

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY
FEB 24 1976
RECEIVED
DATE ENTERED SEP 28 1976

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

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC *Paris*

Marland, E. W., House - (No. 1)

AND/OR COMMON

The Ponca City Cultural Center

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

1000 East Grand

CITY, TOWN

Ponca City

STATE

Oklahoma

— VICINITY OF

CODE
40

— NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

No. 6

COUNTY

Kay

CODE

071

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL <input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL <input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT <input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT <input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL <input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

The City of Ponca City

STREET & NUMBER

516 East Grand

CITY, TOWN

Ponca City

— VICINITY OF

STATE

Oklahoma

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Office of the County Clerk

STREET & NUMBER

Kay County Courthouse

CITY, TOWN

Newkirk

STATE

Oklahoma

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

Oklahoma Landmarks

DATE

1967

— FEDERAL STATE — COUNTY — LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

Oklahoma State University (School of Architecture)

CITY, TOWN

Stillwater

STATE

Oklahoma

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION

EXCELLENT DETERIORATED
 GOOD RUINS
 FAIR UNEXPOSED

CHECK ONE

UNALTERED (basically) ORIGINAL SITE
 ALTERED MOVED DATE _____

CHECK ONE

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The 22-room Marland mansion was built 1914-1916 and is listed in Oklahoma Landmarks.* Its hanging staircase is considered noteworthy. The white stucco, tile roofed structure is in the Spanish style so popular in Oklahoma at the time. The architect is believed to be George Forsyth.

When built, this part of Ponca City was largely undeveloped. Marland needed additional land for the showplace he had in mind. A Massachusetts editor described the estate this way in 1924:

The mansion sets (sic) at the summit of quite a rise of ground while gradually sloping away are a series of terraced gardens ending with the greenhouse at the foot, there being six acres in this garden surrounded with a line of tall growing trees resembling poplars. This is an enchanted spot with its rose gardens, pond lily basins, where all the familiar flowers of the north vie with the lovely varieties of the semi-tropics running a perfect riot . . .

Today its grounds have drawn in to provide only a still-generous setting of trees, shrubs, and lawn. The gardens are small and modest. But the house itself, well preserved and basically unchanged, continues to reflect the clean, gracious beauty of exterior lines and warmly inviting hospitality of interior spaciousness built into it sixty years ago.

* Oklahoma State University, 1967.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES 1916 to present BUILDER/ARCHITECT George (?) Forsyth

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The one-time home of Oklahoma's 12th governor is more than a magnificent mansion ordered into existence by a millionaire oilman. It is a majestic monument in stone to one of the last of a breed - a fantastically successful wildcatter, a rags-to-riches individualist, an ambitious empire who created on the frontier a classic European villa where but a few decades earlier there had been only tepees.

Thus was described in an earlier nomination The Villa, the last house Gov. Marland built in Ponca City, shortly before the Great Depression that was to swamp him. It is now in the National Register. And, interestingly enough, in the fall of '1975 residents of that city voted to purchase the property, adapt it to provide a variety of community services. Now it would seem appropriate to nominate his next-to-last home - a mansion in its own right, if decidedly less pretentious - the business and social base from which he created the wealth that made The Villa possible. Significantly, it too is owned by the City of Ponca City and also serves the community as a showcase for the roots of its cultural heritage.

* * *

Ernest Whitworth Marland was born in Pennsylvania in 1872. He came to Oklahoma in 1908 - "with a dinner bucket in his hand and ambition in his heart," according to one who knew him well. It was a propitious time to come. Oklahoma had become a state only the year before and the oil business was booming. Marland entered it enthusiastically, growing and prospering with it.

He promoted geology as a dependable aid in determining the location of oil fields. He also promoted core drilling and did much else to improve the industry. His first oil production came in 1911, from the South Ponca Field, only a few miles from where he was eventually to build both his mansions. Other and more important strikes followed. He was said to have "a nose for oil and the luck of the devil."

He also possessed solid financial backing in New York. As the Marland Oil Company grew he began to build what is known as an integrated company - one that handles its own product from well head to gasoline pump. The name Marland began to appear over filling stations in an ever-expanding area and Marland pipe lines reached out into widening fields to gather crude from Marland wells. Money flowed in with the oil. In an era when income taxes were far from onerous, Marland paid \$1,000 a day over one ten-year period. His personal wealth reached \$30 million. He controlled holdings in several countries worth several times that and more.

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Marland, E. W., House (No. 1)

This was in the 1920s, however. It was in 1914, just three years after his initial strike, that he first decided to build for himself a home more worthy of his increasing wealth and growing importance in the petroleum industry. This 22-room white stucco mansion at the east end of Ponca City's main street, Grand Avenue, is the result. It was completed in time for Christmas 1916. And for the next twelve years it was the scene of elaborate parties and increasingly important gatherings of social, political, entertainment world, and business figures from around Oklahoma and the country. Marland introduced fox hunting to the area and soon the white mansion was hosting red-coated hunters to traditionally sumptuous hunt breakfasts. Parties were held after polo matches and horse shows.

A publicity coup - for Oklahoma as well as Ponca City and E. W. Marland - came in 1924 when the flamboyant Miller Brothers brought to their nearby 101 Ranch the annual convention of the National Editorial Association. Marland, of course, did his share of entertaining for the state's influential guests, many of them seeing Oklahoma and the West for the first time. A flood of laudatory stories on the area resulted, coming from all parts of the country. And many of them dealt appreciatively with Marland, his mansion, and his various civic benevolences.

An Illinois editor termed "outstanding" NEA's first-day reception at the Marland's "palatial home," where they were welcomed by Gov. M. E. Trapp. He also liked the gardens - where a Japanese landscape gardener had created "a veritable wonderland of beauty" - and the Marland golf links across the street. "Unlike the Rockefeller home and grounds surrounded by a high iron fence and guards scattered about to throw intruders out," he noted, "the Marland grounds are open to everyone . . ."

George W. Marble, NEA's president-elect, also considered the Marland home and gardens Ponca City's "principal attraction." Of Marland himself he wrote: "He is Ponca City's greatest asset, and the people of the town highly honor him." E. L. Wheeler, a Washington state editor, was both appreciative and prophetic. He praised the mansion and the gardens (" . . . a riot of color on the day of our visit and the ladies of our party were given all the roses they could carry"), then noted: "Although he has one of the most magnificent homes in the world, Mr. Marland has started plans for another to be more elaborate." He had indeed. And it was. He started work on The Villa in 1926, moved into it two years later.

* * *

The house passed into the hands of Jay G. Paris, Ponca City businessman and rancher. In 1967 his widow sold it to the city for \$85,000 and it was dedicated the following

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year as the Ponca City Cultural Center. The city's Indian Museum, established in 1936 and concentrating on material relating to the five tribes of the area - Ponca, Kaw, Otoe, Osage, and Tonkawa - was moved into the mansion. Ethnological and archaeological materials of other tribes have since been added. The house also contains the Bryant Baker Studio (the New York artist who sculpted the famed Pioneer Woman Monument that stands a few blocks to the north near the entrance to The Villa), the 101 Ranch Room (with memorabilia pertaining to that famed institution), and the D. A. R. Memorial Museum (patterned after the one in Washington, D. C.). It serves as the Ponca City Garden Center and plays host annually to countless parties, receptions, and other social events, as well as art shows, music club programs, and meetings of numerous civic groups.