

DATA SHEET PH0111898

Form 10-300
(Rev. 6-72)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE:	California
COUNTY:	Orange
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY DATE	APR 21 1975

1. NAME

COMMON:
Key Ranch

AND/OR HISTORIC:
* George Key Ranch

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:
625 Bastanchury Road

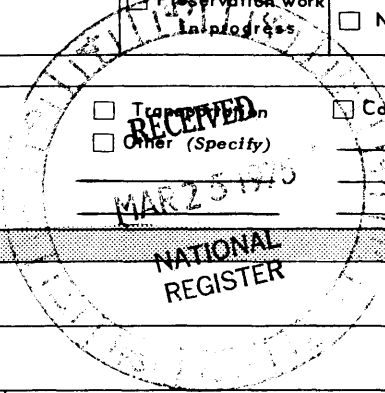
CITY OR TOWN:
Placentia

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT:
39

STATE: California CODE: 06 COUNTY: Orange CODE: 059

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> District <input 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	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work <input type="checkbox"/> In progress	Yes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Park <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transferred <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) <input type="checkbox"/> Comments



4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:
George Gilman Key

STREET AND NUMBER:
625 W. Bastanchury Road

CITY OR TOWN:
Placentia

STATE: California CODE: 06

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:
Orange County Recorder

STREET AND NUMBER:
630 N. Broadway

CITY OR TOWN:
Santa Ana

STATE: California CODE: 06

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:
Upcoming - State Historic Resources Inventory

DATE OF SURVEY: 1975 Federal State County Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:
Orange County Librarian

STREET AND NUMBER:
431 City Drive South

CITY OR TOWN:
Orange

STATE: California CODE: 06

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE: California
COUNTY: Orange
ENTRY NUMBER: APR 21 1975
DATE: FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

In 1893 George Benn Key purchased twenty acres on the northwest corner of what is now Placentia Avenue and Bastanchury Road. Part of this ranch was planted to vineyard, olive trees, fruit, banana and some blue gum trees. The hills to the north and west for several miles were being used for raising hay and grain and for pasturing sheep and cattle. Mr. Key cleared his property and planted about twelve acres of flat land to citrus. Due to water problems the hill section of the ranch was not planted for some years.

In 1898 Mr. Key built his home on his ranch. It was a large two-storied home and very square with no porches. The walls had wood lath but no plaster. There was no indoor plumbing and the only heat was from the kitchen wood-burning stove. The flooring was plain 1" x 6" pine flooring. The stairs were open tread 1" x 12" boards. Coal-oil lights were used. A water tank and windmill rested on a flat roof at the rear of the house. The old pipe hitching rail still stands near the south end of the present tractor shed.

In 1903 Mr. Key and his father bought forty acres on the southwest corner of Placentia and Bastanchury. The north twenty acres of this ranch was in walnuts. The east twenty acres was sold about 1907 but Mr. Key kept the west twenty acres until 1911.

About 1908 the old home was remodeled. It was jacked up and the wooden foundation was replaced with cement blocks. Pillared porches were added. (All the cement blocks used for the foundation and pillars were handmade on the job.) A one-story addition was built on the south side and many changes made inside. The stairs were changed and finished, the walls plastered and papered, and four fireplaces were built to furnish heat. Most of the downstairs floor was covered with 13/16" oak flooring. Balustrades, balconies and paneling were carved and fashioned on manually turned lathes. Living, dining and library areas were added. An acetylene (carbide gas) generator was installed to furnish gas for lights. The tank and windmill were removed, a tank house built and a one cylinder gasoline engine installed to pump the water and inside plumbing was added. Rocks were hauled by team from nearby Carbon Canyon for construction of the retaining wall which is now covered with hedges. Until the 1920's there were barns, corrals and a washhouse on the property.

The twin-peaked garage is made of three small buildings. The two front ones were built about 1905. They were used as "his" and "hers" outhouses by the old school until 1912.

About six acres of the hill section of the ranch were planted to citrus about 1918 by the present owners, George Gilman and Hannah (Ipsen) Key.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- Pre-Columbian | 16th Century | 18th Century | 20th Century
 15th Century | 17th Century | 19th Century

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) Built 1898 Remodeled 1908 and 1945

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>Predominantly</u> |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Agriculture | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture | <u>an orange ranch</u> |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art | <input type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications | <input type="checkbox"/> Military | | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation | <input type="checkbox"/> Music | | _____ |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Key Ranch contains the third oldest home in Placentia still standing. Another pioneer ranch home in town is to be demolished. The third site is a Mexican adobe. The house serves as a good example of 1900 American Victorian architecture, with decorative eaves and second-story porch and cupola. The extensive first floor porch and trellis is supported by columns of squared, rusticated quarry stone, and the entire dwelling is representative of a period when construction work was hand-fashioned.

The Key Ranch typifies those owned by the County's orange ranchers at the turn of the Century and is complete with grounds, home, outbuildings and collections. George B. Key was born in Canada (1854) and came to Placentia in 1893 with his wife, Mary. Mrs. Key, a native of Arkansas, came to Los Angeles at age 7 (1869) in an ox-drawn covered wagon. Mr. Key acted as superintendent of the Southern California Semi-Tropical Fruit Company Ranch, famous for its planting of the first commercial Valencia orange grove in 1880 (now the California State University, Fullerton campus). In 1893 he purchased 20 acres of the old Mexican land grant known as Rancho San Juan Cajon de Santa Ana. Of the total of 60 acres that Key eventually possessed, 18 acres were planted to citrus. Until the 20th Century when a pump was installed, the land was irrigated by driven team and wagon with water being dipped from barrels. Chinese laborers hauled water by tank wagons or else carried water laboriously by hand in yoke buckets.

The ranch is reminiscent of the horse and buggy days and of a time when household, garden and ranch chores were done by hand. The cows had to be milked, chickens and turkeys fed, butter churned, foods canned and clothes sewn. Bobcat and coyote hunting were the sports of the day. A two-room schoolhouse nearby served the children. Mr. Key was active in the organization of the Placentia and Fullerton school boards, Chamber of Commerce, Y.M.C.A. and First Presbyterian Church. He also helped organize the Placentia Orange Growers Exchange, a leading packing house in the area.

There were 8 children in the Key family, and many births and marriages of children and grandchildren have occurred in the home. The home is presently occupied and maintained by one of the sons, George Gilman Key, who has lived there with his wife, Hannah Ipsen Key, since 1945. Both were born in Placentia and she is the daughter of a local Danish merchant. The entire Key family and neighboring pioneer families are responsible for the vast memorabilia collections which cover a wide scope of areas and are housed in a museum-like setting. George and Hannah Key open their home to tours and would like to see it preserved as an historic landmark. So

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Brochure entitled, "The Home of Mr. and Mrs. George B. Key," published by the Key family.

Driscoll, Marjie, "Key Unlocks Treasures of Ranch Museum," Los Angeles Times, March 7, 1974, Part IV, p.1.

Kirkpatrick, Ron, "Rancher George Key-Last of a Vanishing Breed," Anaheim Bulletin, May 6, 1974

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

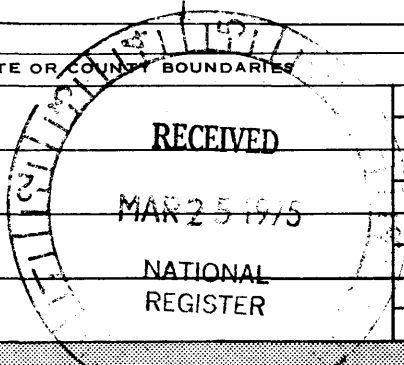
LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees	Minutes	Seconds
NW	° ' "	° ' "		N 33°	53'	49"
NE	° ' "	° ' "		W 117°	52'	26"
SE	° ' "	° ' "				
SW	° ' "	° ' "				

11/419800
3750870
C

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 2.25

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

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE



SEE INSTRUCTIONS

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE: Charlotte Irons, Park Historian-Interpreter

ORGANIZATION: Orange County Harbors, Beaches and Parks District DATE: 2-10-75

STREET AND NUMBER: 1901 Bayside Drive

CITY OR TOWN: Newport Beach STATE: California CODE: 06

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

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: [Signature]

Title: State Historic Preservation Officer

Date: MAR 17 1975

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

[Signature]
Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date: 4/21/75

ATTEST:

[Signature]
Keeper of The National Register

Date: 4.18.75

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Continuation Sheet)

STATE		California
COUNTY		Orange
FOR NPS USE ONLY		
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE	
	APR 21	1975

(Number all entries)

Continuation of No. 7 Description.

Around 1945, George Gilman Key remodeled the kitchen and service porch, and partitioned the original dining room to include a downstairs bath and bedroom. The music room was transformed into a dining area. He also added a shed for his tractors, which is presently used as a workshop and for displays.

Today the home (built-1898, remodeled 1908) rests, as it did before, on a knoll on the north side of Bastanchury Road. The elegant two-story white frame residence (with attic) is 3,676 square feet, and is surrounded by a beautifully landscaped garden, complete with meandering paths, a variety of flowers and shrubs, and a sundial. The property also contains large trees such as pines, palms and oaks. (One oak has a 75-foot branch span.) The home and gardens cover one acre. A winding private access road leads onto the property, which is surrounded on the east, north and west by orange groves. The garage (1908) is 529 square feet and the shed (1945) is 1,000 square feet. Both house agricultural and equestrian implement collections. On the grounds can also be found old farming and ranching equipment (shallow tillers, weed cutters, gooseneck furrowers, moldboard plows, cornplanters, wagons, anvils, rendering kettles, a rare Stokton gang plow, etc.). The interior of the large ivy-covered house is in very good condition and contains the six bedrooms and two bathrooms described above. Also included in the home are a substantial collection of family and period mementos and memorabilia, much of which dates back well over 100 years (photos, clippings, citrus labels, newspapers, antiques, postcards, rocks, shells, household utensils and belongings, clothing, etc.). In 1974-75 some new buildings near the shed were completed for display purposes. Our project includes the 2 1/4 acres of rural "island" setting property mentioned above. The other 3 1/2 acres to the north and west of the present property is hilly and contains producing citrus and avocado trees, but will be subdivided into residential lots. Tract homes and an elementary school are in the immediate vicinity.



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INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM**

(Continuation Sheet)

STATE California	
COUNTY Orange	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
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	APR 2 1975

(Number all entries)

Continuation of No. 8 Significance

would the close to 1,000 school children and adult residents of the community who signed a petition in 1974 in support of its preservation. Purchase by the County is being negotiated. The Ranch serves as a learning experience and as a representative example and reminder of a bygone era which is significant to the County's agricultural past and which is preserved in its own setting. It was the existence of these orange ranches that was to play a part in the naming of Orange County by the year 1889 when it was incorporated as a County separate from Los Angeles.



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
RECEIVED	MAR 25 1975
DATE ENTERED	APR 21 1975

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

Agricultural
Significance
Addition

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER

PAGE

Continuation of #8 significance: pg. 2

The Key Ranch will soon be the second oldest house in Placentia still standing. (There is an adobe in Placentia from the Mexican period). It is the earliest remaining of the Placentia orange ranches and is still operating today, though 3-1/2 acres of the property have been sold and will be subdivided. The remaining 2-1/4 acres, including the ranch house, the gardens, yard, sheds and groves, is the most thoroughly representative of the citrus ranches that made the County famous. This is due to the vast amounts of farming and equestrian equipment and family memorabilia from the turn of the century that have been collected and are present on the property and displayed in a museum-like setting. Hence, the ranch best typifies both a working orange ranch and a life style indicative of that early and important period in the County's history. Since the property consists of 2-1/4 acres surrounded on all sides by vegetation, the setting will continue to reflect the feeling of an early orange ranch.

The Valencia Orange first came to the County in the 1870's. In 1873 Richard H. Gilman of Healdsburg, California, selected approximately 105 acres in the Placentia area for his Southern California Semi Tropical Fruit Company ranch (now part of the California State University, Fullerton campus). This was the first instance in Orange County of a corporate operation of farm lands, according to county historian Leo Friis in his book "Orange County Through Four Centuries". This ranch was to become part of the first commercial Valencia grove in the County around 1880. George Benn Key came to the area in 1893 as superintendent of Gilman's Ranch, and in the same year purchased his first 20 acres of land, 12 of which he planted to citrus. These men were among the pioneers of the Valencia Orange industry, an industry which gained world fame for the County because of the delectable fruit which the perfect growing conditions in the area produced, and an industry which had its beginnings in this area of the County. The Placentia Orange Growers Exchange (Placentia Mutual Orange Association), which Key helped to organize, grew to become the largest packing house in the area. The cooperative of growers associated with the Exchange used the label of "Sunkist" for their oranges.

The Key Ranch is to be utilized in the upcoming Bicentennial celebration as an example of an industry of great importance to the County's early period.

Charlotte Irons
Park Historian
February 22, 1975

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

(Continuation Sheet)

STATE	
California	
COUNTY	
Orange	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
	APR 8 1975

(Number all entries)

Continuation of No. 9 Major Bibliographical References

Mead, Betty, "A 'Key' to the Past," Star-Courier, September 4, 1974, p.10.

Reinhartsen, Bette, "It's Still 1898 On George Key's Ranch," The Register, October 28, 1974, Sec. B-1, p.1.

Staff writer, "Heritage Home May be Preserved," Placentia Courier, September 4, 1974, p. 1.

