

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

JUL 21 1989

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

NATIONAL
REGISTER

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name Edgar Backus Schermerhorn House
other names/site number Same

2. Location

street & number 803 East 5th Street not for publication
city, town Galena vicinity
state Kansas code KS county Cherokee code 021 zip code 66739

3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	Contributing	Noncontributing
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u> buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	_____	_____ sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	_____	_____ structures
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	_____	_____ objects
		<u>1</u>	<u>2</u> Total

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, 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. See continuation sheet.

Ramon Power State Historic Preservation Officer July 12, 1989
Signature of certifying official 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.

Signature of commenting or other official _____ Date _____

State or Federal agency and bureau _____

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this 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:)

Entered in the National Register

Andrew Byron 8/21/89

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally statewide locally

Applicable National Register Criteria A B C D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) A B C D E F G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Architecture
Commerce

Period of Significance

1893-1895
1895-1923

Significant Dates

1893-1895

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

Schermerhorn, Edgar Backus

Architect/Builder

Anderson and Strong: Architects

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

The Edgar Backus Schermerhorn House (c. 1895) is being nominated to the National Register under criteria B and C for its historical association with Edgar Backus Schermerhorn (1851-1923) and for its architectural significance as a free classic, Queen Anne residence. Schermerhorn made his fortune in the Galena lead and zinc mines, becoming one of the wealthiest people in Cherokee County. The Edgar Backus Schermerhorn House retains a high degree of integrity.

In December, 1875 Schermerhorn came to Baxter Springs, Cherokee County, Kansas from a failed mining venture in Colorado. He accepted a clerical position with John M. Cooper, the leading Baxter Springs merchant. In 1877, lead was discovered about ten miles northeast of Baxter Springs and the town of Galena was born. John M. Cooper and Company opened a store in Galena that year, with Schermerhorn as the managing partner. The store catered to the miners, supplying dry goods, groceries, hardware, and miner's supplies. Jonathon Letham described Galena in 1891, writing that, "Galena presents to-day the appearance of a wealthy mining camp. Many men came here poor and to-day are rich. The main business of the merchants is supplying the miner's and their families."

Schermerhorn prospered from the mining boom, investing in large tracts of land in Cherokee County which yielded profits in lead and zinc. Schermerhorn founded the Wyandotte Lead and Zinc Company, and along with seven other corporate owners, controlled all of the land that was mined in Galena. The June 2, 1889 issue of the Topeka Daily Capital described Galena as, "a tough looking town . . . but they've got dollars where they've got dimes in some of your prairie towns . . . There are "diggings" or shafts on all the streets, right in the heart of town . . ." Schermerhorn made a fortune from the mines and as his wealth

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and lintels. The sills and lintels on the second level form a continuous course around the three exposed sides of the tower. Five moulded brick, rectangular panels decorate the upper walls of the tower. The windows on the tower have carved rope trim around the outside jams. The tower is capped by a two-sided, pitched roof that leads from the main roof.

The facade's center bay is comprised of a single portal on the first level. The high solid oak door is enhanced by an oval beveled pane and a large two-key solid brass lockplate. The door is set off on both sides by two leaded glass windows measuring sixteen inches wide and eighty-eight inches high each. A stained glass transom surmounts the door. The second floor is set off by a balcony measuring ten and one half feet wide by six and one half feet deep. The balcony is centered directly over the front entrance and the bottom is combined with the veranda roof. The balcony's six turned columns support a Steamboat Gothic frieze. Fishscale shingling ornaments the balcony's balustrade and gable.

The eastern most unit of the facade elevation is composed of a three-story gabled pavilion. Two, 1/1 double hung windows comprise the first and second floor fenestration, surmounted by carthage limestone lintels and underscored by smooth cut carthage limestone sills. A palladian window pierces the gable, surmounted by carthage stone lintels and underscored by carthage limestone sills. Twelve brick rondelles accentuate the gable's eave line.

The one story wooden veranda extends across the building facade and to the western and eastern sides of the house. It comprises a single porch unit. A gabled roof pediment projects from the center bay of the facade. Fluted, ionic columns support the porch's classical entablature with a dentil course. The total length of the veranda is ninety feet. The veranda has a wooden floor and ceiling, lathe turned balusters stand on elevated bases and are capped with railings that run between the columns.

Although less elaborate than the facade, the secondary elevations incorporate the projecting pavilions and 1/1 double hung fenestration of the main elevation. Features of particular note include the palladian window and rounded bay that mark the west elevation.

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The interior of the house exhibits a modified, center hall plan, with five rooms on the first floor, five rooms on the second floor and unfinished third floor spaces. A right-angled finish oak panelled staircase with two levels rises from the main hallway along the middle north wall of the first floor to the second floor. A rear staircase rises two stories. Six fireplaces throughout the house provide warmth. One central chimney connects five working fireplaces, which are located in the dining room, the sitting room and the hall on the first floor and two bedrooms on the second story. The second story fireplaces are directly above the dining and sitting room on the first floor. The fireplaces in the library, dining room and hall are of brick and sculptured faces with marble mantels and tile hearths. The fireplaces in the sitting room and bedrooms have classically inspired wooden mantels, with tile hearths. The interior of the house exhibits finish flemish oak, finish English oak, birdseye maple, finish cypress, finish curly pine and yellow pine. The finished woodwork for trim and flooring was shipped from England. The interior has original hardware and some original lights with others replaced with period lights. It contains four, five-sided, four foot, colored glass and brass chandeliers. The chandelier in the parlour is original and provided gas as well as electric light.

Sliding, five panelled, double-pocket doors separate the dining room and the library on the east and west side of the main hall. Five panelled single-pocket sliding doors separate the setting room and the parlour on the east and west side of the main hall, too. The doors on the second floor are five panelled, with moveable transoms. A colored glass transom surmounts the front door. The door is wooden with a large oval bevelled glass pane, outlined with decorative designs. The lower half has four panels and decorative shelf. The vestibule door is wooden with an etched glass pane. The door surrounds are classically inspired with moulded architraves and etched narrow panes on either side, with a large divided etched pane above the door. The reception hall has a beautiful parquet floor with intricate patterns of three different woods. The sitting room has an inlaid border of unusual design.

The Schermerhorn House retains a high degree of architectural and structural integrity. A non-contributing concrete block garage and a non-contributing frame carriage house stand behind the house. The garage is deteriorated and the carriage house has been altered.

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grew so did his involvement in the private and public affairs of the community. He became the president of the Citizen's Bank of Galena in 1893, served in the Kansas State Legislature as Cherokee County's representative from 1901 to 1905, and sat on the State Board of Control from 1905 until 1911, when he retired from public life. By 1912 he was worth between \$150,000 and \$200,000 and owned more than 6,000 acres of land in Cherokee County.

Schermerhorn died in February, 1923 at the age of seventy-two and the home was inherited by his sister, Minnie K. Lennon. She retained the home until her death, February 6, 1939. Lennon moved into the home from her farm, but continued her rural living by raising chickens in the library and staking a cow in the front yard and selling milk by the quart. During cold wet weather she let her neighbors use the clothesline in the attic. The home has continued as a private residence and is presently being restored by the current owners.

Plans for the home were drawn by Galena architects Anderson and Strong in 1892. The house was in construction for at least two years and was completed at a cost of \$34,000. The original floor plans show twelve rooms: parlor, two sitting rooms, library, morning room, servants' room, kitchen, a very large reception hall, many bedrooms, and six fireplaces. Finish woodwork for trim and flooring was shipped from England, and included yellow pine, curly pine, cypress, birdseye maple and Flemish and English oak. Parquette floors with intricate inlaid borders ornament several of the downstairs rooms. Eight windows contain leaded glass.

The Schermerhorn House is an example of the Queen Anne style. Its high hipped roof with lower cross gables comprises the most common Queen Anne house type found in this country. The irregular roof shape and dominant gables are hallmarks of this style. Queen Anne style houses avoid plain wall surfaces. The combination of the projecting bays, windows, and gables, the patterned masonry, and the full front porch all add textural diversity to the Schermerhorn House. Interior features which place the house firmly within the Queen Anne tradition include the stained and leaded glass windows, the irregular floorplan, the wide and generous staircase with a landing, the fanciful and period mantles, and the heavy balusters and newel post. All of these features combine to make this a Queen Anne residence that is unique to Galena.

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Anderson and Strong. Architectural Drawings for the Schermerhorn House.
Galen, Kansas. 1892.

Brandy, Mr. and Mrs. William G. "The Schermerhorn House." (n.d.)

Allison, Nathaniel Thompson. History of Cherokee County, Kansas.
(Chicago, 1904).