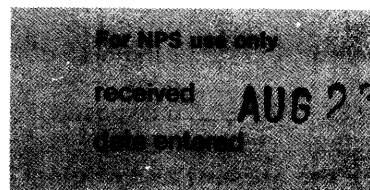


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form



1982

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic St. Basil's Academy

and/or common Same

2. Location

street & number 311 Church Street N/A not for publication

city, town Plaquemine N/A vicinity of congressional district

state LA code 22 parish Iberville code 047
county

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Robert Elliott Smith

street & number 311 Church Street

city, town Plaquemine N/A vicinity of state LA 70764

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Iberville Parish Courthouse

street & number Railroad Avenue (no specific address) P. O. Box 423

city, town Plaquemine state LA 70764

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title LA Historic Sites Survey has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 1982 federal state county local

depository for survey records Louisiana State Historic Preservation Office

city, town Baton Rouge state LA

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one	
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site	
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved	date <u> N/A </u>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed			

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

St. Basil's Academy (c.1850) is a brick and frame two-and-a-half story Greek Revival structure, with rear additions dating from 1905 and 1932. It is located behind a high wall in a garden setting in the Mississippi River levee town of Plaquemine. The building has undergone several alterations over the years, but it still retains enough significant features to merit listing on the National Register.

The property has a large garden lot with trees in the rear. The front of the property is separated from Church Street by a high, stuccoed, brick wall surmounted by an ornamental cast-iron balustrade. Though this wall is a relatively old feature, its origin is not known.

The house began c.1850 as a 2-1/2 story residence with features associated with both the French Creole and the Anglo-American architectural traditions in Louisiana.

Creole features include:

1. The use of stuccoed brick construction on the lower story and frame construction on the upper stories.
2. The second (main) story plan which consists of four rooms without a hall.
3. The use of French doors on the second story to provide access to both the first and rear galleries. The French doorways are unusually wide (4-1/2 feet) and have transoms.

Anglo-American features include:

1. The lower story plan with its central entrance, central hall, and pair of rooms each side.
2. The use of six over six sash mounted windows on the front and rear walls under the galleries.
3. The placement of the chimneys against the exterior walls of the house.
4. The use of Greek Revival details, with features such as:
 - A. The unusually wide Doric posts on the galleries.
 - B. The full gallery entablature.
 - C. The pair of pedimented dormers both front and rear.
 - D. The double parlor on the second story with its two shoulder molded mantels and its doorways which are ornamented with bands of cast plaster patera and cast plaster acanthus leaf corner blocks.

The house also features fixed louver shutters and four panel doors.

In 1905 a plain frame two-story school building was constructed a short distance from the rear of the original house.

**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
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Continuation sheet St. Basil's Academy

Item number 7

Page 2

Description (cont'd)

In 1932 a two-story frame wing was built connecting the 1905 school building with the rear corner of the original house.

Since 1932 the following changes have occurred:

1. Sometime within the past twenty years the interior of the lower story has been gutted.
2. Much of the fenestration on the 1905 and 1932 portions has been replaced or reworked. In addition, the small rear porch on the 1905 addition has been enclosed.
3. The balustrade of the rear upper gallery has been lost.
4. There has been some deterioration of the rear entablature woodwork on the original house.
5. A few of the decorative patera and one of the corner blocks have been lost.

Assessment of Integrity:

St. Basil's significance is based upon its identity as a substantial Greek Revival residence. That identity is established by the extant facades and galleries. Its significance is also based upon the detailing in the second-story double parlors. This, of course, is still intact with the exception of the loss of a few patera and one corner block. These are easily replaceable, and in any case the overall ornamental effect remains.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400–1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500–1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600–1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/ humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900–	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		

Specific dates c.1850 **Builder/Architect** Edward Scratchley, Builder

Statement of Significance (In one paragraph) Criterion C

St. Basil's Academy is locally significant in the area of architecture as both a superior and a rare example of a Greek Revival residence within the context of the town of Plaquemine.

The town of Plaquemine, seat of Iberville Parish, developed as a commercial port in the mid-nineteenth century. However, it was largely rebuilt in the late-nineteenth and early twentieth-centuries. It is against this background that St. Basil's architectural significance as a rare survivor of a once much larger building stock emerges. It stands as one of only two remaining substantial Greek Revival residences in Plaquemine.

In addition, the treatment of the second story double parlor is especially noteworthy. It qualifies St. Basil's as Plaquemine's finest Greek Revival residence. Indeed, the use of bands of patera to articulate door frames is seldom seen among Louisiana Greek Revival structures, most of which have plain molding boards.*

* A word of explanation is required regarding the level of significance of the property. It is clear that St. Basil's is at least locally significant. Although one of its features (bands of patera described above) can be spoken of within the context of the state, the State Historic Preservation Office staff does not feel that a sufficient scholarly or survey basis exists to make a case for the house itself as significant on the state level.

Historical Sketch:

St. Basil's was built c.1850 by Dr. Edward Scratchley as a private residence. In 1859 he sold it to the Sisters Marianites of the Holy Cross and it became a girl's school. Apparently it acquired its present name in 1866 when the school was chartered as an academy and given authority to grant diplomas. In 1937 St. Basil's Academy was merged with a boy's school under the name St. John's High School. Given the fact that St. Basil's was a school for over 100 years, it is surprising that anything remains at all of its original Greek Revival character.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Iberville Parish Conveyance Records.

Grace, Albert L. The Heart of the Sugar Bowl: The Story of Iberville, Plaquemine, LA, 1946.

10. Geographical Data

Acreege of nominated property approx. 1.3 acres

Quadrangle name Plaquemine, La.

Quadrangle scale 1=24000

UMT References

A

1	5	6	6	9	9	0	0	3	3	5	2	0	8	0
Zone	Easting				Northing									

B

Zone	Easting				Northing									

C

Zone	Easting				Northing									

D

Zone	Easting				Northing									

E

Zone	Easting				Northing									

F

Zone	Easting				Northing									

G

Zone	Easting				Northing									

H

Zone	Easting				Northing									

Verbal boundary description and justification

Please refer to sketch map.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state N/A code county code

state code county code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Robert Elliott Smith

organization N/A

date July 1982

street & number 311 Church Street

telephone (504) 687-7661

city or town Plaquemine

state LA 70764

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.


State Historic Preservation Officer signature 

Robert B. DeBlieux

title date August 16, 1982

For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

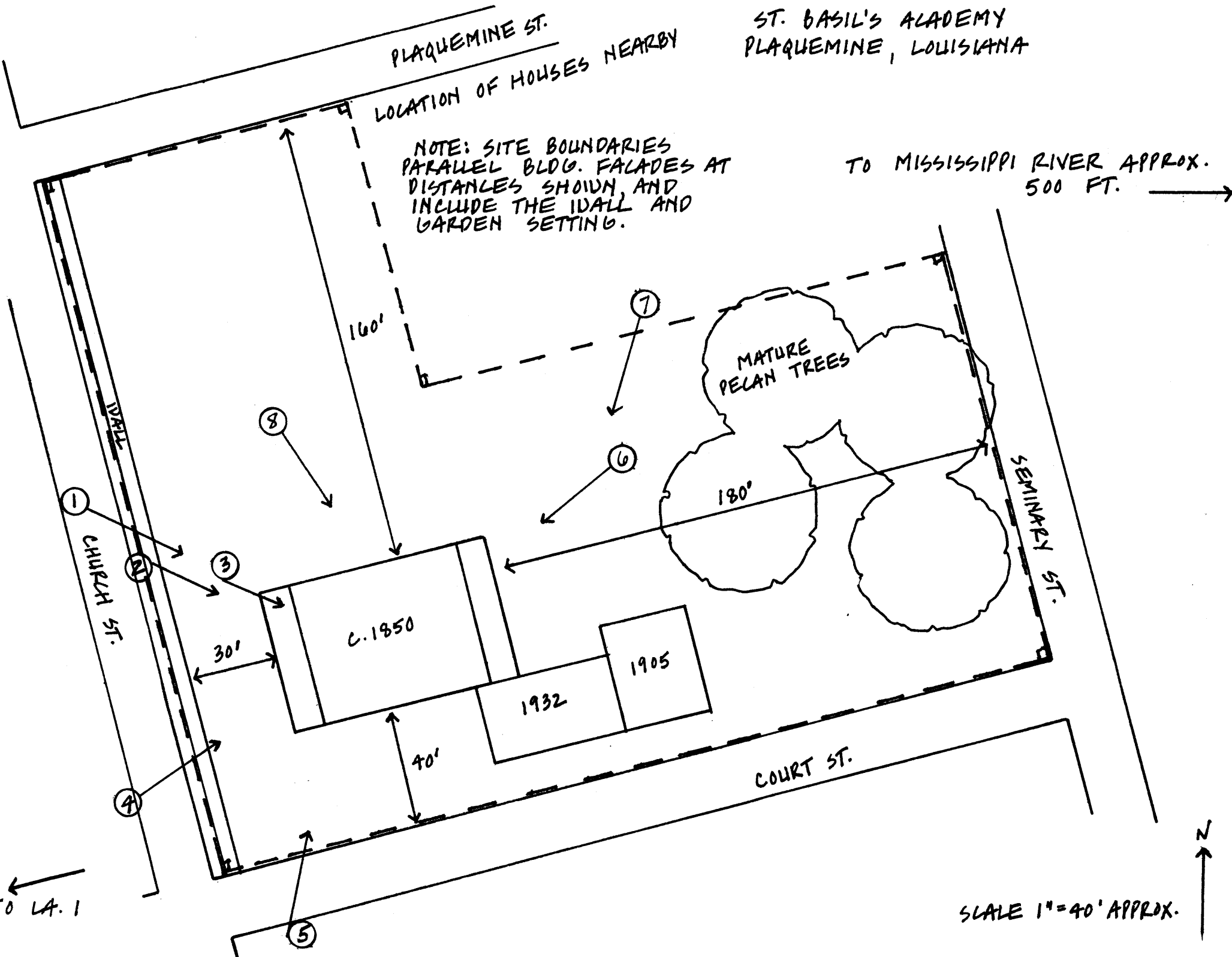

Keeper of the National Register

date 10/5/82

Attest: 
Chief of Registration

date 10/4/82

ST. BASIL'S ACADEMY
PLAQUEMINE, LOUISIANA



PLAQUEMINE ST.
LOCATION OF HOUSES NEARBY

NOTE: SITE BOUNDARIES
PARALLEL BLDG. FACADES AT
DISTANCES SHOWN, AND
INCLUDE THE WALL AND
GARDEN SETTING.

TO MISSISSIPPI RIVER APPROX.
500 FT. →

MATURE
PELAN TREES

180'

C. 1850

1932

1905

30'

40'

COURT ST.

SEMINARY ST.

CHURCH ST.

SCALE 1" = 40' APPROX.

TO LA. 1

