

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

DEC 22 1992

NATIONAL REGISTER

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Les Chenes Verts (Live Oaks)

other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number Corner Highland Road and Jean Lafitte Avenue N/A not for publication

city or town Baton Rouge N/A vicinity

state Louisiana code LA county East Baton Rouge code 33 zip code 70810

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, 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. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Gerrit Hobdy December 18, 1992
Signature of certifying official/Title Gerrit Hobdy, LA Date
SHPO, Dept of Culture, Recreation and Tourism
State of Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the 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:)

Signature of the Keeper

Entered in the National Register

Date of Action

Shelovec Byun 1/21/93

Les Chenes Verts
Name of Property

East Baton Rouge Parish, LA
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>1</u>		buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	Total

Name of related multiple property listing
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

Louisiana's French Creole Architecture

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/single dwelling

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

WORK IN PROGRESS

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

Other: French Creole

Federal

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation concrete

walls brick

weatherboard

roof wood shingle

other _____

Narrative Description
(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

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**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Les Chenes Verts, Baton Rouge, East Baton Rouge Parish, LA

Section number 7 Page 1

Les Chenes Verts (c. 1830) is a two story raised Creole plantation house of brick and frame construction. It stands within East Baton Rouge Parish on a large suburban plot which maintains much of its former rural character. Although moved from its original St. Landry Parish location, the house retains its National Register eligibility as a rare example of the apex of the French Creole building tradition.

Les Chenes Verts was originally located between Opelousas and Washington in St. Landry Parish. It stood within a grove of large oak and pecan trees along a rural gravel road. Vacant for many years, the house was open to the elements and suffered deterioration before being purchased by the current owners in 1985. As a result of this neglect, cattle had roamed freely throughout the lower floor. In addition, vandals had written graffiti on the walls and lighted dangerous fires in the interior. The house would most certainly have been lost had the new owners not moved it to East Baton Rouge Parish in 1991. Its new site, although in a suburban area, still has the feel of rural countryside. Reached by a gravel drive, the house now stands back from the road on a deeply wooded lot with rolling topography and its own private pond. Thus, the new setting is not at all inappropriate to the historic house.

Creole characteristics found within the house include:

- 1) a Class III hipped umbrella roof,
- 2) the fact that the premier etage (primary living space) is raised a full story above the ground,
- 3) the upper floor's French braced frame and brick between post infill,
- 4) wraparound mantels,
- 5) French doors and casement windows,
- 6) chamfered upper gallery columns,
- 7) two exterior gallery stairways (one original and one replicated),
- 8) exposed beaded ceiling beams throughout the lower floor rooms, gallery, and loggia, and
- 9) a hall-less Creole floorplan which is three rooms wide and two rooms deep. The rear range of rooms contains cabinets at each corner. On

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Les Chenes Verts, East Baton Rouge Parish, LA

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the lower floor the cabinets flank a loggia, but on the upper floor the space above the loggia has always been enclosed. A gallery adjoins the front rooms on each level.

Much of the home's original Federal woodwork survives, including the previously mentioned wraparound mantels, two non-wrapping mantels, door and window surrounds, and simple chair rails and baseboards. Four of the building's eight plank doors are also original. An interesting feature is the rear second story door, which can be opened for cross-ventilation but leads nowhere because the rear exterior staircase on to which it formerly opened was removed during the historic period. A rail placed across the opening is designed to prevent residents from falling to the ground below.

In addition to the loss of the rear exterior stair, Les Chenes Verts had its upper cabinet doors relocated during the historic period. Other changes have resulted from the move and rehabilitation of the home. This work was done under the supervision of Sid Gray, a specialist in Creole house restoration.

These alterations include the following:

- 1) The brick lower story was replaced with stud wall construction veneered with the original bricks. The veneer was applied in such a way as to replicate the exact appearance of the original. The floorplan was replicated, all openings were put back in their original locations, and the original woodwork was used (doors and windows, mantels, exposed beam ceilings, etc.) The lower story piers were rebuilt using the original bricks. The lower story flooring (exterior and interior) also had to be replaced. Brick was used in all but one space.
- 2) The chimneys were rebuilt.
- 3) An interior stairway which rises from the east cabinet to the room above the loggia was constructed.
- 4) Some missing hardware, shutters, plank doors, one of the exterior stairs, one room's missing chair rail, and the home's plaster walls were replicated.
- 5) The upstairs cabinets were converted into bathrooms.
- 6) The roof's lost dormers were replaced based upon surviving physical evidence and a knowledge of other houses of the period and style.
- 7) A side wing with an attached shed roof carport was added. This wing is

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Les Chenes Verts, East Baton Rouge Parish, LA
Section number 7 Page 3

connected to the house by an enclosed breezeway.

Assessment of Integrity

Despite these changes, Les Chenes Verts still strongly conveys its architectural identity as a fully raised Creole plantation house. Its premier etage is still raised a full story above grade. The replacement of the lower story was done very sensitively, as explained above. In short, from the exterior it looks just as it did originally. More than enough rare historic characteristics and old fabric remain within the home to justify its nomination. Furthermore, the surviving rare Federal woodwork on the upper floor makes the premier etage significant in its own right. The side wing is low in scale and does not obscure any of the larger building's important features. Despite being moved from one parish to another, the house remains within French Creole South Louisiana. It is of sufficient caliber to be nominated to the Register at the state level of significance.

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** a birthplace or grave.
- D** a cemetery.
- E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F** a commemorative property.
- G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

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 # LA-1188
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

architecture

Period of Significance

c.1830

Significant Dates

c.1830

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

unknown

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:

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Les Chenes Verts, East Baton Rouge Parish, LA
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Les Chenes Verts is significant in the area of architecture at the state level because it is a rare surviving example of a large, raised Creole plantation house. Creole dwellings once dominated the rural landscape of central and southern Louisiana, but today perhaps only 300 - 400 examples of these buildings remain standing outside New Orleans. Of these, the majority are small or moderately sized one story houses, while only approximately thirty (30) are members of the distinct group of substantial, fully raised plantation houses which are regarded as the apex of the Creole style. Les Chenes Verts is one of these rare survivors. Despite its move and the resulting rebuilding of the basement story, the house still retains the architectural integrity necessary to identify it as a significant representative of this tradition and support its nomination to the National Register. In addition, the house is important because of its rare Federal woodwork. In Louisiana, far more Creole houses with Greek Revival woodwork have survived than have those showing Federal influence.

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Les Chenes Verts, East Baton Rouge Parish, LA

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BIBLIOGRAPHY

Site visit by National Register staff.

Historic American Buildings Survey drawings, Live Oak Plantation, LA-1188, July 29, 1986. Appended to these drawings are photos of the house before the move.

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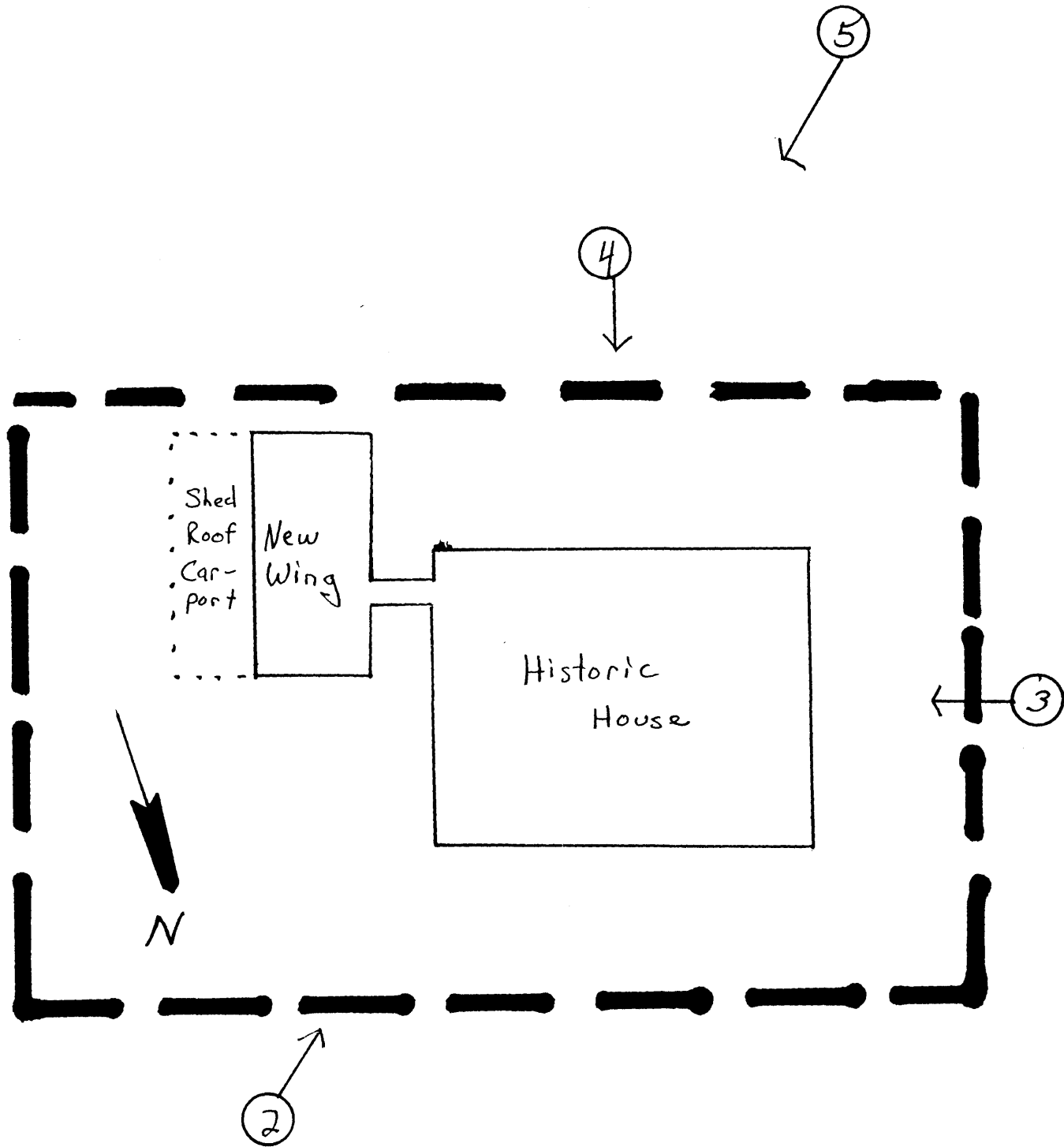
Les Chenes Verts, East Baton Rouge Parish, LA
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Boundary Justification

Boundaries were drawn to discretely encompass the significant resource. Because this is a moved building, there is no historic setting to recognize. Also, there are various original buildings on the property. The one visible in Photos 3 and 6, the Ory House, is of sufficient distinction that it is being nominated separately to the Register.

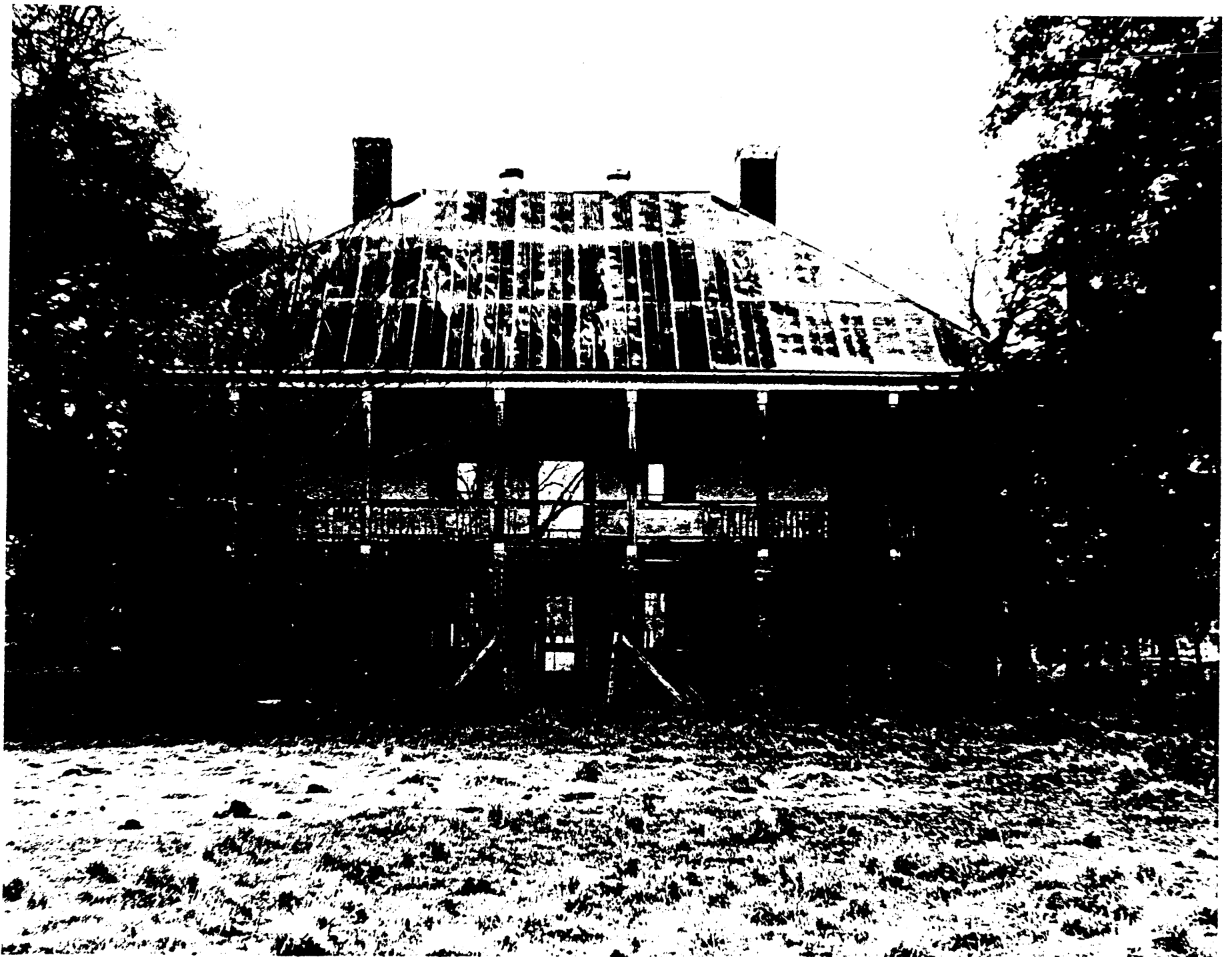
Les Chenes Verts (Live Oaks)

Baton Rouge, East Baton Parish, LA



Scale: 1" = 20'
Boundary: **---**





PRE-MOVE PHOTO

Les Chenes Verts, East Baton Rouge Parish, LA