

Nauvoo

The Way We Were

Overview: South Side, 1500 Block of Mulholland
This block was basically a residential block during the post-Mormon Era (after 1846). No buildings were noted in the 1891 Plat; by 1912 there were six dwellings. A wine cellar is located on the west end of the block.

1590 Mulholland

1891 Plat: Site Empty
1912 Sanborn Map: Dwelling
2010: Parking lot for garage

Early 1900s John Repplinger Residence
Local Nauvoo inventor, who built six cement block houses and made dreams of various inventions come to life. None were ever patented, however.

His “laboratory” was his garage. It was located just west of the house.

- 1903** Repplinger built his home, the first concrete block house, on this site.
- 1915** Created the prototype for the first gas pump
- 1920** Built an eight-cylinder car out of two Model T Ford motors.
- 2010** **Vick’s Service Station**

1530 Mulholland

1891 Plat: Site Empty
1912 Sanborn Map: Site Empty
2010: Bakery

19__ - Present Nauvoo Mill and Bakery

18__ August Beger’s wine cellar can be seen to the rear and west of the bakery.

1. 1891 Plat and 1912 Sanborn Maps were used as baselines for building locations. They are available for viewing at the Nauvoo Historical Society’s Weld House Museum, 1380 Mulholland.

2. Addresses in quotation marks indicate no existing structure at this location in 2010.

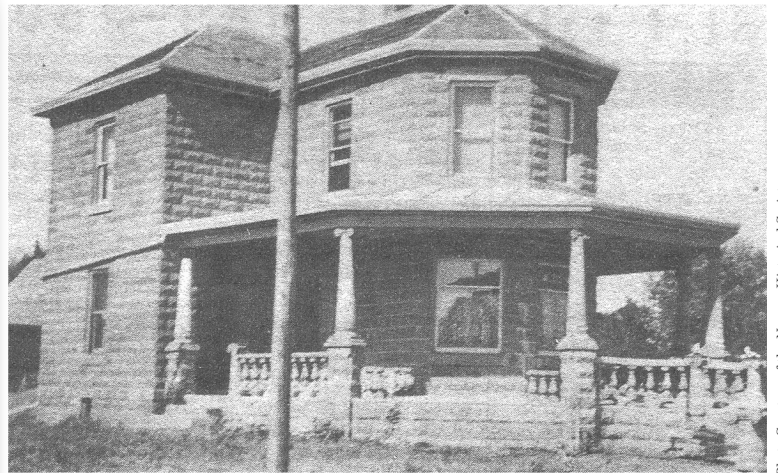


Photo Courtesy of the Nauvoo Historical Society

Early 1900s. John Repplinger’s home and first cement block house in Nauvoo with its frame second-story addition

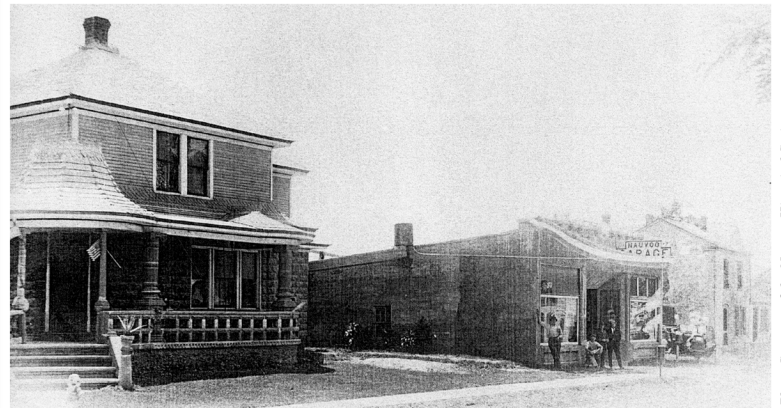


Photo Courtesy of the Nauvoo Historical Society

“Repp’s” garage, “laboratory” for his many inventions, can be seen to the west (R.) of the house.

John (“Repp”/“Reverend”) Repplinger, a creative genius with only a third grade education, captured the “impossible” with his inventions. Among them were houses made of cement block. Many scoffed at the idea, saying cement blocks were unsubstantial as a building material. Repplinger, nevertheless, built six of houses of them circa the early 1900’s. Five remain today—the sixth one, Repplinger’s home (at this location) was razed in order to utilize the property for commercial purposes c. mid 1950’s. Four of remaining ones may be seen nearby on Wilcox (15th) Street just south of Mulholland: three are on the east; one, on the west. A fifth one is at 1760 Mulholland.

His garage “laboratory” was in a building to the west of his residence. Here he created all sorts of inventions from a prototype of the first gas pump to an eight-cylinder car. Patenting of his inventions didn’t seem to be of any importance to him, however.

1590 and 1530 Mulholland

His garage “laboratory” was in a building to the west of his residence. Here he created all sorts of inventions from a prototype of the first gas pump to an eight-cylinder car. Patenting of his inventions didn’t seem to be of any importance to him, however.



Photo Courtesy of the Nauvoo Historical Society

“Repp” with some of his inventions: (above) 1915 “Long Annie”, created by elongating a Model T Ford’s frame and using two engines. (below)

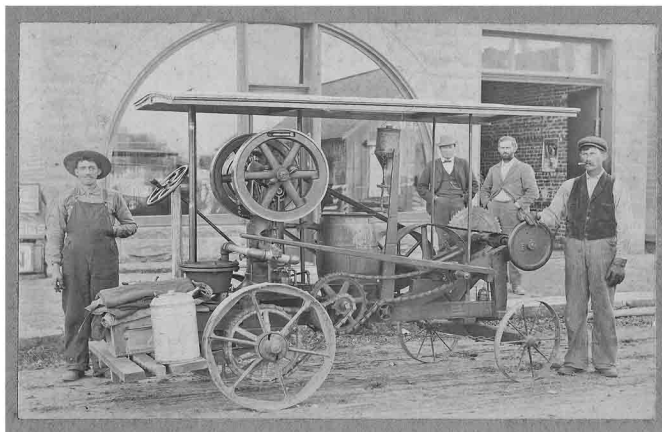


Photo Courtesy of the Nauvoo Historical Society

1530 Mulholland

The Nauvoo Mill and Bakery was once located on the “Flats” just off Water Street. To the rear and west of the bakery on an adjoining piece of property is an old wine cellar. It was built by Phillip Koechle for August Beger, Sr.

It is an example of many of the wine cellars, over 40 at one time, that dotted the landscape around Nauvoo.

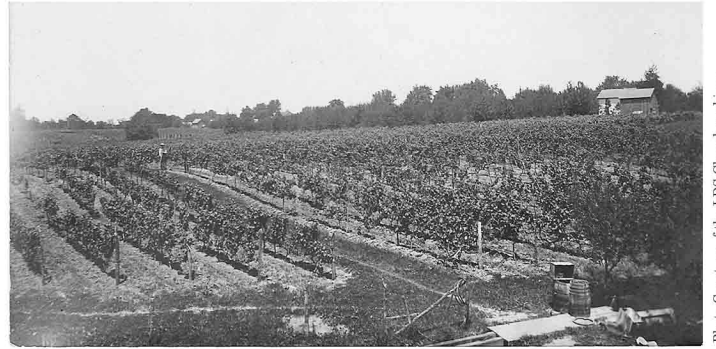


Photo Courtesy of the LDS Church archives

Vineyards as they appeared in and around Nauvoo’s commercial district and beyond

Nauvoo’s Long History with the Grape

The word Nauvoo is often associated with the history of its religious groups: the Mormons (1839-1846) and the Icarians (1849-1856).

But, equally entrenched in its history is its cultivation of grapes. And, while the general area of Mulholland’s commercial district today has no vineyards for you to see, there were many of them interspersed throughout the adjacent neighborhoods, down the hill and onto the “Flats.” The first vines were planted in 1847, and many of the vineyards were strung out along the less-populated eastern portions of the city.

As early as the 1857, Emil Baxter’s original vineyard was located just south of Mulholland on Barnett, what is now a mobile home park. (Baxter had moved to Nauvoo in 1855 to serve as secretary to Cabet, Icarian leader.) The Icarians (1849-1856) had been unsuccessful in cultivating the variety of grapes which they’d brought with them from France, their being ill-suited to the local climate of western Illinois.

However, the Germans had more success in the 1840’s with the roots they’d brought with them. And, by 1909, the city was actively engaged in grape-raising and wine-making. So important, in fact, that the University of Illinois once conducted all of its vineyard experimentation in Nauvoo. By 1925, there were 250 grape growers and 600-1,000 acres in production. At one time there were c. 40 stone-arched wine cellars in Nauvoo. Some still exist today.

Today, visitors would enjoy learning more about the grape industry at the Rheinberger Museum, located in Nauvoo State Park. The vineyard located at the museum is over 100 years old. You can also learn a great deal about vineyards and winemaking at Baxter’s Vineyard and Winery, on east Parley Street past Nauvoo State Park. The winery is still locally owned by original family that started it in 1857.