

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

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: New York	
COUNTY: Oneida	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

**1. NAME**

COMMON:  
Grant House

AND/OR HISTORIC:  
\* Elihu Root House

**2. LOCATION**

STREET AND NUMBER:  
101 College Hill Road

CITY OR TOWN:  
Clinton

STATE: New York      CODE:      COUNTY:      CODE:

**3. CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			Yes:
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Park <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

**4. OWNER OF PROPERTY**

OWNER'S NAME:  
Mrs. John S. Dietz (see continuation sheet)

STREET AND NUMBER:  
402 Sedgewick Drive

CITY OR TOWN: Syracuse      STATE: New York      CODE:

**5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:  
Oneida County Records Building - County Clerk's Office

STREET AND NUMBER:  
800 Park Avenue

CITY OR TOWN: Utica      STATE: New York      CODE:

**6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE OF SURVEY:

DATE OF SURVEY:       Federal       State       County       Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:      STATE:      CODE:

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## 7. DESCRIPTION

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

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Situated nearly opposite the main entrance to the Hamilton College campus, and approached by a gravel drive, the home of Elihu Root is today sequestered by the magnificent trees for which he himself is largely responsible. The house is a rambling, two-story clapboard structure, painted pale yellow with white trim. Within the radius of a few hundred yards are the two other structures--Buttrick Hall and "The Homestead"--most intimately associated with Root's background, while the Hamilton College campus and the quietly conservative town of Clinton itself largely round out the statesman's natal environment.

Born in the family apartments at Buttrick Hall in 1845, Root spent his boyhood at "The Homestead." Several years later, in the midst of a flourishing legal career, he bought the dwelling immediately east of The Homestead, at 101 College Hill Road, together with four surrounding acres, to serve as his own residence.

Known as the "Lower" or second "Mathematical House," the main part of the structure had been erected in 1817 for Theodore Strong, Hamilton College's first Professor of Mathematics. Later in the 19th century, it served as a college boardinghouse. At that time, a long, two-story frame dormitory wing was added to the rear. When Elihu Root acquired the structure, Victorian porches had replaced both the original stoop as well as the small gallery across the front of the story-and-a-half east wing.<sup>1</sup> The wing itself had also been raised from one to two stories. The straight-run Victorian staircase which still dominates the entrance hall undoubtedly had been installed during the same period.

In the early 1900's, when Root made other additions and improvements, it appears that he "restored" the facade of his home by removing the Victorian porches and constructing new ones more appropriate to the basic Federal simplicity of the house. He also modified the rear dormitory wing by converting the east side of the lower floor into an enormous living room centered about a massive fireplace. The one-story wooden gallery, running along the east side and across the back of the wing, was substantially altered as well. The northern end was partially enclosed to form a bay for the living room area, while the rest of the porch was widened and remodelled into a double-level, tetrastyle pedimented portico. The rear part of the porch became a roofless deck, overlooking the lawns which sloped away toward the wooded glen to the south. At the west rear of the wing, Root added a two-story servants' quarters.<sup>2</sup> With these changes, the house assumed the character it has preserved until the present day.

1. This conclusion is based upon examination of early photographs of the house now in possession of Root's descendants.
2. Both the rear wing and the servants' quarters added by Root are distinguished by one-over-one sashing, as well as narrow clapboarding.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**6. SIGNIFICANCE**

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- |  |                                       |  |  |
|--|---------------------------------------|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian | <input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 18th Century            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 20th Century |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 15th Century  | <input type="checkbox"/> 17th Century | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 19th Century |  |

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) **1893 - 1937**

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- |   |   |   |  |
|---|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal     | <input type="checkbox"/> Education              | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Political | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric    | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering            | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy  | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic       | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry               | <input type="checkbox"/> Science              | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture    | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention              | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture            | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Architecture   | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian  | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art            | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature             | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater              | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce       | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Military    | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation       | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications | <input type="checkbox"/> Music                  |   | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation   |   |   | _____                                    |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The conservative opponents of Progressivism were a crucial part of the American political spectrum during the early 20th century although the perspective of history has failed to vindicate some of their assertions. Elihu Root was a formidable and articulate spokesman for this viewpoint in the counter of Wilsonian policy. Still more important, perhaps, were his incontrovertible achievements under President Theodore Roosevelt in evolving a viable American military organization. Root's was also an axial role in American diplomacy prior to the First World War. Thus his place in American history is threefold: he has justly been called "the father of the modern American army;"<sup>1</sup> moreover, he was among the first American statesman to grasp the implications of becoming a world power; finally, he both stood in the mainstream, and in many ways represented the best, of the American conservative tradition.

The home of Root's adult life stands adjacent to that of his boyhood, while his birthplace lies but a few hundred feet away. Seldom, in fact, does a single locale circumscribe the formative influences of a man's life as does the sedate, upstate village of Clinton and its noted college. Root purchased the attractive Federal-style house in 1893, and, despite long intervals in New York City and Washington, he considered this his permanent home. For many years he found time only for short visits to Clinton, but he never missed the April flowering of the trillium on the grounds which he continued to improve throughout his life. The house and a portion of the original arceage is still owned by Root's descendants, while the "Root Glen"--the impressive gardens developed by the Root family--is maintained by Hamilton College. The house is in excellent condition, and many of its furnishings date from Elihu Root's lifetime.

1. George E. Mowry, The Era of Theodore Roosevelt (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1958), p. 125.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

Jessup, Philip C. Elihu Root. New York: Archon Books, 1964  
 Leopold, Richard W. Elihu Root and the Conservative Tradition. Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1954.  
 Link, Arthur S. and William B. Catton. American Epoch: A History of the United States since the 1890's. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1963.  
 Mowry, George E. The Era of Theodore Roosevelt. New York: Harper and Brothers, Publishers, 1958.  
 Pilkington, Walter. "The Homestead." Clinton, N.Y.: Hamilton College, 1959.  
 Weigley, Russell. History of the United States Army. New York: The Macmillan Co., 1967.

**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		
	Degrees	Minutes		Seconds	Degrees	Minutes
NW	°	'	"	°	'	"
NE	°	'	"	°	'	"
SE	°	'	"	°	'	"
SW	°	'	"	°	'	"

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 7

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

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

**11. FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME AND TITLE:  
Robert Gamble and Chris Redburn - Historic Sites Survey

ORGANIZATION: National Park Service      DATE: July, 1972

STREET AND NUMBER:  
1100 - L Street, N.W.

CITY OR TOWN: Washington      STATE: D.C.      CODE:  

**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 \_\_\_\_\_

Title \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

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

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

Date \_\_\_\_\_

ATTEST:

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

Date \_\_\_\_\_

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Grant House  
Elihu Root House (Continuation Sheet)

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(Number all entries)

(1)

4. Owner of Property (Continued)

Mrs. Paul A. Rustow  
243 Florasota Avenue  
Sarasota, Florida 33577

Mrs. David Griffiths  
3016 North Pollard Street  
Arlington, Virginia 22207

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Grant House  
Elihu Root House

(Continuation Sheet)

(Number all entries)

(1)

7. Description (Continued)

The nucleus of the house follows the characteristic side-hall plan found in later 18th and 19th century houses throughout upstate New York. In the east bay of the pilastered, three-bay facade, a paneled doorway, framed by sidelights and an elliptical fanlight, opens into the principal hallway. Root's study, formerly to the right, or west, side of the hall, is now a sitting room, while directly behind it is the dining room. On the left, or east, side of the hall is the single large downstairs room of the original wing. In all three rooms, Root carefully preserved the handsome Federal woodwork, including three strikingly attractive mantelpieces. A narrow cross hall, with a bath and large closet at the eastern end, connects the oldest portion of the house to the large wing containing the living room and, back-to-back with it, the butler's pantry, kitchen, and service area. Upstairs, essentially the same plan prevails, although the area above the large living room is partitioned into small bedchambers. The master bedroom is over Root's study. There is also a full basement with a very early summer kitchen beneath the east wing. The oldest portion of the foundation is of ashlar construction, while the foundations of the two later additions are built of rough stone.

Furnishings throughout the house are largely those of Elihu Root's lifetime, substantially augmented by heirlooms from the Grant family into which his daughter, Edith, married. Among numerous articles of interest is a large, leather-covered chair presented to Root in 1902, when he was Secretary of War. From that year until 1927, although living most of the time in New York or Washington, Root added surrounding parcels of land until his holding included some 260 acres and several of the original structures of his father's farm. In 1907, he acquired from the widow of his brother, Oren Root, full interest in "The Homestead." He continued the development, initiated by his father, of the wooded ravine behind the two houses. This vale, laced with shale walks, is now owned and maintained by Hamilton College. A massive hemlock hedge planted during Root's boyhood, defines the western property line of the house.

In the 1920's, Root and his wife retired to their Clinton home. Mrs. Root died in 1928. At Elihu Root's own death in 1937, the house passed to his daughter, Mrs. U.S. Grant III, and it is now maintained as a part-time residence by Root's three granddaughters. To distinguish it from "The Homestead," the Elihu Root residence is now generally known as the "Grant House."

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Grant House  
Elihu Root House (Continuation Sheet)

(Number all entries)

(2)

7. Description (Continued)

Root's son, Edward, Lecturer on Art at Hamilton College, occupied "The Homestead" from 1922 until his death in 1956. Subsequently this portion of the Root property, and "Root Glen" to the south, came into possession of the college. "The Homestead" now houses the Root Art Center.

The lot on which the Root, or Root-Grant, house stands today consists of approximately 6 1/2 acres and is largely as he left it except for the addition by his daughter of a three-car garage to the west rear of the house.

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Grant House  
Elihu Root House (Continuation Sheet)

(Number all entries) (1)

8. Significance (Continued)

BIOGRAPHY

The son as well as the grandson of a professor, Elihu Root spent a placid youth in the village of Clinton, New York. He was a member of the class of 1864 at Hamilton College, and, after graduation, he entered New York University Law School. Upon completing his studies there in 1867, he opened a private law practice in Manhattan, and over the next three decades he laid the groundwork for his future national and international eminence. As a defender of the large corporate interests then beginning to accrue power and influence in eastern America, Root also established his reputation as a leading conservative voice. From 1883 to 1885, he served as United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York, and in 1894 he was a delegate to the New York State Constitutional Convention.

With his appointment as Secretary of War by President McKinley in 1899, Root became a national figure, quickly demonstrating his capabilities. The Spanish-American War had revealed woeful inadequacies in the American military establishment, and Root proceeded to confront these problems with vigor and dedication. But his administrative and organizational talents did not come into full play until the accession of Theodore Roosevelt to the Presidency in 1901. The two New Yorkers were already friends of many years' standing, and Root became Roosevelt's most trusted advisor--"the ablest member of the constellation around the President" as Arthur Link has written.<sup>2</sup> Responding to the increasing American role in international affairs, Root laid the conceptual foundation during this period for the military structure with which the United States was to fight two world wars. He established the Army War College and, over widespread opposition, he evolved a thoroughgoing reorganizational plan for military, the basic premise of which was the proposal to create a general staff modeled after European precedent. From 1905 to 1909, Root also served as Roosevelt's Secretary of State. His achievements in this capacity--notable among them increased understanding between the United States and both Latin America and Japan, and the advocacy of a World Court--earned for him the Nobel Peace Prize in 1912.

Yet while Root was an internationalist, his philosophy was one of caution with regard to human progress, in his acceptance speech for the Nobel Prize, he warned in Spencerian terms that progress must be measured "not by days and years, but by generations and centuries in the life on nations."<sup>3</sup> He clung to the view that society could not "trust the impulses of the human heart under temptation."<sup>4</sup>

2. Arthur S. Link and William B. Catton, American Epoch: A History of the the United States since the 1890's (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1963), p. 100.

3. Mowry, p. 40.

4. Ibid., 39.

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(Number all entries)

(2)

8. Significance (Continued)

Returned to the Senate from New York State after he left the cabinet, Root became one of President Wilson's bitterist critics, and continued a strong defender of conservative domestic interests. When World War I erupted, however, Wilson's Secretary of War, Newton D. Baker, paid tribute to the Root military reforms as, he said, indispensable to the prosecution of the war.<sup>5</sup>

Essentially, Root supported the concept of the League of Nations, although, along with Henry Stimson, he feared that Wilson was proceeding too fast in breaking with ingrained American traditions. Thus he joined Senator Lodge in opposing ratification of the Treaty of Versailles, and, ironically, contributed one of the most significant of Lodge's famous "reservations." Throughout the later years of his public service, he continued to advocate strongly the course of the World Court, leading the fight to secure Senate approval for American participation.

His last years were spent in Clinton, and he died there in 1937.

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5. Russell F. Weigley, History of the United States Army (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1967), p. 322.