

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

442

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

APR 24 1989

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 Yoerg, Anthony, Sr., House other names/site number N/A

2. Location

street & number 215 West Isabel Street city, town St. Paul state Minnesota code MN county Ramsey code 123 zip code 55107

3. Classification

Ownership of Property: [x] private, [] public-local, [] public-State, [] public-Federal. Category of Property: [x] building(s), [] district, [] site, [] structure, [] object. Number of Resources within Property: Contributing 2, Noncontributing 0 buildings, 0 sites, 0 structures, 0 objects. Total 2. 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 [x] 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 [x] meets [] does not meet the National Register criteria. [] See continuation sheet. Signature of certifying official Nina M. Archabal, State Historic Preservation Officer, Minnesota Historical Society. Date 4/17/89.

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: [x] 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:). Signature of the Keeper, Date of Action 5/25/89.

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/single dwelling

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/single dwelling

DOMESTIC/hotel

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

Mansard

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation limestone

walls weatherboard

roof asphalt

other veranda parapet: limestone

veranda trim: portland stone

veranda columns and balustrade: wood

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

The Anthony Yoerg House is a large, two-story wood frame dwelling located on the crest of St. Paul's West Side bluffs. Its box-like form is simplified Second Empire in style, indicated by a double-pitched roof with very steep primary slopes. A profusion of attic dormers extends the wall plane above a shallow bracketed cornice. At ground level the most conspicuous feature is a full-length frontal veranda. Turned millwork balustrades and stout paired octagonal columns betray a turn-of-the-century remodeling. However, an early birds-eye view of the city shows that the original veranda was nearly identical in size and profile to its successor. The house and its veranda both rest on stone foundations, the main part on native Platteville limestone and the veranda on Kasota dolomite.

In plan, the house is a T inverted to the street, with all of the main downstairs rooms occupying the crossbar, and the kitchen, pantry, and back stairs fitted into the slightly constricted rear wing. The front and rear elevations are balanced on the ground floor and symmetrical above, while the lateral elevations appear to be worked out from the inside with little adjustment. The symmetrical second-story fenestration reflects the plan; it demarcates three bays front and back, with the wider central bay in front lit by a double window for the back-to-front hallway and attic staircase. Dormer placement was determined entirely by exterior aesthetic considerations, for the attic was left unfinished. Three dormers in the front and two in the back enforce the symmetry of the lower windows, while the two on either side are simply placed where structure and chimney allow.

The house is entirely clad with a wide ship-lap pine siding. Original millwork piers and fretsawn brackets survive on two secondary porches, a small re-entrant angle porch on the east side and a full-width kitchen porch at the rear. The windows are framed with dog-eared casings and a simple architrave. Dormer windows are each headed by a low-pitched gable roof, suggesting a pediment. Their tympanums are fretsawn in a linear Eastlake pattern.

Successive turn-of-the-century remodelings, though sensitive to the architectural values of the original construction, produced a few exterior modifications. The most conspicuous alteration was to the veranda, undertaken c. 1900. Its new foundation rose to form a stone parapet, and doubled octagonal columns replaced piers probably related to those in the surviving secondary porches. The stout-piered balustrade that surmounts the veranda

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may also date to this remodeling, though railings with similar neoclassical turnings were often affixed to frame houses of the original construction period whatever their stylistic affinities. The balustrade was repeated above a faceted bay on the east side of the house.

An extensive interior ground floor remodeling occurred in 1910. The new plan retained the original central hall flanked by the main staircase to one side and the living room to the other. The original dining room behind the living room was converted to a sitting room and a new dining room installed on the opposite side of the hall. The openings off of the central hall and between the rooms were enlarged during this remodeling, and much of the original casework replaced. Octagonal columns matched to those on the veranda now embraced the living room entry, the living room fireplace was redone in a very simple Craftsman manner, and built-in buffets and a diagonally coffered ceiling were added to the new dining room. A number of beveled glass window panes were also inserted at this time on all three of the main facades of the house. The effect on the outside of these various interior modifications was to replace regularly spaced tall windows on either side with the varied sizes and informal placements appropriate to the new first floor arrangement.

The most unusual early interior work is a large amount of ornamental painting dating back to the World War I period. Stenciled canvases line the walls of the main stairway, the music room to the left of the entry, and the upstairs and downstairs hallways. The commonest pattern is a geometrical border outlined with a dark stencil and infilled with hand-applied color. Several Egyptian motifs appear above and around doors and windows, most notably lotus blossoms and open-winged scarabs and falcons. The dining room walls are painted in freehand garden scenes complete with neoclassical pavilions in the French manner.

Except for the effects of this two-phased neoclassical remodeling, the Yoerg House retains all of the original character indicated in the only pre-1900 view discovered to date, the 1883 Steiner lithograph showing a birds-eye view of St. Paul. Since the turn-of-the-century alterations, the house has retained its integrity in plan, profile, and facings. A piece of original fretsawn lattice has been discovered by the present owners, who plan to replicate it for the rear porch. Recent alterations to the kitchen and the second story plan (to accommodate the property's expanded use as a bed-and-breakfast) have not affected the exterior.

A simple, rectangular gabled barn stands immediately to the northwest of the house. Its materials and detailing suggest a construction date from the same period, i.e., 1875-1880. The swing door on the principle side, facing the rear yard, is mounted beneath a segmental arch; it is a very

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early replacement of a sliding door. Windows next to it and on the street side are original; a companion to the one on the street side has been filled in. Both gables carry fretsawn vergeboards fancifully reminiscent of Gothic king trusses. Window trim and siding are original and matched to the house. The barn has never undergone conversion to a garage and retains its integrity in plan and structure.

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)

Industry
Architecture

Period of Significance

1875-1896

Significant Dates

1875

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

Anthony Yoerg, Sr.

Architect/Builder

Sheire, Monroe, and Brother

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

The Anthony Yoerg House is primarily significant as the residence of one of St. Paul's pioneering industrialists. Yoerg set up the first brewery and the first incorporated entity in Minnesota, and in so doing paved the way for one of the state's most important early industries. The establishment of the brewing industry drew on the skills and habits of an increasingly large German population which settled around the leading brewery sites in uptown, the east side, and the west side. The Yoerg House is secondarily significant as one of the rare surviving works of Monroe Sheire, St. Paul's pre-eminent master builder during its first two decades, and as one of the few significant local fragments of the once-eminent Second Empire style.

Anthony Yoerg was born in Bavaria in 1816 and immigrated to Pittsburg, Pennsylvania in 1845. After three years, he came to St. Paul and in 1850 set up a commercial brewery, a business for which he had been trained in Germany. He began his operation at the upper steamboat landing near the beginning of present-day West Seventh Street, but the soft sandstone terraces across the river and intense competition among a growing number of small producers led him to set up a new and much larger operation on the west side (then the separate community of West St. Paul). The sandstone already was hollowed out into a number of caves, and enlarging these created refrigeration chambers for lagering and storage at very little cost. Within ten years, Yoerg's facility was producing 20,000 barrels a year, an impressive figure for this early date in Minnesota brewing.

Yoerg's settlement on the west side was incremental. He began to store beer in the caves as soon as his business had outgrown his first home's attic and cellar, purchased the property on which he was to build his house in 1858, erected his stone brewing complex in 1871, and according to family tradition moved into his new mansion in 1875. Yoerg was likely waiting for demographics to catch up with him. In 1873-1874, a large number of working class people built small houses on the west side flats; in October of 1874 the West St. Paul Building Association was formed to facilitate new mortgages and attract larger property holders; and in the

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following month, West St. Paul was officially annexed as the Sixth Ward of St. Paul. By 1875, the west side still only had 1500 inhabitants in a city of 33,000, and Yoerg's mansion was one of the two or three largest single family residences in the new ward.

The Yoerg Brewery continued as the largest brewery in the city into the early 1890s, but gradually lost its place as family-run operations were replaced by conglomerates and fermenting caves were outmoded by new technologies. After a hiatus over the Prohibition years, the brewery was reincorporated as the Yoerg Brewing Company in 1933, but by 1953 had sunk into bankruptcy. The house remained in the hands of the Yoerg family and its heirs until 1963. Its most important resident, apart from Anthony himself, was Louis Yoerg, the son who became secretary-treasurer of the business upon his father's death in 1896 and served as president from 1935 until his death in 1950.

The Anthony Yoerg House is secondarily significant as one of the few surviving works of Monroe Sheire executed in his typical but now locally rare mansard-roofed style. Sheire was born in Lexington, New York in 1834 and educated in Detroit, Michigan. According to his obituary, he studied architecture in Detroit and joined his father in the contracting business in 1856. He brought his family to St. Paul in the winter of 1860-61 and joined with the builder Charles Leonard to form a partnership in 1862. In 1866, Sheire's younger brother Romaine joined the firm, and in 1874, the year before the Yoerg House was built, Leonard died and the firm became Monroe Sheire and Brother, a name which lasted until the collapse of Monroe's health and his ensuing death in 1887.

During the peak years of Monroe Sheire's business, between 1862 and 1878, he was the only St. Paul master builder whose skill and success in the design of expensive and large scale buildings was competitive with the three local architects (A.F.Knight, A.M.Radcliffe, and E.P.Bassford). His most noteworthy projects included lavish stone residences for E. F. Drake (1865, razed) and Alexander Ramsey (1868-72, NRHP), a woodframe residence for his own family (1866, razed), the stone Christ Church (1865-66, razed), and several stone business blocks on Third Street (1865-70, razed). Sheire also handled the construction of several major buildings in which he had minor design input, such as the First Baptist Church (W.W.Boyington, 1875, extant).

Of the dozens of houses and commercial buildings that Sheire designed in the Italianate-Second Empire mix that was his forte, the Ramsey County Historic Site Survey identified only three survivors. Among these and other mansard-roofed houses in St. Paul, the Yoerg House is second only to the Ramsey House in its degree of historical integrity. The Yoerg House forms an excellent companion to the Ramsey House, as a frame version of the same style and a closely related plan.

9. Major Bibliographical References

- Bird's Eye Panorama of St. Paul, colored lithograph (Madison: J. J. Steiner, 1883).
- Brueggmann, Gary J., "Beer Capital of the State: St. Paul's Famous Breweries," Ramsey County History, 16 (Summer-Fall, 1981), 3-5.
- Hennesy, W.B., Past and Present of St. Paul (Chicago, 1906). pp. 786-787.
- Hess, Jeffrey A., and Larson, Paul Clifford, ms. of Architectural History of St. Paul, in process.
- Ramsey County Abstract of Title, Lots 12 and 13, Block 198, except the North 80 feet thereof, Irvine's Addition to West St. Paul.
- Sheire, Monroe, "Annual Report of the Noble Grand Arch," Proceedings, Seventh Annual Session of the Grand Grove of the State of Minnesota United Order of Druids, 1877, 4-8.
- Sheire, Monroe, obituary, original source unknown, clipping in Minnesota Scrapbook N.1, p. 148, Minnesota Hisstorical Society Library.
- "Yoerg's of Old World Brew School, Quitting," St. Paul Pioneer Press, Nov. 28, 1952, 6:12.

See continuation sheet

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Specify repository:

Ramsey County Historic Site Survey

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of property less than one acre

UTM References

A

1	5	4	9	2	5	4	5	4	9	7	5	3	3	5
Zone				Easting				Northing						

C

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

B

Zone				Easting				Northing						

D

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See continuation sheet N/A

Verbal Boundary Description

The nominated property occupies city lots 12 and 13, Block 198, except the North 80 feet thereof, in Irving's Addition to West St. Paul (now incorporated into St. Paul)

See continuation sheet N/A

Boundary Justification

The boundary includes the entire parcel that has historically been associated with the property.

See continuation sheet N/A

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Paul Clifford Larson date November 21, 1988
 organization N/A telephone 612 641-0915
 street & number 1181 Raymond Avenue state Minnesota zip code 55108
 city or town St. Paul

KEY TO PHOTOGRAPHS

1. Anthony Yoerg House
St. Paul, Mn.
Photographed by Paul Clifford Larson
July, 1988
35 mm. negative held by photographer
Yoerg House file, #A11
camera facing northwest
2. Anthony Yoerg House and Barn
St. Paul, Mn.
Photographed by Paul Clifford Larson
July, 1988
35 mm. negative held by photographer
Yoerg House file, #A5
camera facing southeast
3. Anthony Yoerg House (detail of street elevation)
St. Paul, Mn.
Photographed by Paul Clifford Larson
July, 1988
35 mm. negative held by photographer
Yoerg House file, #A10
camera facing north
4. Anthony Yoerg Barn
St. Paul, Mn.
Photographed by Paul Clifford Larson
July, 1988
35 mm. negative held by photographer
Yoerg House file, #A6
camera facing southwest
5. Anthony Yoerg House (detail of side porch)
St. Paul, Mn.
Photographed by Paul Clifford Larson
July, 1988
35 mm. negative held by photographer
Yoerg House file, #A7
camera facing southwest
6. Anthony Yoerg House (detail of staircase)
St. Paul, Mn.
July, 1988
35 mm. negative held by photographer
Yoerg House file, #A31
interior, camera facing northwest

*Yoerg, Anthony, Sr.
House
Ramsey CO. MN.*