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DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Hill-Kurtz House is a one-story, hipped roof house built c. 1860 on a cross-hall plan. A nicely proportioned portico of square profile Doric columns surrounds the square block of the structure on three sides. Originally this colonnade continued around the entire building, but the rear facade columns were removed during the eighteen-nineties for an addition. This rear wing extends beyond the body of the house creating a T-shaped plan.

Doors into the house from the three sides of the present portico are framed, in the traditional Greek Revival manner, by rectangular fan and side lights enclosed within pilaster and entablature units. Nine-overnime light windows, usually more common earlier in the piedmont region, appear here in windows of generous proportions which add elegance to this relatively modest Greek Revival structure.

Interior details, such as the French doors inserted into the entrance hall and a neo-Adamesque mantel in the dining room, were added during a remodelling of the 1920's, but many original elements remain. For example, original mantels in the two front parlors are formed by strongly modeled pilasters and simple geometric entablatures. Original pegged, pine floors are visible throughout the older portion of the building.

The rear section of the building is entered through a Victorian porch of turned posts and cut-work brackets which extends along the entire facade of this later wing yet is not visible from the front. The driveway, which originally circled the house, now runs along this facade under a central porte-cochere on simple turned posts. 91/10



PERIOD (Check One or More as	Appropriate)		
Pre-Columbian	16th Century	🔲 18th Century	20th Century
15th Century	17th Century	🔀 19th Century	
PECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicab	le and Known) C. 18	860, c. 1890	·····
REAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Ch	eck One or More as Appropr	iate)	
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Communications	Military	Theater	
Conservation	Music	Transportation	

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Hill-Kurtz House is one of a number of structures in Griffin that were constructed by a builder named Gilman J. Drake, who came to the town from New Hampshire in 1857. With its cross-hall plan and encircling portico it was an unusual structure for this period in the area, even though a second house apparently built along similar lines by the same builder is located nearby. In addition to its handsome and interesting architectural form, the house has been connected with several families which settled in the area during Griffin's earliest days.

The house stands on property originally belonging to Benjamen J. Milner, a pioneer citizen of Griffin for whom the Benjamen Milner Dragoons were named. This was the only company of cavalry sent from Spalding County to the Confederate forces. Milner provided financial assistance for equipping and mounting this group which served under General Nathan B. Forrest. Milner, for whom Gilman Drake built the house, sold it along with fourteen acres in August 1866 to Henry P. Hill. Hill's daughter, Elizabeth, married Flemming Bailey, one of six surviving children of David Jackson Bailey, a prominent Griffin lawyer and politician. It was Bailey who added the Victorian wing which now forms the T-end of the originally square structure. Elizabeth Hill Bailey, who owned much property in Griffin in the early twentieth century, sold this house in 1920 to Ober Tyus. The lot was then only a part, four acres, of the lands originally deeded by Milner to Hill. Later, the land was further subdivided, leaving its present area of about one acre. It was Ober Tyus who remodelled extensively in the twenties, adding such improvements as French doors and bathrooms. The house was sold to Catherine Griffin in 1948 and ten years later to its present owner, W. Paul Kurtz.

Even though its originally larger acreage has been reduced, the Hill-Kurtz House is today one of the most impressive structures on this street of older homes and trees. Set well back from the street in luxuriant foliage, it is a nicely detailed example of the Greek Revival in this area of Georgia.



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