

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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RECEIVED DEC 9 1976

DATE ENTERED

AUG 2 1977

**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

**

AND/OR COMMON

SAUER CASTLE

LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

945 Shawnee Drive

__ NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Kansas City

__ VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT
No. 3 Larry Winn

STATE

Kansas 66103

CODE

20

COUNTY

Wyandotte

CODE

209

CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

- DISTRICT
- BUILDING(S)
- STRUCTURE
- SITE
- OBJECT

OWNERSHIP

- PUBLIC
- PRIVATE
- BOTH
- PUBLIC ACQUISITION**
- IN PROCESS
- BEING CONSIDERED

STATUS

- OCCUPIED
- UNOCCUPIED
- WORK IN PROGRESS
- ACCESSIBLE**
- YES: RESTRICTED
- YES: UNRESTRICTED
- NO

PRESENT USE

- AGRICULTURE
- MUSEUM
- COMMERCIAL
- PARK
- EDUCATIONAL
- PRIVATE RESIDENCE
- ENTERTAINMENT
- RELIGIOUS
- GOVERNMENT
- SCIENTIFIC
- INDUSTRIAL
- TRANSPORTATION
- MILITARY
- OTHER:

OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

Paul Berry

STREET & NUMBER

945 Shawnee Drive

CITY, TOWN

Kansas City

__ VICINITY OF

STATE
Kansas 66103

LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Register of Deeds

STREET & NUMBER

Wyandotte County Courthouse

CITY, TOWN

Kansas City

STATE
Kansas

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

Historic Sites Survey

DATE

May, 1973

__ FEDERAL STATE __ COUNTY __ LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

Kansas State Historical Society

CITY, TOWN

Topeka

STATE
Kansas

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Sauer Castle is located near the crest of the bluffs that overlook the Kaw river valley. It is a large, irregularly shaped, two and one-half story brick building with a four story tower. The house was built in the Italian Villa style. Originally it stood on a sixty-three acre site that was landscaped and terraced for Sauer's vineyards. This acreage has dwindled to four and the only remains of the landscaping are the fish pond and fountain in front of the house.

The main facade, which faces north is broken into three receding planes. The central element and dominating feature of this facade is the four story tower. The main entrance has been placed at the base of this tower. The double, three paneled doors are solid walnut and set in an elaborately carved arched stone frame. There are two carved stone lions to either side of the door on the small landing at the top of a short flight of stone steps. To either side of the tower bay on the first story are two large segmental arched double-hung windows which extend to the stone water table. The windows on the east side open out to a narrow balcony with a delicate metal railing, while the windows to the west are sheltered by an ornate wood veranda. All windows on the north, east and west facades with the exception of those above the entablature in the tower have segmental arches with similarly carved stone lintels. There are two windows each on the east and west bays of the north facade and a window above the main doorway on the central bay. There are narrow metal balconies at the base of the windows on the east and central bays. A round window with a stone frame has been placed above the second story windows on the east bay where the entablature breaks and forms an open gable.

There are two small double-hung windows on the third story of the tower with stone segmental arches with keystones joined by a stone string course on three facades of the tower. Long thin round-headed windows with keystones are joined by a stone string course formed by the impost on all the faces of the fourth story of the tower. The tower has a flat roof with an elaborate entablature which matches that of the main house and has coupled brackets on each corner. Originally there was metal cresting around the ridge of the tower.

An L-shaped wood veranda extends around the southeast corner of the east facade. There is a door opening out to this veranda on the south corner of the east facade. A window has been placed above this doorway on the second story, and to the north of the veranda there are two windows on each story. Two single, evenly spaced brick chimneys rise above the entablature.

On the west facade there is one centered window on each story. There are two windows with light wells below the water table. Two single, evenly spaced chimneys rise above the entablature with a small gabled dormer centered between them.

The south facade has been treated with less detail than the rest of the building. Stone is limited to the window sills, and the windows have brick segmental arches. There are three one story extensions from this facade; a brick one with a hip roof that appears to be original, and two later wood frame additions. There is a small one story wood veranda on the west end of the facade.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

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

SPECIFIC DATES

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Sauer Castle was erected around 1871 for Anton Phillip Sauer, a German immigrant who first came to Kansas City in the 1860's.

Sauer was born March 10, 1826, at Essen in Germany. As a young man he went to Australia to seek his fortune as a merchant. Success eluded him and in 1853 he arrived in New York City. There he worked in a tannery, married and had five children. After his wife died and he also developed health problems, he moved west. For a time he engaged in the freighting business in the Rocky Mountain region. He then settled in Kansas City, apparently around 1867. According to some reports, he established a tannery but soon sold it. He subsequently had a number of other business interests and properties. In 1870 the city directory listed him as an owner of the Crider-Sauer Grocers and as president of the German Savings Association. He also had a seed importing business.

In 1868 he married a widow, also a German immigrant, with two children. His wife's brother-in-law was in the real estate business and after much searching he finally located a 63 acre tract of land that Sauer considered acceptable for the new home he intended to build. The land was located high on a bluff overlooking the Kansas river and its valley from the south. It was reportedly in 1871 that he bought the property and began planning its development. According to family traditions the first step was the construction of a large barn to house construction materials and a barracks-like building in which the workers would live. Many craftsmen were brought from St. Louis and elsewhere to work on the project. Supposedly all materials but the foundation stones were shipped from St. Louis. Marble for the mantels came from Italy, Vermont and Kentucky. The house is believed to have been finished in November, 1872. One cost estimate was \$20,000. Sauer spent an even greater sum on the development of the grounds, which included a greenhouse, wine cellar, milkhouse, smokehouse, carriage house and stable. A large vineyard was planted and the yard was beautifully landscaped with rock terraces and a large fountain.

Sauer and his wife had five daughters, four of whom survived him. Their house was noted as the cultural and social center of the area. Sauer was in poor health most of the time and died of tuberculosis at his home August 16, 1879. His widow continued to live there until her death in 1921 and the property remained in the family until 1950. Much of the surrounding acreage was sold off during the years and used for residential development.

It is not known exactly why the house came to be called Sauer Castle, but that name has been used for generations. For the place and the time it was

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE

8.

constructed, Sauer's house was indeed a castle. It stands as a legacy of Anton Sauer, a German immigrant who struck it rich by virtue of hard work and wise management.

The Sauer Castle was perhaps the finest example of the Italian Villa style constructed in the Kansas City, Kansas area and gains added importance in being one of the few remaining buildings of its era. The richness of the materials and the care in assembly add distinction and still preserve a sense of grandeur about the house.

9.

"Great Mansions Fade," Kansas City Times, November 29, 1937.

McDonald, Mrs. William, "Sauer Castle," (manuscript filed in Kansas State Historical Society library), 1964.

McGuinn, Nellie, The Story of Kansas City, Kansas (n.p., 1961), pp. 82, 83.

Morgan, Perl W., History of Wyandotte County, Kansas (Chicago, Lewis Publishing Co., 1911), pp. 574, 575.

Russell, J.R., "Myths, Folklore Surround Old House," Heritage Magazine (supplement to the Lansing (Kansas) Leader), July, 1976, pp. 9-11.

Russell, J.R., "Sauer Family History Traced," Heritage Magazine (supplement to the Lansing (Kansas) Leader), Mid-August, 1976, pp. 3-5.

Wyandotte Herald, August 21, 1879.