

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: Kansas
COUNTY: Douglas
FOR NPS USE ONLY
ENTRY DATE

045 - 1730-001

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**1. NAME**

COMMON:

AND/OR HISTORIC:  
Pilla, Charles, House

**2. LOCATION**

STREET AND NUMBER:  
615 Elm

CITY OR TOWN:  
Eudora

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT:  
No. 2, Bill Roy

STATE: Kansas CODE: 66025

COUNTY: Douglas CODE: 045

**3. CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Object <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Structure 	<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	Yes: <input type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural	<input type="checkbox"/> Government	<input type="checkbox"/> Park	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation	<input type="checkbox"/> Comments
<input type="checkbox"/> Commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> Industrial	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private Residence	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Educational	<input type="checkbox"/> Military	<input type="checkbox"/> Religious		
<input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Scientific		

**4. OWNER OF PROPERTY**

OWNER'S NAME:  
Ralph Snyder

STREET AND NUMBER:  
615 Elm

CITY OR TOWN:  
Eudora

STATE: Kansas CODE: 66025

COUNTY: Douglas

**5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:  
Register of Deeds

STREET AND NUMBER:  
Douglas County Courthouse

CITY OR TOWN:  
Lawrence

STATE: Kansas CODE: 66044

COUNTY: Douglas

**6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE OF SURVEY:  
Historic Sites Survey

DATE OF SURVEY: June 23, 1973  Federal  State  County  Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:  
Kansas State Historical Society

STREET AND NUMBER:  
120 West 10th Street

CITY OR TOWN:  
Topeka

STATE: Kansas CODE: 66044

STATE: Kansas	COUNTY: Douglas	ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

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7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input checked="" 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

The Pilla House, which is considered the most elaborate and best constructed house built in Eudora, is a two and one-half story irregularly shaped structure with a full basement. The Victorian-style mansion sits on high ground overlooking the town square to the west. It is located in a residential area about one block north of the town's business district. It measures nearly 50 feet long and a dominant tower over the west entrance reaches three full stories above the ground.

The exterior walls are built of wood frame covered with narrow horizontal clapboards. The building rests on a stone foundation which encloses the basement. Covering the walls of the entrance tower are wood shingles with angled corners, which give a diamond-like pattern to the walls. The gable ends, which are separated from the walls below, are treated in a similar manner.

The roof form is a steeply pitched gable with intersecting gables on the north, west and south facades. The gables are accentuated by lace-like barge boards and squared cornices. The tower roof, which originally was pyramidal, is now flat. The roof overhangs the walls and is supported by evenly spaced wooden brackets around the perimeter. A large porch beginning at the front entry wraps around the west and south sides and has a shingled sloping roof. Small gables in the porch roof mark entrances on the west and south sides. Ornamental wood columns with carved brackets support the porch roof. Windows on all floors are simple rectangles of the double-hung type. Stained glass was originally used in the front door.

On the interior the original hardwood floors are still in good condition, but the present owner has covered them with linoleum. (The health of the present occupants did not permit them to maintain the wood floors as they wished, so the linoleum, which can easily be removed, was installed.) The dining room and the parlor have corner fireplaces with frames and hearths of Italian marble in flowered patterns.

Except for the removal of the tower's pyramidal roof and the window shutters, the Pilla house has changed very little in exterior appearance. The interior likewise has not been greatly altered. The original stained woodwork is still in place and presents a very charming appearance. The original privy with its decorative top still stands behind the house.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**SIGNIFICANCE**

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

<input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian	<input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century	<input type="checkbox"/> 18th Century	<input 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) 1894

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 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 checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> Commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> Military	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Communications	<input type="checkbox"/> Music		_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Conservation			_____

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Charles Pilla house was erected in 1894 at a time when the German-born merchant was mayor of Eudora. Born in Bavaria in 1830, Pilla came to the United States in 1849 and to Eudora in 1865, where he joined his brother Frederick who had opened a small store three years earlier. After Frederick's death in 1871, Charles expanded the business until it was the largest general merchandise store in the community. It handled everything from household goods to agricultural implements and, later, automobiles.

In addition to his mercantile interests, he was involved in many other business activities. He helped organize the Eudora State Bank in 1892 and served as its president until his death in 1916. He was a partner in the brick manufacturing firm of Pilla and Statler, and an investor in other Eudora and area enterprises, and the owner of a number of farms. He served the community as postmaster (1871-1885), mayor, councilman and school board director.

The construction of his large, impressive Victorian mansion began in early March, 1894, and the Eudora News of May 31, 1894, announced, "Mayor Pilla's new residence is progressing rapidly, under the supervision of Mr. Nadelhoffer of Lawrence. When completed it will probably be the largest and handsomest residence house in the township. It will cost \$10,000 or more when completed." (William Nadelhoffer was the prominent Lawrence builder who later supervised the construction of Green Hall at the University of Kansas campus in 1905. Green Hall has previously been nominated to the Register.) The lumber used in the house was cut from timber on the various farms Pilla owned and planed at a Lawrence mill.

Work on the house continued through the summer and on October 4, the newspaper noted that the residence had received its first coat of paint and would probably be ready for occupancy by November 1. The Pilla family occupied the house until 1963 when an 86-year-old daughter was removed to a rest home.

Charles Pilla was for 50 years a respected businessman in Eudora, one who allowed customers to pay off their charges at his store with produce such as eggs and butter. Having experienced poverty himself, he helped many poor German emigrants get their start in the Eudora area. He was a generous contributor to local charities and a leader in projects promoting and improving his community. Few, if any other individuals, had as much influence on the growth and prosperity of Eudora as Charles Pilla.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

Connelley, Wm. E., Kansas and Kansans (Chicago: Lewis Publishing Co., 1918), pp. 2277, 2278.  
Eudora News, March 1, 1894; April 12, 1894, May 31, 1894; October 4, 1894; April 30, 1936; July 25, 1957.  
A History of the State of Kansas (Chicago: A. T. Andreas, 1883), p. 354.  
 Hoddle, Harold W., editor, Eudora Centennial Magazine, 1957 (n.p., 1957), p. 13.  
Lawrence Journal-World, April 20, 1967.

**GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY				OR	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	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds
NW	0			0			38	56	52	95	05	53
NE	0			0								
SE	0			0								
SW	0			0								

PROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 1

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

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE

**FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME AND TITLE: Richard D. Pankratz, Director, Historic Sites Survey, and Charles Hall

ORGANIZATION: Kansas State Historical Society DATE: May 1, 1974

ADDRESS AND NUMBER: 20 West Tenth Street

CITY OR TOWN: Topeka STATE: Kansas 66612 CODE: 20

**STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION**

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: Nyle H. Miller  
 Title: Executive Director, Kansas State Historical Society  
 Date: June 5, 1974

**NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION**

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

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

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

ATTEST:

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

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

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(Continuation Sheet)

STATE Kansas	
COUNTY Douglas	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

(Number all entries)

8. The Pilla house is an outstanding example of Victorian residential architecture as constructed in a small eastern Kansas community. It has been one of the landmark buildings of Eudora since 1894.

9.

Portrait and Biographical Record of Leavenworth, Douglas and Franklin Counties (Chicago: Chapman Publishing Co., 1899), pp. 253,254.

Tonganoxie Mirror, August 16, 1973.

Wilson, Hill P., Eminent Men of Kansas (Topeka: Hall Lithographical Co., 1901), pp. 303-305.