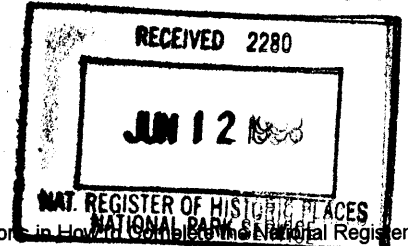


836

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service



NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM

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 any 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 Old Arabi Historic District

other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number Portions of Angela, Mehle, and Esteban streets NA not for publication

city or town Arabi NA vicinity

state Louisiana code LA county St. Bernard code 087 zip code 70032

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, 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. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide X locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Jonathan Fricker June 2, 1998
Signature of certifying official/Title Deputy SHPO, Dept. of Culture, Recreation and Tourism Date

State or 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 this 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): _____

Edson H. Beall Signature of Keeper Date of Action 7.9.98

Old Arabi Historic District

Name of property

St. Bernard 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>99</u>	<u>28</u>	buildings
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	sites
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	structures
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	objects
<u>99</u>	<u>28</u>	Total

Name of related multiple property listing

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

NA

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

Cat. Domestic

Sub. Single dwelling

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

Cat. Domestic

Sub. Single Dwelling

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

Italianate, Eastlake, Colonial Revival, Bungalow

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation brick

walls weatherboard

roof asphalt

other _____

Narrative Description

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

Old Arabi Historic District

Name of property

St. Bernard Parish, LA

County and State

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "X" next to 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" next to all that apply.)

NA

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or a 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.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

architecture

Period of Significance

C. 1880 - 1948

Significant Dates

NA

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

NA

Cultural Affiliation

NA

Architect/Builder

NA

Narrative Statement of Significance

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

9. Major Bibliographical References

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

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

NA

- 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

Name of repository: _____

Old Arabi Historic District

Name of property

St. Bernard Parish, LA

County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property approx. 15 acres

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

Zone Easting Northing Zone Easting Northing

1 15 788860 3317380

3 15 788780 3316700

2 15 789020 3317260

4 15 788600 3316720

__ See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title National Register Staff

organization Division of Historic Preservation date March 1998

street & number P.O. Box 44247 telephone (504) 342-8160

city or town Baton Rouge state LA zip code 70804

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A **USGS** map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white** photographs of the property.

Additional items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name Multiple

street & number _____ telephone _____

city or town _____ state LA zip code _____

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service****NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**Section 7 Page 1

The boundaries of the Old Arabi Historic District encompass 127 buildings, almost all of which are one story wood frame residences. Contributing elements mainly date from the 1880s through the 1920s, although there are a handful of small houses from the '30s and '40s. Styles include Italianate, Eastlake, Colonial Revival and Bungalow, with the most conspicuous house type being the shotgun. The non-contributing rate is a respectable 22%, and contributing buildings on the whole are well preserved.

METHODOLOGY

The nomination of the Old Arabi Historic District to the National Register is the result of a request made to the Louisiana State Historic Preservation Office by the St. Bernard Parish Council, the local governing authority. Initial fieldwork conducted by the state's Register coordinator revealed that there were two viable districts in Arabi separated by a wide transportation corridor (historically a rail-industrial corridor). The earlier of the two is being nominated as the Old Arabi Historic District, while the other takes its name from its long street, Friscoville. Fieldwork (conducted by the Register coordinator) included identifying each building by style and contributing/non-contributing status, photography and mapwork. Because of the largely repetitive nature of the housing stock, an overall breakdown by style is being used rather than a written building-by-building inventory. (This methodology has been used successfully several times for similar districts in nearby New Orleans.) Because of the prevalence of shotguns, a count was made of this important building type (see below).

SETTING

There are two factors critical to understanding the architectural development and significance of the Old Arabi Historic District. Firstly, it abuts the City of New Orleans and consequently features the same type of building stock -- in this case, highly styled shotguns. Secondly, it is located in a parish largely given over to marshes and water. In fact, because there is relatively little inhabitable land in St. Bernard, there are very few towns. And the ones that do exist are small.

The district consists of portions of three parallel streets which run from a four-lane highway (St. Claude) to the Mississippi River (see map). Most of Angela Street is included; a lesser portion of Mehle Street due to loss of integrity; and finally, the two blocks of Esteban which developed during the historic period.

As is typical of its neighbor New Orleans, Old Arabi is densely packed, with usually only a few feet between houses and little in the way of yards.

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**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 7 Page 2

BUILDING TYPES

Fifty percent of the total number of buildings are shotguns and 65% of the contributing elements. The district includes singles and doubles and two or three camelbacks.

The basic shotgun is a single story dwelling, one room wide, two or more rooms deep, with the roof ridge running perpendicular to the street. Despite a number of popular theories, the origin of the shotgun house remains obscure. It is, however, a distinctively southern house type which is found in the form of plantation quarters houses as well as urban and suburban dwellings. It often appears in the historic period as a speculatively built rent house. Double shotgun houses consist of two shotgun units joined by a party wall, with each side a separate living unit. The camelback is a single or double shotgun with a second story over the rear rooms.

Old Arabi's shotguns are similar to the norm described above. A few have side porches (full and partial), and three or four feature a small block at the rear set perpendicular to the main block.

Other building types within the district include bungalows, galleried cottages, and so-called raised basement houses. The latter type, which is peculiar to the New Orleans area, consists of a house raised a full story (or almost a full story) above grade on a high basement. The principal (upper) story is often reached by prominent flights of exterior steps. There are about a half dozen raised basement houses in the district. There are also a handful of two story houses (usually symmetrical) and one historic building which was not built for residential use -- a one story frame corner store.

STYLES

Because the neighborhood did not begin to develop until c.1880, the earliest style found is Italianate. While there are strongly styled buildings of various types, the "signature" of the district is the intensively styled shotgun -- from Italianate, to Eastlake, to Colonial Revival, to Bungalow.

Italianate	15%
Eastlake	6%
Colonial Revival	16%
Bungalow	26%
No style	15%
Non-contributing	22%

CONTINUED

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service****NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**Section 7 Page 3 **Italianate (15%)**

Although the high-style Italianate began to go out of fashion in the early 1880s in New Orleans, Italianate elements were used at the builder vernacular level as late as the first decade of the twentieth century. The Italianate houses found in the Old Arabi district are similar to those found throughout nearby New Orleans. Virtually all are shotguns, featuring prominent, florid brackets and often quoins defining the sides of the facade, beveled siding on the facade to produce a rusticated effect, and segmental arch openings. Because the brackets are so dominant, this distinctly New Orleans (and vicinity) interpretation of the Italianate is known locally as the "New Orleans bracketed style." The district's most richly articulated Italianate shotgun is at 718 Angela, featuring quite large, intricately worked brackets, elaborate cornices on the front segmental head openings, quoins and beveled siding. The Old Arabi district also has a landmark two-story double gallery Italianate house at 550 Mehle Street. As is typical of the Italianate in the area, it is largely symmetrical.

Eastlake (6%)

Although Eastlake houses are small in number, they have a strong presence because of their intensive styling, including turned columns, lace-like brackets and spindle screens. All examples are shotguns except for a one-and-a-half story galleried cottage. Probably the district's most elaborate Eastlake shotgun is 331 Angela, which features a profusion of brackets, turned members, a spindle screen, a lace-like design over the front openings, and a decorative bargeboard in the front gablet.

Colonial Revival (16%)

In most cases the Colonial Revival takes the form of a shotgun fitted with Tuscan columns. Some have other Colonial Revival details such as fanlights, and two shotguns have pronounced egg and dart molding on their entablatures in addition to Tuscan columns (438 and 450 Angela).

Bungalow (26%)

Here the term is being used in its stylistic sense (porch posts on flared brick bases, angle brackets, etc.) rather than as a building type. Bungalow style features are found mainly in the district on shotguns. There are also a few instances of two story houses with Bungalow style details (mainly of the raised basement type) and true bungalows (i.e., one story, low slung houses usually two rooms wide).

No Style (15%)

This is a typical category for districts - - legitimate historic buildings which happen to be completely or largely

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**United States Department of the Interior
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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 7 Page 4

unornamented. While they do not contribute stylistically to the district, they contribute in matters of massing, fenestration patterns, etc.

Non-contributing (22%)

Virtually all of the non-contributing elements are altered one story historic buildings. Hence they conform to the massing of a given streetscape. Hence even when they occur in "clumps" (two instances), their effect is not as disruptive as one might think (see photos 16 & 19). A few non-contributing elements are slab-on-grade ranch houses. One is a modern commercial building (photo 14). None of the non-contributing elements are more than one story.

INTEGRITY OF CONTRIBUTING ELEMENTS

Each building was examined during the survey. Those which had been so altered that they no longer conveyed their architectural identity were counted as non-contributing. The most common alterations to contributing elements are replaced porch columns and vinyl or aluminum siding, although it should be stressed that on the whole, contributing elements are well preserved. In cases where alterations were present, a building was counted as contributing only if surviving historic elements were dominant.

LANDMARKS

Although buildings in the Old Arabi Historic District are strongly styled on the whole, there are few landmarks due to the largely repetitive nature of the housing stock. Any buildings with particularly distinctive features were mentioned in their appropriate stylistic category above.

PHOTO INFORMATION COMMON TO ALL

Photographer: Donna Fricker
Date Taken: January 1998
Location of Negative: LA SHPO

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service****NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**Section 8 Page 1

The Old Arabi Historic District is locally significant because it and the nearby Friscoville Street Historic District are easily the finest groupings of historic structures in St. Bernard Parish. The period of significance spans from the date of the first buildings (c.1880) to the present fifty year cutoff (1948).

The land area that in 1807 would become St. Bernard Parish, located just below New Orleans, had been settled early in the colonial period. The population, however, during the historic period was always sparse because the parish has relatively little arable, inhabitable land, with most of it being given over to marshes and various bodies of water. In 1900 the population for the entire parish was 5,031. By 1940 it had grown to 7,280. Because of the very nature of the parish, there historically were no towns of any size.

Arabi developed in the late-nineteenth century from former plantation lands and essentially was an adjunct to New Orleans. It traces its origins to the location of major stockyards there in the 1870s after they had been banned within the New Orleans city limits -- most notably the huge Crescent City Stockyard and Slaughterhouse. These no-longer-surviving facilities were located on a wide railroad-industrial corridor which is now a trucking corridor separating the two historic districts in Arabi. Then in 1906 the mammoth American Sugar Refinery was built, creating population growth and a need for additional housing. A newspaper had been founded in the little community in 1890, and in 1906 a post office was located there. Arabi's few commercial buildings were located along the Mississippi, but they do not survive. According to tradition, the community's unusual name can be traced to a Sudanese figure named Arabi Pasha who led a group of insurrectionists in raids against the British in the Sudan and Egypt during the early 1880s. Most of the population of what was then called Stock Landing, being of French and Irish descent, regarded Pasha as a hero and named their post office in his honor.

Because of the stockyards and sugar refinery, Arabi developed as an important population center -- at least within the context of St. Bernard. The employment provided by these industries made possible the building of today's Old Arabi and the nominated district. Shotguns, as noted previously, were particularly popular, and virtually all examples are strongly styled -- from Italianate, to Eastlake, to Colonial Revival, to Bungalow.

Within the context of St. Bernard, the Old Arabi Historic District is a major architectural expression. It and the Friscoville St. Historic District are really the only major groupings of historic buildings in the parish -- both in size and quality. By contrast, other communities have either largely modern buildings or perhaps a scattering of fairly basic, nondescript historic buildings. In terms of individual buildings of note, there are about a dozen (plantation houses, institutional buildings, and industrial facilities).

The district is particularly notable for its superb collection of richly styled shotgun houses. Shotguns are found across the South, but virtually all collections consist mainly of plain humble structures with little or no architectural treatment. New Orleans and vicinity is the only place where one finds shotguns which are intensively styled. As noted previously, shotguns comprise fifty percent of the overall building stock in the Old Arabi Historic District. Almost all of them are strongly styled, and many are quite elaborate. Collectively these buildings represent an important architectural "flowering" that in many ways is the signature of the area.

United States Department of the Interior
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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 9 Page 1
 10 1

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Survey of proposed district by National Register Coordinator.

St. Bernard Parish, Louisiana: Its Natural Resources and Advantages. Published by authority of the Parish Immigration League, St. Bernard, Louisiana, 1906.

St. Bernard Parish Celebrates Its Bicentennial, 1780-1980. Published by the St. Bernard Bicentennial Committee, 1980.

Sanborn Map, updated to 1950.

Boundary Description: See attached sketch map.

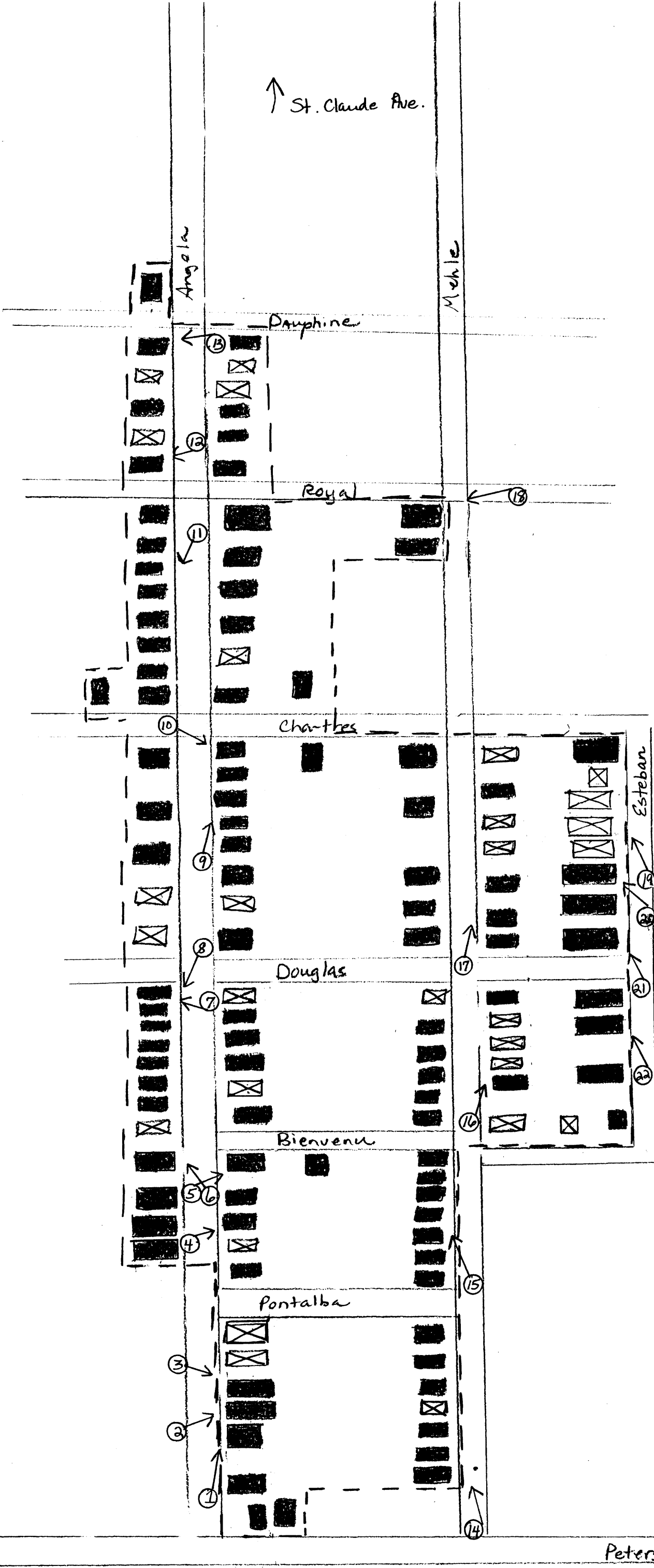
Justification:

Boundaries were chosen to encompass the concentration of historic buildings in the neighborhood. Areas outside the boundaries are characterized mainly by less than fifty year old buildings or severely altered historic buildings. For example, this is why the boundaries cut in and out between Chartres and Royal (see map). The western boundary almost abuts the property line of the Jackson Barracks (an NHL in adjacent Orleans Parish).

Perhaps one area requires further explanation. While the two blocks bounded by Mehle, Chartres, Esteban, and Bienvenu contain various non-contributing elements, they also contain numerous styled shotguns, some of which are Italianate (an early style for Arabi). Because styled shotguns are an important source of the district's significance, the inclusion of these two blocks seemed justified.

OLD ARABI HISTORIC DISTRICT
ST. BERNARD PARISH, LOUISIANA

↑ St. Claude Ave.



↑ N
1" = 200'

- - - BOUNDARY
- CONTRIBUTING
- ⊠ NON-CONTRIBUTING

(Exact bldg. shapes not shown.)

MISSISSIPPI RIVER