baptist Catholic Church. The North Parcel includes the extant buildings and house site associated with Adam Brenner's family.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 11 Page 19

**Brenner Vineyards Historic District
Doniphan County, Kansas**

Photographic Information

The following information is consistent for all photographs:

1. Brenner Vineyards Historic District
2. Doniphan County, Kansas
3. Photography—Susan Jezak Ford
4. July 7, 2004
5. Negatives retained by the Kansas State Historical Society

The following information is applicable to specific photographs:

6. St. John the Baptist Catholic Church, north view
7. #1

6. Jacob Brenner House, southwest view
7. #2

6. Jacob Brenner Winery, northwest view
7. #3

6. Brenner Barn, southwest view
7. #4

6. Adam Brenner Smokehouse, northwest view
7. #5

6. Adam Brenner Winery, northwest view
7. #6

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 11 Page 20

**Brenner Vineyards Historic District
Doniphan County, Kansas**

Property Owners

The property owners are listed for each building in the Brenner Vineyards Historic District by the number of the building identified on the sketch map in Section 11.

1-2. St. John the Baptist Catholic Church and Guest House
St. Benedict's Abbey, Inc.
2nd & Division St.
Atchison, KS 66002
913-367-5340

3-9. Jacob Brenner Farmstead
James Huss, et al
317 N. Fifteenth
Atchison, KS 66002
913-367-1656

10-12. Adam Brenner Farmstead
Robert & Kathleen Nourie
1501 92nd Rd.
Atchison, KS 66002
785-985-2383

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number _____ Page _____

SUPPLEMENTARY LISTING RECORD

NRIS Reference Number: 04001514

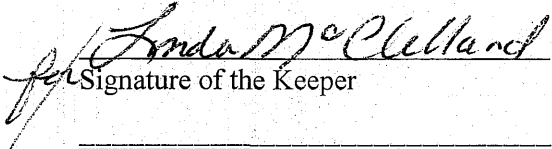
Property Name: Brenner Vineyards Historic District

County: Doniphan State: Kansas

N/A

Multiple Name

This property is listed in the National Register of Historic Places in accordance with the attached nomination documentation subject to the following exceptions, exclusions, or amendments, notwithstanding the National Park Service certification included in the nomination documentation.


Signature of the Keeper

May 24, 2005
Date of Action

Amended Items in Nomination:

Sections 5, 7, & 8, and Sketch Map

The Jacob Brenner House is, hereby, reclassified as a building "contributing" to the significance of the historic district. Although sided in non-historic materials, the house retains its nineteenth-century form, architectural details, and character.

The Kansas State Historic Preservation Office was notified of this amendment.

DISTRIBUTION:

**National Register property file
Nominating Authority (without nomination attachment)**

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 11 Page 20

Brenner Vineyards Historic District
Doniphan County, Kansas

