

Horn-Vincent-Russell Estate (1931)

6624 Wenonga Rd. - Mission Hills
National Register of Historic Places

Imagine a warm summer evening: Orchestra music and laughter flow throughout the grounds of a gracious, English-style manor home. The front courtyard is set for a summer dinner party of 150 friends and colleagues. The gardens and terraces are illuminated with candles and moonlight as the soothing sounds of water from the courtyard fountain mixes with lively conversation. Guests stroll throughout the home and gardens and dance to the orchestra playing on the rear terrace. These images were a few of many recalled by Mrs. Marguerite Peet Foster about parties at her family home in Mission Hills. Mrs. Foster's mother Mrs. Marguerite (Margot) Munger Peet lived in the Mission Hills home from 1956 until her passing in 1995.



The Horn-Vincent-Russell home's front courtyard in Mission Hills. *Johnson County Museum Collection.*



The Edward Tanner designed home is English Tudor Revival in style with French Norman influences. *Johnson County Museum Collection.*

Construction of the estate began in 1929 for local millionaire John E. Horn. John and Phoebe Horn purchased the ten-acre site in 1927 and hired Edward Tanner as the chief architect and the landscape architecture firm of Hare and Hare to design the grounds of the property. Construction was completed in 1932. Unfortunately, the Horns enjoyed life on this estate only until 1938. It is not known exactly when or why the Horns vacated the property, although a 1934 scandal involving Horn and allegations of

embezzlement was probably the primary reason. The suit against the estate was subsequently thrown out because it was deeded in Mrs. Horn's name, not Mr. Horn's and Mrs. Horn was not named as a defendant in the lawsuit.

Architect Edward Tanner was well known for his work with the J.C. Nichols Company. He designed over 2,000 homes in Mission Hills and the Missouri County Club district. The Horn-Vincent-Peet estate is one of Tanner's finest commissions. Located on six acres, it is one of the largest estates in Mission Hills. Designed in the English Tudor Revival style, with French Norman influences, the home is evocative of a medieval manor house. The walls are constructed of limestone, with stucco and half-timbering on the second story wings. The home was designed in a modified L shape arranged around a courtyard.



The Horn-Vincent-Russell home's European landscaping design is generally regarded as Hare & Hare's finest existing residential commission. *Johnson County Museum Collection.*

A vaulted exterior porte-cochere, which resembles a medieval gateway, serves as the entrance to the front courtyard and formal entrance to the home.

The Tudor Revival style is represented in homes as small as cottages to architect-designed mansions such as the Horn-Vincent-Peet property. This style is named Tudor Revival because the ornamentation is inspired by the architecture built during the reign of Tudor family in the sixteenth-century England. Typical of the style is the use of half timbering, leaded casement windows, steeply pitched roof lines, and construction in stone or brick. The French Norman style is named for architecture in the Normandy province of France. The English ruled Northwestern France during the Middle Ages. It is not uncommon to see French and English design elements successfully combined on revivalist homes of this period. The Horn-Vincent Peet home is an outstanding example of this combination of styles. The French Norman influence is evidenced by the use of small dormers on the north and south facades; limestone quoining around the doors and windows; the round garden gate house, designed with a steeply pitched conical slate roof; and the overall design.

The property is regarded as the finest existing residential commission of the Kansas City, Missouri, landscape architecture firm of Hare and Hare. The grounds are an innovative combination of naturalistic landscape form and

formal European garden design. The overall scheme is intended to convey the feeling of a large country estate.

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