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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 Henry Tilley House 135-4670-0004
Other name/site number Prairie Cottage Guest House

2. Location

Street & number 108 W. 2nd St. not for publication
City or town Ransom vicinity
State Kansas Code KS County Ness Code 135 Zip code 67572

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.)

Patrick Palmer DSHPO 10/11/06
Signature of certifying official/Title Date
Kansas State Historical Society

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. 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:)

Edson D. Beall Signature of the Keeper Date of Action 11.21.06

Henry Tilley House
Name of Property

Ness Co., 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	
1		buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
1		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

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

Domestic: hotel

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

OTHER: Folk Victorian

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

Foundation: STONE: Limestone
Walls: STONE: Limestone

Roof: ASPHALT

Other:

Narrative Description

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

Henry Tilley House

Name of Property

Ness Co., 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)

Architecture

Period of Significance

1898-1912

Significant Dates

1898, 1912

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Henry Tilley

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:

Henry Tilley House
Name of Property

Ness Co., Kansas
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property Less than one

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1

1	4	4	1	8	8	5	0	4	2	7	6	6	9	0
Zone		Easting						Northing						

2

Zone		Easting						Northing						

3

Zone		Easting						Northing						

4

Zone		Easting						Northing						

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

Name/title John Dietterich

Organization _____ Date November 1, 2005

Street & number 112 N. Delaware Telephone 785-731-2220

City or town Ransom State KS Zip code 67572

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 Virginia Dietterich

Street & number Rt. 1 Box 27 Telephone _____

City or town Ransom State KS Zip code 67572

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

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National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

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Tilley House
Ness Co., Kansas

Description

This single-story, limestone house in Ransom, Kansas was built by the local stonemason Henry Tilley in 1898. The home is a four-room house common to that time and was built of locally quarried limestone. The original block of the house was topped by a decked roof and featured an off-centered chimney. Smooth cut and rough-cut limestone blocks were skillfully laid to create a quoining effect at the corners of the house and around the openings on the front façade. All mortar joints feature a beaded joint.

The front façade is oriented to the south and has three main openings. A centrally placed front door is framed by a small entry porch and features expertly carved spindles and support posts. The front door itself is a wooden door that features an etched glass panel. Originally the porch roof was decked with decorative shingles. But the current porch has a composite shingle roof that extends down from the main roof.

To the left of the front door is a pair of original double-hung, one-over-one, wood windows set into a single, oversized opening. To the right of the front door is a single, double-hung original wood window. Both window openings feature a decoratively stone carved lintels. The date of construction, 1898, is carved in a stone between the front porch and the right-hand window, just under the eave of the main roof.

The original structure was modified around 1912 with the addition of a wing on the east side. Henry Tilley added this wing using the same type of stone he used for the construction of the house. He did not continue the quoining pattern to the same degree, only using decorative stone on the corners. The east-wing contains a kitchen, and bathroom. It is topped by a side gabled, single-ridge roof, which extends down over a wrap-around porch. The chimney originally stood at the east end of the roof but was removed with the addition of the east wing. The porch begins at the southeast corner of the main block and wraps around the east end of the wing. The porch terminates at the northeast corner of the wing where the entrance to a small stone cellar is located in a shed addition. This porch features spindle work similar to the small front porch. When the east wing was built, a door was opened at the southeast corner of the original house to allow access to the porch from the dining room. The south side of the east wing features one, double-hung wood window. The east end of the wing has another door and one wood window to its north. These appear to be original to the time of the wing's construction.

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Tilley House
Ness Co., Kansas

The rear of the house faces the north and is very simple and utilitarian. Various shed additions have been added over the years, but are built of the same limestone used in the original house and east wing. One of these shed additions currently functions as the utility room. A large cistern is intact beneath the floor. Another addition was constructed at an unknown date on the north side of the original house. This addition is visible in a 1912 photograph and may have been built at the same time as the east wing or may have been original to the house. The north addition is very small with an interior dimension of 9'x9'. It is believed to have originally served as a bedroom. The north addition is topped with a single ridge roof that extends out from the rest of the house. The majority of the stone used on the back of the house is rough hewn with the exception of the stone in the gable of the north addition.

The exterior of the Tilley House retains a great deal of its historic character and integrity. Few changes have taken place since the early part of the 20th century. These changes include the removal of chimneys, painting of the exterior stone, and a slight reconfiguration of the roof. The decked hip of the main block was modified to regular hipped roof with a short, central ridge. The small entry porch roof was also modified to remove the flat, decked portion and the roof over the porch on the east wing was made slightly steeper.

The interior of the Tilley House has also maintained a high degree of integrity, though modern finishes have obscured some features. The interior of the house features original woodwork found in the windows, window frames, doorframes, baseboards, and floors. The doorframes and woodwork in the kitchen and bathroom has been painted. Several of the bedrooms have had carpet placed over the hardwood floors. The door and window surrounds are all decorated with molding and corner blocks that vary from a bull's eye to a wild flower pattern. The window ledges are very wide due to the thickness of the stone walls and are covered with beadboard.

The interiors of the walls are plaster over the rough hewn stone. The ceilings are also plaster but have been dropped some from their original height. The solid stonewalls prohibit any electrical or mechanical systems being run through the walls, so everything has been run down from the ceiling. While these wires and outlets detract from the general look inside the house, they have not irreparably damaged any of the historic materials. Very few interior modifications have taken place since the original construction and overall, the house retains a great deal of its historical integrity.

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Tilley House
Ness Co., Kansas

Statement of Significance

Summary

The Henry Tilley house in Ransom, Ness County, Kansas, is being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places under **Criterion C**. The Tilley house was built in 1898 by Henry Tilley a stonemason who lived and worked in Ness County. Henry Tilley quarried the stone himself and built the home as a residence for his family in their later years. The Tilley house is an example of a limestone Vernacular home constructed around the turn of the century.

History

Henry Tilley was born in Ware, Somerset, England, on July 26, 1844. He immigrated with his family to Iowa in 1857. It is recorded that he joined the Iowa Cavalry in 1863 and was honorably discharged in 1865. After his two years in the Cavalry, Henry returned to Pocahontas County, Iowa, where he homesteaded 160 acres. In 1866 Henry married Isabel Hancher. And in 1873 he and Isabel, with their two children, moved to Ness County, Kansas. Henry learned the trades of stone cutting and masonry from his father, Mathew Tilley.

In 1879 Henry Tilley bought a quarter section near the town site of Schoharie in Ness County, Kansas. Schoharie was an early community in Ness County, consisting mainly of a post office and a school. The post office existed only between 1881 and 1889. Henry's father and mother came from Iowa and bought a portion of Henry's land and Henry helped his father build a house there. The Walnut Valley Times on September 20, 1879 reported, "Mr. Mathew Tilley has his splendid mansion on River Street newly enclosed. Go that way and see what Henry and his father can do and if you want a fancy job you will know you can find a workman that can do it." The house featured a rose design on the gable end and the date 1879. It is believed that Henry also built a house on his land during this time. Page 214 of Minnie Millbrook's Ness, Western County, Kansas, shows the "home of early day settler, Henry Tilley" as a modest, stone structure. In 1881 both Mathew Tilley and Henry Tilley sold their land and their houses to Moses Langellier, and the families returned to Iowa.

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Tilley House
Ness Co., Kansas

According to his declaration for pension, submitted in 1912, Henry returned to Kansas for one year in 1884 before returning to Iowa again in 1885. However, he may have returned between 1885 and 1887 as he is cited as the builder of several other stone buildings in Ness County during those years. Letters written from both Henry and Isabel to Isabel's mother in Iowa and also letters from Isabel to Henry describe the tough times the family was experiencing during these moves. Henry was a farmer and a stonemason, but it was difficult to earn a living in the slow economy of that newly settled part of Kansas. Henry and Isabel had five children in all. It is not known if Isabel and the children accompanied Henry on all of these moves between Iowa and Kansas. Henry was definitely settled in Ness County, Kansas, by 1897. The family moved to Ransom, in Ness County in that year and lived there till Henry died in 1915.

Henry Tilley had his own stone quarry southwest of Ransom and he used that stone to build several stone buildings in the business district of Ransom. These included two banks, the S & D Mercantile (1900), and the Scherzinger Mercantile. These buildings composed nearly the entire west side of the business district of late 19th century Ransom, Kansas. Henry Tilley also built the Ransom Grade School (1902) and the Christian Church (1904). Unfortunately, the Tilley House is the only remaining example of his work left in Ransom.

Elsewhere in Ness County, Henry built the "Lion Block" on the town square of Ness City in 1887. He also built the New York House near Schoharie townsite. The limestone New York House was originally built in 1881 as the home of Levi M. Bice but also served as a hotel, store, and post office. Henry Tilley also enlarged a stone stable for Bice. He also built the Benjamin VanVolkenburg home near Schoharie in 1890.

An interesting comment on Henry Tilley's skill as a mason can be found on pages 246-247 of Minnie Millbrook's account in *Ness, Western County, Kansas*. "Ness County first displayed its products at a Western Kansas fair held in October 1886 at Garden City with exhibits from fourteen other counties. The Ness display, which won first prize of a silk banner and \$150 in cash...consisted of a stone house built of four different kinds of building stone, which abound in the county. The words 'Ness County' were neatly cut in the stone over the door, the whole structure being the work of Henry Tilley of Schoharie. The whole exhibit required seven teams to haul it to Garden City."

Henry and Isabel lived in the Tilley House at 108 West 2nd in Ransom from the date it was built in 1898 until their deaths. Henry died in 1915 and Isabel in 1933. Their daughter, Kate, lived in the house until the 1950s. A photo of the house from 1910 or 1912 shows the house looking very much as it does today. The Tilley House is a significant structure as an example of the limestone construction practices of western Kansas, but also for its association with the skilled craftsman of that stone, Henry Tilley.

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Tilley House
Ness Co., Kansas

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Declaration for Pension, May 28, 1912

Family History from Pioneer History of Pocahantas County, Iowa

Hall, Mary L., Sweet Prairie Home (local author, no publisher or date listed)

Letters from Henry Tilley and Isabel Tilley, dated August 7, 1881, September 6, 1881 and July 3, 1891

Millbrook, Minnie Dubbs. Ness Western County Kansas. Detroit: Millbrook Printing Co., 1955.

“Obituary Henry Tilley” New County News, Saturday, April 24, 1915.

“Obituary Isabel Hancher Tilley” The Ransom Record, Friday, February 17, 1933.

Verbal Boundary Description

Block 11, Lots 13-16

Boundary Justification

This boundary includes all of the property historically associated with this resource.

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Tilley House
Ness Co., Kansas

Photographic Information

The following information is consistent for all photographs:

1. Henry Tilley House
2. Ness County, Kansas
3. Photographer: Kristen Lonard
4. April 6, 2006
5. Digital photographs on file at the Kansas State Historical Society

- Photo #1: South (front) Elevation, view from the southwest
- Photo #2: West Elevation, view from the west
- Photo #3: North Elevation, view from the north
- Photo #4: East Elevation, view from the east
- Photo #5: South Elevation, view from the southeast
- Photo #6: South Elevation, Porch detail, view from the southeast
- Photo #7: South Elevation, Stonework detail, view from the south
- Photo #8: Interior, North room, woodwork detail, view from the south
- Photo #9: Interior, Kitchen, woodwork detail, trim, view from the east
- Photo #10: Interior, bathroom, view from the south