

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service
National Register of Historic Places Registration Form



104

1. Name of Property

Historic Name: Monte Verdi Plantation
Other name/site number: Julien Sidney Devereux Family Home
Name of related multiple property listing: N/A

2. Location

Street & number: 11992 CR 4233 W
City or town: Cushing State: Texas County: Rusk
Not for publication: Vicinity:

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 at the following levels of significance:
 national statewide local

Applicable National Register Criteria: A B C D

Mark Wolfe State Historic Preservation Officer 2/6/14
Signature of certifying official / Title Date
Texas Historical Commission
State or Federal agency / bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting or other official Date

State or Federal agency / bureau or Tribal Government

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:
 entered in the National Register
 determined eligible for the National Register
 determined not eligible for the National Register.
 removed from the National Register
 other, explain: _____

For Edson H. Beall 3-31-14
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

Monte Verdi Plantation, Cushing (V), Rusk County, Texas

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Private
<input type="checkbox"/>	Public - Local
<input type="checkbox"/>	Public - State
<input type="checkbox"/>	Public - Federal

Category of Property

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	building(s)
<input type="checkbox"/>	district
<input type="checkbox"/>	site
<input type="checkbox"/>	structure
<input type="checkbox"/>	object

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	6	buildings
0	0	sites
1	0	structures
0	0	objects
2	6	total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions: DOMESTIC / single dwelling = residence; AGRICULTURE / agricultural field = cotton field; DOMESTIC / secondary structure = water well

Current Functions: DOMESTIC / single dwelling = residence; DOMESTIC / secondary structure = water well; VACANT

7. Description

Architectural Classification: MID-19th CENTURY: Greek Revival

Principal Exterior Materials: Wood, Brick

Narrative Description (see continuation sheets 7-6 through 7-13)

Monte Verdi Plantation, Cushing (V), Rusk County, Texas

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	A	Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	B	Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	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.
<input type="checkbox"/>	D	Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations: N/A

Areas of Significance: Agriculture, Architecture, Ethnic Heritage - Black

Period of Significance: 1852-1873

Significant Dates: 1856

Significant Person (only if criterion b is marked): Sarah Ann Landrum Devereux

Cultural Affiliation (only if criterion d is marked):

Architect/Builder: unconfirmed

Narrative Statement of Significance (see continuation sheets 8-14 through 8-24)

9. Major Bibliographic References

Bibliography (see continuation sheets 9-25 through 9-27)

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
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record

Primary location of additional data:

- State historic preservation office (Texas Historical Commission, Austin)
- Other state agency
- Federal agency
- Local government (Rusk County Appraisal Office, Henderson, Texas)
- University (Dolph Briscoe Center for American History, University of Texas, Austin, Texas; and East Texas Research Center, Stephen F. Austin State University, Nacogdoches, Texas)
- Other

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10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property: 100.00 acres

Coordinates These points correspond to the map on Page 30.

Datum if other than WGS84: N/A

- A. Latitude: 31.904788 Longitude: -94.877121
- B. Latitude: 31.906813 Longitude: -94.871829
- C. Latitude: 31.901638 Longitude: -94.868457
- D. Latitude: 31.900797 Longitude: -94.870819
- E. Latitude: 31.899942 Longitude: -94.871956
- F. Latitude: 31.901000 Longitude: -94.872569
- G. Latitude: 31.900420 Longitude: -94.875445

Verbal Boundary Description: The nominated property is located in the E Talbert survey (788) and is bounded by CR 4233 and other private property parcels. The starting point for the nominated property is Joe and Cecilia Koch's southeastern property boundary on the north side of CR 4233. From this southeast corner, the property extends approximately 10,737 yards north to the northeast corner, and approximately 7,808 yards west to the northwest corner. From the northwest corner, the property extends approximately 9,761 yards south to the adjacent private property. The property then extends approximately 2603 yards east, then approximately 976 yards south to CR 4233. From this corner, the property travels northeast along the road to the original corner. The Rusk County Appraisal District records identify the nominated property by Property ID numbers 19170 (10 acres) and 38066 (90 acres).

Boundary Justification: These boundaries are the current legally recorded property boundaries as surveyed in November 2012. The nominated 100 acre-property served as Monte Verdi's historic homestead and remains the last intact section of the original 10,700-acre plantation. Although this property currently has cattle, the original plantation housed a cotton gin, corn mill, slave quarters, house garden, cotton and corn fields, and various livestock areas. While the exact location of each of these plantation attributes is yet unknown, archival and archeological evidence depicts that the nominated property historically housed the cotton gin or mill, some slave quarters, house garden, and some agricultural fields. The nominated property's agricultural landscape maintains the historic integrity of the antebellum plantation and geographically contextualizes the plantation house.

11. Form Prepared By

with Carlyn Hammons, THC Historian

Name/title: Jake McAdams, Graduate Student
Organization: Stephen F. Austin State University
Street & number: 2911 Chimney Rock Dr. #30
City or Town: Nacogdoches State: Texas Zip Code: 75965
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Date: May 2013

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Additional Documentation

Maps (see continuation sheet Map-28 through Map-31)

Additional items (see continuation sheets Figure-32 through Figure-36)

Photographs

All photographs are credited as follows:

Name of Property:	Monte Verdi Plantation
City:	Cushing (vicinity)
County:	Rusk County
State:	Texas
Photographer:	Jake McAdams
Date:	February 8, 2013 and March 29, 2013
Number of Photos:	9

TX_Rusk County_Monte Verdi Plantation_0001.tif

Southeast oblique of the main plantation house, Resource 1, contributing. Camera facing northwest.

TX_Rusk County_Monte Verdi Plantation_0002.tif

Northeast oblique of the main plantation house, Resource 1, contributing. Camera facing southwest.

TX_Rusk County_Monte Verdi Plantation_0003.tif

North elevation, Resource 1, contributing. Camera facing south.

TX_Rusk County_Monte Verdi Plantation_0004.tif

West elevation, Resource 1, contributing. Camera facing east.

TX_Rusk County_Monte Verdi Plantation_0005.tif

South elevation, Resource 1, contributing. Camera facing north.

TX_Rusk County_Monte Verdi Plantation_0006.tif

Southeast oblique of the bungalow, Resource 3, noncontributing. Camera facing northwest.

TX_Rusk County_Monte Verdi Plantation_0007.tif

Northeast elevation of Resource 5, noncontributing. Camera facing southwest.

TX_Rusk County_Monte Verdi Plantation_0008.tif

Southeast elevation of the Birdwell House, Resource 8, noncontributing. Camera facing northwest.

TX_Rusk County_Monte Verdi Plantation_0009.tif

Northeast elevation of barn, Resource 6, noncontributing. Camera facing southwest.

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.460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including 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 Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

Monte Verdi Plantation, Cushing (V), Rusk County, Texas

Narrative Description

Monte Verdi Plantation home (Recorded Texas Historic Landmark, 1964) is a good example of an antebellum Texas Greek Revival plantation house. Built in 1854-1856 on the 10,700-acre plantation of Julien Sidney Devereux and his wife Sarah Ann Landrum Devereux, the house retains much of its original materials, including the original wood windows, heart of pine flooring, doors, cypress walls, and built-in pine cabinets. Typical of Texas Greek Revival residences, the house is constructed of wood, is symmetrical in composition, contains a main entry surrounded by sidelights and transom, and boasts full-façade upper and lower galleries. The second most prosperous plantation in Rusk County, Texas before 1865, Monte Verdi preserves the history of a large Texas cotton plantation during the antebellum, Civil War, and postbellum eras. The nominated property contains the restored plantation main house; the original water well (c. 1852); the relocated and rehabilitated 1840 Allen Birdwell Log House (Texas Historic Landmark in 1967); the Bungalow house (c. 1960); two small ancillary storage structures (c. 1960); a barn (c. 1960); a large ancillary structure (c. 2000); and one hundred acres of the original plantation site where a cotton gin and slave quarters once stood. The house and the well are considered contributing resources.

Monte Verdi Plantation is located approximately ten miles north of Cushing, Texas, in Rusk County.¹ The property boundaries established for the nomination comprise 100 acres of a central section of Julien Sidney Devereux's original plantation of approximately 10,700 acres. The restored main house is located on top of a hill on the north side of County Road 4233 W and the other buildings are north of the main house. All the nominated acreage is currently the house's yard and pastureland, but historically the Devereuxs used it to support a vast agricultural operation, including a family garden, cotton farming and ginning, and slave quarters during the mid-1800s. Although the main house and water well are the only original, and thus contributing, building and structure intact at Monte Verdi, all contributing and noncontributing resources are described below. Each resource's identification number is the same number as listed on the sketch on page 31.

1. Monte Verdi Plantation House, 1854-1857 (contributing; Recorded Texas Historic Landmark, 1964)

Leading from the white rock driveway to the east-facing front porch is an approximately fifty-foot brick sidewalk ending at reinforced concrete steps constructed during a 1960s restoration. Although the sidewalk is not original, the Lowrys constructed it with circa 1850s hand-made bricks salvaged from bricks strewn about the property.² On either side of the steps are two brass vases and a brass lion to the left and right. The first floor of the Greek Revival house is a L-shaped plan of 1,723.9 square feet and the second floor is a rectangular plan of 1,236.6 square feet, for a total 2,960.5 square feet. The house has a hipped roof with asphalt shingles and a chain wall and brick pier foundation. The entire house's exterior is white painted clapboard, which owners have repaired and replaced in-kind since 1856. While all sashes, muntins, and other wooden window components are original, only 10 percent of the original window lights remain.

East Façade: This façade illustrates the house's symmetry and serves as its main entrance. The entablature has a boxed cornice with original Italianate-style brackets, which extends along the other three, two-story façades.

¹ Note: The town of Cushing is located in Nacogdoches County, but Monte Verdi Plantation is located within Rusk County.

² Numerous tenants that farmed the plantation property since 1873 moved the bricks and stone foundations from demolished buildings throughout the property to clear the fields for agricultural production. Even if documentation existed that detailed exactly where on the property the Lowrys salvaged the bricks from, it likely would not help determine where the original structures stood.

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The entablature leads into a six-order Roman Doric colonnade of colossal cypress orders, capitals, bases, and brick pedestals. (During the 1960s restoration, the Lowrys salvaged the current six columns from a destroyed 1850s house in Galveston to replace the existing four, squared timbers. Although the original colonnade had six pairs of single columns stacked on top of each other, the current colonnade effectively preserves the building's physical integrity and restores the design's original symmetry and feel. Notice Figures on pages 32 through 33 to compare the original façade, the 1950s façade, and the current façade).

The second floor has a paneled door opening onto the 10-by-54 foot, restored wooden balcony. The balcony door has an undecorated lip lintel and a solid, undecorated doorframe. On either side of the door are two six-over-six, double hung wooden windows with an undecorated lip lintel and two operating, louvered shutters. This window design is maintained throughout the house. A wooden railing with spun balusters encircles the second floor balcony.

The first floor doorway consists of an undecorated entablature with Doric pilasters, a transom light, two four-light sidelights, and a paneled door. Similar to the second floor, the ground floor has two six-over-six light windows on either side of the doorway. The wooden porch runs the entire length of the front façade and measures 10-by-54 feet.

North Façade: Only 22.9 feet of this façade is two stories, while the remaining 22 feet are one story. The north façade has a two-story brick chimney restored with the original, handmade bricks, with a first and second story window on either side. The one-story section is original and has two windows and an undecorated entablature.

West Façade: The one-story section runs a length of 22.1 feet, has a front gabled roof with asphalt shingles, and a restored internal, brick chimney protrudes from the center of the gable. A window is also located on the south side of the chimney. This façade also has a covered, L-shaped, wooden porch that runs 10-by-22 feet and 32-by-9.6 feet. The western, or short, leg of the porch has a flat roof while the eastern, or long, leg of the porch has a shed roof. A seven-tread, concrete staircase with wooden balustrades and railing leads up to the western end of the porch. In the corner of the "L" is a set of paneled double-doors.

The two-story section of the house appears less symmetrical than the other façades. There are four windows on the second floor, but there is only one window on the north half of the façade and a central window is lower than the other three windows on the west façade. This placement, however, coordinates with the landing of the interior stairway.

The present West Façade seemingly differs from two historical photographs taken of the house, Figure 2 (page 32) and Figure 3 (page 33). These two pictures seemingly show an enclosed space behind the house's eastern portions. Because of the angle of these two pictures, it is unclear whether the enclosed area is attached to the house or not. Note in Figure 3, there appear stairs that lead to the enclosed western end of the south façade. Additionally, the shed roofline of the enclosed western portion is unattached from the main house. Furthermore, Figure 2 depicts that the enclosed western structure has a pier foundation separated from the main house's brick foundation. This evidence implies that the enclosed section is an ancillary building possibly separated from the main house by a narrow walkway. Although the current rear porch is not original, there is not sufficient evidence explaining that the original western façade was destroyed to build the current porch.

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South Façade: The eastern end of the south façade is identical to the north façade except for the reconstructed, not restored, exterior brick fireplace. The single-story portion of the south façade has two, smaller six-over-six light windows and a paneled door on the western end of the back porch.

Interior: The front door opens into a central hall with a staircase leading to the second floor; a parlor, dining room, and kitchen on the north side of the house; and a bedroom is on the south end of the house. All rooms on the ground floor have painted, original cypress wood paneling; original heart of pine floors; and original doors and hardware. The parlor has wide crown molding, and the original mantle has an undecorated entablature and Doric pilasters. On the south end of the parlor, underneath the staircase, is a small bathroom, which is a portion of the original butler's pantry.

The parlor leads into the dining room, which has smaller crown molding and original fireplace and mantle and built-in cypress cabinets on the west end. South of the dining room is the current kitchen area, which has no crown molding and opens onto the back porch. This room is a portion of the original butler's pantry, but has modern kitchen appliances. The downstairs bedroom south of the hall has crown molding identical to the dining room, and a fireplace mantle reconstructed from materials salvaged from a mid-1800s home.

The staircase has original heart of pine treads and heads, but the Lowrys replaced the balustrades and handrail in the 19060s. The first flight leads from the front door to an 11-by-4 foot landing, turns, and continues to a second flight upstairs. The stair way opens onto the second floor landing and faces the balcony door. The two upstairs bedrooms, located on either side of the landing, are identical to the first floor bedroom except they are wallpapered instead of painted cypress. Although the wallpaper is not original, the two second-floor bedroom originally had wallpaper.

This building is in good condition. Though the column configuration and rear additions impact the integrity of the original design, the overall effect is minimal, and these changes do not significantly impact the integrity of location, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling or association. The house clearly conveys its historic identity, as well as its architectural and historical significance.

2. Water Well, c. 1852 (contributing)

This 47-foot-deep, brick-lined well has a 44-inch diameter and served as the Devereuxs' water well after Julien commissioned local workers to dig and brick it in 1852. Devereux's slaves and hired craftsmen hand-made the well's bricks onsite.³ This well is still operational, and the Lowrys built the circa-1960 Bungalow around the well.

This structure is in good condition.

3. Bungalow, c. 1960 (noncontributing)

The wood-framed bungalow has a wood-shingled, hipped roof and a rectangle floor pattern. A three-order colonnade of boxed columns supports the undecorated entablature. The south-facing front porch is 15-by-4 feet and has two unpaneled doors, one opening into the bedroom and bathroom and one opening into the portion containing the original water well. The west façade has a two-over-two double-hung window; the north façade

³ Gladys Allen, "Old Plantation Recalls Historical Era," *The Daily Sun*, Texas City, TX, September 6, 1964, 16.

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has a casement window and an unpaneled wooden door; and the east façade has two, two-over-two wooden windows. The Lowrys built the bungalow during the 1960s restoration and sought to make it architecturally compatible to the main house.

The western living section opens into a bedroom and has a door that leads to the bathroom. The eastern interior serves as the well house and has a rear door.

The bungalow is noncontributing because its construction date is much later than the period of significance. This building is in good condition.

4. Ancillary Building #1, c. 1960 (noncontributing)

This 8-by-6-foot, wood-framed structure serves as a tool shed. It has an asphalt-shingled, side gabled roof and east facing batten double doors.

The ancillary building #1 is noncontributing because its construction date is much later than the period of significance. This building is in poor condition.

5. Ancillary Building #2, c. 1960 (noncontributing)

This wood-framed structure is currently vacant. Its side-gabled roof has wood shingles and one, square wooden post partially supports it. The exterior is wood-paneled, and the interior is an open, 9-by-12-foot space. Approximately 40 percent of the roof and 10 percent of the wall has collapsed.

Ancillary building #2 is noncontributing because its construction date is much later than the period of significance. This building is in poor condition.

6. Barn, c. 1960 (noncontributing)

This 60-by-40-foot, open-sided feeder barn has a wood frame and corrugated tin, front gabled pent roof. The middle aisle has a 15-by-40-foot concrete slab foundation, and doors open into floor bays on the north and south sides. The front, or east, façade has a batten door on the second story and batten double doors on the ground floor. The west façade has an identical ground-floor door as the east façade, and the north and south façades have a batten door opening into the floor bays. Similar to the bungalow and ancillary buildings #1 and #2, the Lowrys built the barn during their ownership of the property, possibly using materials salvaged on-site and from other properties.

The barn is noncontributing because its construction date is much later than the period of significance. This building is in fair condition.

7. Ancillary Building #3, c. 2000 (noncontributing)

This 10-by-15 foot, wood-framed building has a gambrel roof with composite shingles and a pier and beam foundation. The front, or north, façade has a six-foot batten double door, with a one-over-one light, double hung window on either side.

Ancillary building #3 is noncontributing because its construction date is much later than the period of significance. This building is in pristine condition.

Monte Verdi Plantation, Cushing (V), Rusk County, Texas

8. Birdwell House, c. 1840 (noncontributing; Recorded Texas Historic Landmark, 1966)

Originally constructed by Allen Birdwell in Mount Enterprise, Texas, around 1840, this enclosed, two-story, log dogtrot house has many renovations and additions. Although much of the house, especially the front façade, maintains the original feel of the house, the later additions have altered the house's original massing and materials.

Exterior: This rectangular house has a side gabled, steep pitched roof with wooden shingles and a rock foundation wall and piers. The roof has an open cornice and undecorated entablature supported by the original colonnade of six, unhewn timbers. The house is comprised of square hewn logs with mortised corners and wide chinking. The east, or front, façade has two six-over-six double hung windows on either side of the circa 1960 paneled door with sidelights. The 6-by-42.3 foot wooden front porch replicates the original porch.

The north façade has a centrally located, reconstructed two-story iron ore and brick chimney with a four-over-four double hung, second-story window and a six-over-six double hung, first-story window on either side of it. Additionally, the western most 8 feet have mid-twentieth century wood paneling that differentiates this circa 1960 addition from the original house. While the south façade is identical to the north, the west façade has mid-twentieth century wood paneling and one six-over-six double hung window on either side of the metal door located in the façade's center.

Interior: The house opens into a hallway lined with the original exterior walls of the 1840s dogtrot breezeway. The living area is on the north side of the hall and maintains the original exposed ceiling beams, wood paneled walls, and wood flooring. On the south side of the hall is the dining room, which has the original exposed beams and half of the original wall paneling. The wood floor and half of the wooden wall paneling in the dining room, though, date to the mid-twentieth century. The dining room opens into the 1960s kitchen, which has a modern bathroom across the hall.

A spiral-box staircase leading to the southern bedroom begins in the dining room. This staircase has the original treads, and the southern, second-story bedroom has original wood floors. The second staircase begins at the west end of the entry hall and ends on the second story landing. This landing leads into the northern bedroom, which has original wood flooring. Although there are many additions, they meet the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation.

The Birdwell House is an important historic resource. However, because it was relocated to the property well after the end of the period of significance, and because it does not reflect the historical significance of Monte Verdi Plantation and the historical context presented in this nomination, it is considered a noncontributing resource to the nominated property. This building is in good condition.

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The Overall Landscape⁴

At the height of its operations, Monte Verdi Plantation consisted of more than 10,000 acres and was home to nearly 100 people—the Devereux family, an overseer and his family, and a slave community of more than 80—as well as the center of a highly productive agricultural enterprise. Though only the main house and the water well are extant from the period of significance, it is possible to reconstruct what the landscape may have looked like during that time by utilizing evidence found in the Devereux Family Papers (held at the Dolph Briscoe Center for American History at the University of Texas at Austin), as well as what is known about the typical Texas plantation layout in general.

Though large land holdings were fairly common in antebellum Texas, the actual improved acreage on any given farm rarely exceeded 100 acres. The improved acreage at Monte Verdi, however, was almost 400. A large labor force was necessary to maintain these improvements and produce a profitable crop. With 80 members, the Monte Verdi slave community was among the largest on Texas plantations; less than 10% of all Texas slaveholders held more than 20 slaves. In John Michael Vlach's study of Southern plantation landscapes, he noted that there was no particular "style" of architecture and that houses and service buildings seemed to follow local building customs, which ultimately impacted the landscape overall. Site development depended on a variety of factors, such as crop production, regionally-specific agricultural practices, transportation options, climate, topographical influences, etc. Sue Winton Moss's study of Texas plantations led her to conclude that the built environment of Texas plantations actually showed "a surprising homogeneity." However, she did find that Texas' larger plantations (although few in number) did demonstrate some diversity, as identified in Vlach's study. Nonetheless, some reasonable assumptions can be made regarding the layout of the Monte Verdi Plantation.

Like on most of the state's agricultural operations, most of the plantation's main buildings would have been adjacent to, or directly in the midst of, the primary fields. Kitchens, other food facilities, water collection and storage, and slave dwellings would have been in close proximity of the main house; and workshops, barns, crop processing and storage facilities were farther away, yet within sight of the big house. If the 400 improved acres (0.625 square miles) at Monte Verdi were mostly contiguous, all of it would have been easily visible from the vantage of the main house. The planter's residence dominated all others in siting and scale. Nearly everything needed for survival would have been very close by—kitchen, smokehouse, woodpile, cultivated vegetable plots, chicken houses, hog pens, and the like. It might have been enclosed within a fence. Just beyond this would have been the fields dedicated to corn and the cash crop, cotton, along with the slave quarters and agricultural outbuildings. The layout of all of these resources held both functional and psychological meaning for the residents and their visitors. As Vlach explains, the size, scale, and spatial layout of these buildings on the landscape had symbolic implications meant to reinforce the social hierarchy both on the plantation and in the larger world, in general. The planter created these physical settings as a way to establish a "direct material expression of their social power."

⁴ The following discussion is based primarily upon John Michael Vlach's *Back of the Big House*, a study of plantation landscapes across the South, historian Sue Winton Moss' "A Plantation Model for Texas," which looks specifically at Texas plantations of all sizes in each region of the state, and Terry Jordan's *Texas Log Buildings: A Folk Architecture*. John Michael Vlach, *Back of the Big House: The Architecture of Plantation Slavery* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1993); Sue Winton Moss, "A Plantation Model for Texas," in *The Anson Jones Plantation: Archeological and Historical Investigations in Washington County, Texas* (College Station: Center for Environmental Archeology, 1995); Terry G. Jordan, *Texas Log Buildings: A Folk Architecture* (Austin: The University of Texas Press, 1978).

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Kitchen – This ubiquitous building was almost always located very near the main house, though it was usually separate from it due to fire and heat concerns.⁵ Details from the records in the Devereux Family Collection, along with anecdotal information from family descendants indicate that the kitchen was located approximately 50 feet west of the main house. The size of this building is unknown, as is its construction. However, a typical plantation or farm kitchen in Texas was a single pen log building with a gable roof and large gable end fireplace. In the case of Monte Verdi Plantation, the kitchen building had been repurposed, having formerly served as one room of the family’s first residence. In January 1856, at least some of the rooms on first floor of the new mansion were complete. Sarah wrote to Julien (who was in Austin at the time) that she and the children had moved into the new dwelling and that one room of the old house had been moved up the hill for use as the new kitchen. She relayed that it was “a better one than they could have made of new logs and much quicker done.” As all of the paid workers on the new house had been dismissed already, one assumes that the slaves were responsible for dismantling, moving, and reassembling the building. The records do note that Charles, one of the slaves, was responsible for laying the floor in the new kitchen. It’s not clear if there was a second kitchen building for the slave quarters, or if this one building served the entire plantation population.

Smokehouse – Not far from the kitchen, main house, and water source would have been a smoke house, an essential facility for any farm, and in which beef and pork could be cured by salting it in large troughs and then hanging and smoking until cured. The square or rectangular buildings were typically constructed of “V” or dove-tail notched hewn logs which fit tightly together to keep critters out and smoke in. John Devereux’s January 26, 1846 diary entry states that the slaves had finished building the smoke house the day before, “three days from the stump,” which implies a log construction. The exact location of the Monte Verdi smokehouse remains unknown, but large quantities of meat would have been necessary to sustain the plantation’s large population. Records indicate that they put up anywhere between 6 and 9 tons of pork per year.

Slave Residences - Records in the Devereux Family Papers, along with anecdotal information from family descendants indicate that the slave residences were located 100 yards northwest of the main house, with others possibly located another 100 yards northwest, near a creek. It’s unknown if there were separate quarters for domestic service slaves and field slaves. In correspondence, the residences are referred to as “cabins” and one can assume they were constructed of logs. John Devereux’s March 26, 1846, diary entry makes reference to the day’s work, which included “men building cabins” while women cleared the fields. The 1860 census taker recorded 75 slaves living in 20 “slave dwellings.” Beyond this information, we have little detail regarding the appearance and layout of the quarters. The twenty residences were most likely arranged in a linear or grid-like fashion, possibly in two or more rows with shared common areas, and the groupings likely resembled a small village. Typically, Texas slave accommodations consisted of just one room, though there are examples of two-pen construction. Vlach found that on larger Southern plantations, slaves were often housed according to their primary occupation, but Moss found that such an arrangement was very rare in Texas and happened only on a few of the very largest plantations. As on most Southern plantations in the 1850s and 1860s, slaves lived in family groups, generally one family per residential unit. The size of the dwelling varied depending on the size of the family group. Other likely features include a prominent fireplace and chimney; small, unglazed window openings; hard packed dirt floor; and board roof.

⁵ In *Back of the Big House*, Vlach points out that the separate location of the kitchen also reinforced the social hierarchy of the plantation by making a clear distinction between those that served and those who were served. Moss, however, found that in Texas, the kitchen was separate from main house regardless of whether the farm owner was a slaveholder or not.

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It was also common in rural Texas for slaves to have small plots of land adjacent to or near their dwellings for use as gardens or to support livestock or poultry. Documentary evidence in the Devereux Family Papers demonstrates at least some of the Monte Verdi slaves grew their own produce and crops (including cotton and corn), sold it (with Devereux as their agent), and then kept or spent the money on goods of their choosing.

Overseer's Residence – There was a separate house for the Monte Verdi Plantation overseer (several men held the position over the years) and his family. It may have been located between the main house and slave quarters or closer to the slave quarters. The quality of construction was likely higher than that used in the slave cabins, and it was certainly larger, but was probably still constructed of logs and consisted of two to four rooms.

Barns and Other Agricultural Outbuildings – On an agricultural complex as large as Monte Verdi, there would have been numerous barns and other similar buildings to house equipment, store feed and supplies, and shelter processing activities. None of these survive today, but would likely have been grouped not far from the main house and slave quarters. Vlach, Moss, and Jordan all found barns and related outbuildings built of simple log construction throughout Texas and much of the South. They tended to be anywhere from 150 to 225 square feet in size, typically one-pen, but sometimes two. Erected to meet a particular need, they generally served a specific purpose and were arranged to accommodate certain agricultural functions or processes. The Devereux Family Papers contain mention of two cotton gins and a feed mill, but invariably there were a variety of other buildings such as corn cribs, a milk or spring house, a carriage house, a variety of pens and stables, and a cotton storage house. One of the plantation slaves, Jack, was a skilled blacksmith, and the plantation no doubt gave him a large volume of work, so it is likely that there was a separate blacksmith shop, as well. The two cotton gins were likely the most valuable. One is described as a building “41 feet square containing a 50 saw improved Pratts Gin and Burrows improved patent corn mill with cast iron segments and running gear.” It was valued at \$1,500. The second gin house was “36 feet square containing Pratts 45 saw gin.” It was valued at \$1,000.

Fields, Gardens, and other Landscape Features – Most of the 400 improved acres was likely devoted to the cash crop, cotton, but many acres supported corn, which was a food staple for both human and livestock consumption. To feed the nearly 100 people that called Monte Verdi home, there was also at least one large garden, and some slaves cultivated smaller ones of their own. Diaries and other correspondence in the Devereux Family Papers mention tomatoes, lettuces, turnips, rye, wheat, potatoes, beans, squashes, cucumbers, and okra. Devereux also cultivated a number of fruit trees and grape vines. Family correspondence contains many references to both Sarah and Julien collecting horticultural samples during their travels.

The 100 acres included in this nomination are primarily grazing and hay fields, with some wooded areas. During the period of significance, the existing evidence indicates that the kitchen, slave quarters, kitchen garden and numerous agricultural buildings stood somewhere on this acreage in close proximity to the main house. It is highly likely that portions of this acreage were utilized as cultivated cotton and corn fields as well. Though the acres do not carry out the exact function as they did historically, the agricultural setting, association and rural feeling of the plantation remain intact. A thorough archeological investigation, guided by a thorough review of the existing archival evidence, could certainly lead to a greater understanding of this plantation landscape in the future.

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Statement of Significance

Monte Verdi is the former cotton plantation of Julien Sidney Devereux and his wife Sarah Devereux Garrison. Located in the Glen Fawn community in southwestern Rusk County, Monte Verdi served as one of the county's most economically and historically significant plantations and one of the largest antebellum plantations in Texas. Julien bought the property in 1845, and began construction of the main house in 1854. Under his ownership, Monte Verdi boasted a real property value of approximately \$93,500 and was home of one of the state's legislators.⁶ After Julien's death in 1856, Sarah became Rusk County's most successful female planter, and the state's second wealthiest female planter behind Rebecca Hagerty of Harrison County.⁷ Despite political and economic challenges that Sarah Devereux Garrison faced, she remained a prominent civic and economic leader in the county through the Civil War. Based upon their agricultural successes, the Devereuxs were important figures in the economic development of Rusk County. That success was achieved through slave labor, and Monte Verdi was home to a large African American slave community. Surviving evidence indicates that this was a community with strong family bonds and allows for examination of their individual and collective contributions to the success of the plantation's agricultural endeavors. After the Civil War, Sarah Devereux married Jim Garrison, who sold the remaining property in 1873. Monte Verdi then passed through several owners and deteriorated greatly before Emmett and Agnes Lowry bought and restored the main house in the early 1960s.⁸

The Monte Verdi Plantation's main house is a good example of Greek Revival plantation architecture in Texas and achieves greater local significance as the last remaining antebellum plantation house in rural Rusk County. As a successful agricultural enterprise, the plantation was an important contributor to the county's economic development—a system which relied on the individual and collective contributions of both slaveholders and slaves. Monte Verdi Plantation is nominated to the National Register of Historic Places at the local level of significance under Criterion A in the areas of agriculture and ethnic heritage (black); Criterion B in the area of agriculture for its association with Sarah Devereux; and Criterion C in the area of architecture. The period of significance begins in 1852, the date of the earliest extant resource (water well), and ends when Jim Garrison sold the property in 1873, thus terminating the Devereux family connection.

The Devereux Family's Early History in Texas

Fleeing from financial troubles caused by land speculation and a failing marriage with Adaline Rebeccah Bradley Devereux, Julien Sidney Devereux moved to Texas from Alabama in 1841 with several members of his extended family and more than thirty slaves.⁹ Similar to many other Texas immigrants during the Republic era, Texas's attraction as a "garden spot" and the ability to escape his debts contributed greatly to Devereux's relocation to Texas.¹⁰ Grasping the possibility to start fresh in Texas as a wealthy planter certainly attracted

⁶ Property value derived by extrapolating 1858 values for Julien Devereux's 1856 probated will. Winfrey, *Julien Sidney Devereux*, 125, 129.

⁷ United States Census Bureau, *Population Schedules of the Eight Census of the United States, 1860*, 19; and Judith N. McArthur, "Myth, Reality, and Anomaly: The Complex World of Rebecca Hagerty," *East Texas Historical Journal* 24, no. 2 (Fall 1986): 26.

⁸ Agnes Lowry to Dorman Winfrey, 7 July 1961, published in full in Dorman H. Winfrey, *Julien Sidney Devereux and His Monte Verdi Plantation* (Waco: Texian Press, 1964), 138.

⁹ Winfrey, *Julien Sidney Devereux*, 31; and Joleene Maddox Snider, "Sarah Devereux: A Study in Southern Femininity," *Southwestern Historical Quarterly* 97, no. 3 (January 1994): 481.

¹⁰ Winfrey, *Julien Sidney Devereux*, 32-33.

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Julien Devereux to move. Therefore, in January 1841, Julien sold his 1,718-acre Alabama plantation and moved to Texas with his children, sister, brother-in-law, and his father John.

Julien arrived in Jasper County and took the oath of allegiance to the Republic in November 1841. While this proved an important immigration port, the entire family moved southwest to Montgomery County, Texas, sixty miles north of Houston, in December 1841. Julien stayed close to his family in Montgomery for the next four and a half years, and founded a 495-acre plantation called Terrebonne.¹¹ The thirty-four slaves he brought from Alabama enabled Devereux to partake in Texas's planter class culture.¹² While this had no inherent economic value, Julien and his father John Devereux used their social positions to vocalize their pro-annexation opinions.¹³ Although Julien did not enter politics at this point, supporting United States annexation set him up to participate in state politics after annexation.

While in Montgomery County, Devereux also met Sarah Landrum, the daughter of a Texas Revolution veteran. Although separated, Julien remained officially married to his wife in Alabama. In February 1843, however, Julien filed for a divorce and married the sixteen-year-old Sarah in June. Although the Devereux letters do not record when the couple met, this timeline indicates Julien divorced specifically to marry Sarah. Nonetheless, Julien's and Sarah's letters both indicate that the couple loved each other as they prepared for their lives together.¹⁴ Despite having agricultural success by producing an average of seventy bales of cotton a season, Julien Devereux bought land 140 miles north in Rusk County in the summer of 1845 because of Terrebonne's adverse effects on his health.¹⁵ In August, the Devereuxs returned to Terrebonne to harvest the cotton crop, collect their personal property, and sell their land. In May 1846, the family permanently moved to Rusk County and began their life at what they called Monte Verdi.¹⁶

The Devereux Family in Rusk County

Incorporated on January 16, 1843, Rusk County became an important political and economic center of antebellum Texas. Primarily an agricultural county, Rusk County became the third most populated county in Texas by 1850 with 8,148 people: 6,012 whites and 2,136 slaves.¹⁷ Additionally, Rusk County had hundreds of thousands of farming acres and became the home to more than twelve "major planters," those producing more than 100 bales.¹⁸ By 1860, Rusk became the most populated county with 15,803 people, 60 percent white, and the state's sixth wealthiest with an almost \$6.5 million appraised value.¹⁹ During this time, Rusk County developed three male and female colleges and boasted an active civic life.²⁰

¹¹ Ibid., 35, 37.

¹² Ibid., 34.

¹³ Ibid., 49.

¹⁴ Snider, "Sarah Devereux," 481.

¹⁵ Winfrey, *Julien Sidney Devereux*, 50, 58.

¹⁶ Ibid., 54.

¹⁷ United States Census Bureau, *The Seventh Census of the United States: 1850* (Washington D.C.: Robert Armstrong, Public Printer, 1853.), 504.

¹⁸ Winfrey, *A History of Rusk County*, 25.

¹⁹ United States Census Bureau, *The Population of the United States in 1860; Compiled from the Original Returns from the Eighth Census* (Washington D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1864), 503-504; and *The Galveston News, The Texas Almanac for 1860, with Statistics, Historical and Biographical Sketches, &C. Relating to Texas* (Galveston: *The Galveston News*, 1861), 242-245.

²⁰ Winfrey, *A History of Rusk County*, 31.

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As a prominent planter twenty-five miles south of the county seat, Henderson, Julien Devereux became a political leader and an active participant in the development of the county. He served as the county's Justice of the Peace from 1848 to 1851 and Rusk County Commissioner in 1854.²¹ He also served as Commissioner of the proposed Henderson and Burkeville Railroad in 1852, supported the Galveston, Houston, and Henderson Railroad, and helped found the town of Anadarko.²²

Within a year of the Devereux family's resettlement to Rusk County, Julien advanced to the status of "large planter." As Randolph Campbell notes, large planters comprised less than 3 percent of the state's total population by 1860.²³ Furthermore, Abigail Curlee illustrates that approximately 1 percent of Texas' slaveholders owned more than fifty slaves and produced more than 100 bales of cotton in 1850.²⁴ Devereux and Monte Verdi fell within this elite large planter class, owning 80 slaves and annually producing one hundred and twenty 400-pound bales of cotton.²⁵ While cotton became Monte Verdi's major cash crop, the plantation also produced corn, peas, beans, sweet potatoes, hogs, sheep, and cattle. Additionally, Devereux maintained substantial peach, plum, fig, and apple orchards. By 1850, his land produced 2450 bushels of corn, and made Monte Verdi virtually self-sustainable.²⁶ To demonstrate his wealth, Devereux also purchased clothing, tools, and furnishings from local markets and retailers as far away as New Orleans.

Devereux also built the necessary structures to ensure Monte Verdi's self-sustainability and service the local community. By 1850, Monte Verdi slaves operated a corn mill and two cotton gins.²⁷ Although most large planters built their own gins, Devereux also used his as commercial ventures by advertising his services to local small planters.²⁸ Additionally, Devereux's massive cotton production and investment in local railroads coalesced to make him a major early funder of Rusk County's greater agricultural and economic development. By the time of his death in March 1856, Devereux owned 10,721 acres and eighty slaves, making the plantation among the largest in Texas.²⁹

The Monte Verdi Slave Community

Like other large plantations in the South, Monte Verdi's agricultural enterprise depended heavily on slave labor. While the slaves themselves left no written evidence of their experience on Monte Verdi, it is possible to gain insight into their lives utilizing census records, tax rolls, and the diaries, account books, and correspondence in the Devereux Family Papers. These records allow glimpses into various aspects of slave life, such as the nature of their work tasks and conditions, diet, health and medical care, familial relationships, and interaction with white owners, overseers, and others. The records, of course, are written from the vantage point of the slave owners or others in positions of power. Nonetheless, it is possible to glean at least some data regarding the lives

²¹ Ibid., 123-4.

²² Winfrey, *Julien Sidney Devereux*, 100, 102.

²³ Randolph B. Campbell, *Gone To Texas: A History of the Lone Star State* (New York: University of Oxford Press, 2003), 214.

²⁴ Abigail Curlee, "A Study of Texas Slave Plantations, 1822-1865" (Ph.D. diss., University of Texas, 1932), 27. While Curlee's analysis and interpretation of the institution of slavery is biased and outdated, most historians agree that her statistical compilations are solidly researched and reliable.

²⁵ Winfrey, *Julien Sidney Devereux*, 78.

²⁶ Ibid., 81-83.

²⁷ Ibid., 80.

²⁸ Randolph B. Campbell, *A Southern Community in Crisis: Harrison County, Texas, 1850-1880* (Austin: Texas State Historical Association, 1983), 50; and Winfrey, *Julien Sidney Devereux*, 80.

²⁹ Devereux, will, 356.

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the slaves lived on the plantation. Joleene Maddox Snider, a historian who has conducted extensive research into the African American population at Monte Verdi, draws this conclusion: “By all criteria this was a stable, monogamous, strong Slave Community and society. Continuing kinship lines are clearly evident; a large number of the same individuals are evident in the records over a span of 18 years and were presumably part of the community long before this study commences; there are few sales and purchases; there is little evidence of severe punishment or cruelty; and there are few runaways.”³⁰

Among the slaves to make the move to Texas with the Devereux family were Scott and Tabby, a couple who had both been born in Georgia in the late 1700s. Over time, the Devereux slaveholdings grew to include Scott and Tabby’s children, grandchildren, in-laws, nieces and nephews. All indications are that the family units, particularly women and their children, were preserved to a high degree and enabled a stability and continuity in the community. Had Julien remained in Alabama and been forced to reconcile with his creditors, he likely would have had to sell at least some of his slaves—an action that would have likely separated and irreversibly damaged these strong family ties. Thus, while the slaves that traveled to Texas no doubt left behind some members of their family, friends, and home, they did so with at least some integrity of family unit intact.

Both John and Julien Devereux make mention of familial connections within the slave community throughout their diaries and other written records. There are lists of slave names and birth dates and these almost always mention the mother’s name. This, of course, had a practical and economic purpose—if a child was born to a slave mother, then it followed that the child was also a slave—but it also serves a useful genealogical purpose, as well. Both John’s and Julien’s wills indicate that they were aware of these kinship patterns within the slave community and perhaps even placed some value on their importance. For example, John expresses in his will that “it is my wish that my twenty-two Negroe slaves (they being one family and children and grand children of my Negroe woman Tabby) be disposed of in the manner following—that the slaves whose names are Henry, Amey and her three children Charles, Mahala & Sam Mary and her two boys Ham and Anthony Daniel Randal and Scott & Tabby shall descent to [...]” Later, Julien’s will also records specific names and groups identified family units together as he distributes his estate to various heirs. In another provision of his will, Julien stipulates that if the plantation earnings are not enough to satisfy his debts at the time of his death, his executor is sell off certain portions of land to satisfy those debts. He specifically prohibits the sale of slaves to satisfy his debts, explaining that “they are family slaves and it is my will that they remain so after my death.” Obviously this preserves and perpetuates the wealth of the estate—slaves were infinitely more valuable than land—and is likely the primary motivating factor for this decision. The byproduct of such a decision, however, is that it created a situation in which Monte Verdi’s slave community could forge strong bonds, create stability and promote continuity through a shared and collective history, even in the face of the absolute degradation of slavery.³¹

³⁰ Joleene Maddox Snider, (untitled paper presented at the spring meeting of the East Texas Historical Association, Nacogdoches, February 8, 2005). Unless otherwise noted, the information on the slave community presented in this section of the nomination is derived from this presentation or from Snider’s unpublished research notes. The notes represent a thorough examination of the Devereux Family Papers, held at the Briscoe Center for American History at the University of Texas at Austin, as well as additional collections held by direct descendants of Monte Verdi slaves.

³¹ One significant separation of slave families did occur in 1848, however. Julien’s sister, Louisiana Holcombe, sued Julien after their father’s death, claiming ownership of some of the Devereux family slaves. Louisiana received eleven slaves in the settlement of the suit, and they went to live with her in nearby Marshall, Texas, thus splitting up members of the slave community, but the distance allowed for them to still see one another on occasion. Several years later, however, Louisiana and her family moved back to Alabama and her husband sold some of the slaves. Though this dealt a devastating blow to the slave community, Snider’s research found that the integrity of the community as a whole, with the strong influence of Tabby and Scott, allowed for the family to recover strongly from this tragic separation.

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The 1850 census taker recorded 65 enslaved individuals at the Monte Verdi Plantation. They were not enumerated by name, but by age and color (either black or mulatto). From this, we know that there were 27 females and 38 males; two were enumerated as mulatto. The average age was just over seventeen years old. Twenty-four were under the age of 10; five were older than 40. These numbers changed slightly by the time the next census was taken 10 years later. The 1860 census enumerates 75 slaves at Monte Verdi—30 females and 45 males. The average age rose slightly to 19 years. Thirty-two slaves were under the age of 10, while 14 were over 40. Seven slaves were recorded as mulatto.

The slaves were responsible for all agricultural production and processing on the plantation, as well as domestic chores, and every other task necessary to sustain a large plantation operation. Activities mentioned specifically in the existing records include chopping and gathering wood, rendering (presumably hogs), constructing various buildings (including gins, cabins, and kitchens), grubbing and hoeing, burning brush, picking cotton, building roads, killing hogs, harvesting deer, cooking, and caring for the Devereux children. No doubt there were countless additional duties. Though it appears that illness excused someone from work, weather had little consequence and the records contain accounts of work taking place in rain, sun, cold and heat. In a February 1846 entry, Julien observes that it “Rained gently all night and now *misting* and cold.” He notes that the “weather [is] too bad to be out,” but that they are trying to prepare the fields in time to plant the next week. The entry concludes with “they finished the cut at dark—heavy rain.” In another entry, we learn that slaves “get wet to their necks with the heavy dews & when the sun comes out it is like ‘fire itself’—white people cannot work out in this part of Texas—[...].” A variety of overseers came and left the plantation (this was common throughout the south), and there were periods of time when the plantation was without his services. In these times, it appears that John filled the void on occasion, but often Scott, the patriarch of the slave community, assumed the role.

Other slaves filled somewhat specialized roles, as well. Jack was a blacksmith. Henry (Scott and Tabby’s oldest son), Martin, and Jess (Scott and Tabby’s son-in-law) were trusted with running important errands, including delivering crops to the Devereux’s factor in Shreveport and to purchase supplies in nearby Henderson or Shreveport, a much longer journey. Tabby, the matriarch of the slave community, must have done much of the cooking. In one letter written during one of his many travels, Julien notes that although he was feeling well, he did not have an appetite—a condition he owed “partly to my having been so accustomed to Tabby’s kind of cookery [...].”

Slaves were a planter’s most significant investment and represented an enormous percentage of any planter’s overall worth. This was true on Monte Verdi Plantation, where in most years the value of the slaves comprised more than half of the plantation’s total value. Slave health, then, was paramount and the records contain invoices and receipts for large quantities of medicines and frequent doctor’s services. Correspondence between family members, as well diaries and other records, regularly mention whether the slaves were in good health, and if not, the treatment administered to them. A particularly bad outbreak of an unnamed illness occurred in August 1846 when John recorded, “Negoes half of them sick and convalescent—the rest nursing the sick.” In November 1855, Sarah writes to Julien with concern about Tabby, explaining that “Granna fell down in her house and Sprained her wrist very badly [...].”³² Doctor’s bills indicate that they tended wounds, pulled teeth, and prescribed a variety of medications to the slaves. Slave children were often delivered by female members of

³² The Devereux letters often refer to Tabby as Granny or Granna.

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the slave community, but often received assistance from a local midwife named Mrs. Wornell. The records inform us that a few of the women died during or shortly after childbirth.

There are no records of Devereux hiring out his slaves, and the reasons seem to be that he feared they would be badly treated or “killed or crippled.” The Devereuxs did record a few instances of punishment, including one on March 19, 1846 when Heard (one of the overseers) “gave July and Flora and Seven a good thrashing which they well deserved for impudence.” Another entry records the purchase of a 15-lb. iron clog “made to put on my negro man Ben [...]” The reason is not stated, but we can reasonably assume it was punishment for a perceived wayward act. In January 1852, Julien Devereux paid ten dollars “for bringing negro man July home after Runaway (the first occurrence of the kind ever happened with me).” July’s punishment, if any, was not noted.

As noted in Section 7, at least some of the slaves tended their own vegetable plots, and some even grew corn and cotton which Julien helped them sell to nearby plantations or local merchants. In 1853, Mt. Enterprise merchant Charles Vinzent sent three hundred dollars to Devereux to distribute to the slaves. The amount was payment for the slaves’ cotton crop that year. In his letter to Devereux, Vinzent states, “I should be glad to have a chance to sell them anything they want of such things as we keep for sale. I would sell goods to them really very low.” Devereux supplied his slaves with clothing, shoes, bedding, and other necessities, but the records show that the slaves placed their own orders for additional items with their earned income such coats, slippers, seeds, and marbles, among other goods.

The Devereux family correspondence regularly contains messages both to and from the slaves. One letter, however, is written by Jincey, an older slave who lived with Julien’s sister, Louisiana Holcombe, in Marshall, Texas.³³ Jincey’s children, though, resided at Monte Verdi. She writes to them affectionately and expresses a strong desire to see them again. “They said Mas Julien had promised that you should all come up and see me, do come Christmas if Mas Jul will let you . . . Tell Scott and Tabby their children are very anxious to see them and look for them too Christmas, beg Mas Jule to let you come up...” Records indicate that at least some slaves were permitted to travel to other Devereux family properties to visit kinfolk on occasion.

Building the Monte Verdi Plantation House

Devereux followed the contemporary pattern of building a temporary log house on his homestead and erecting a larger house once established. From the time they moved to Rusk County in 1846 until the mansion was complete, they family lived in what was likely a dog-trot log house, with one or two large rooms on either side of an open, central passage. A description of the house does not survive, but one of Sarah’s later letters describes how one of the rooms of the old house was repurposed for use as the new home’s kitchen.

Devereux commissioned local constructors to build the Monte Verdi Plantation house in 1854. Devereux designed the Greek Revival house to accommodate the family’s planter lifestyle. To accomplish this, Devereux ordered cypress paneling and heart of pine flooring from New Orleans and built storage cabinets in the Dining Room.³⁴ The home’s size, scale, quality, and even its location on the top of the hill announced the family’s status and reinforced the social hierarchy and power relationships that existed on the plantation.

³³ Jincey dictated her letter to a member of the Holcombe family.

³⁴ Winfrey, *Julien Sidney Devereux*, 116.

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Though Devereux had lived and traveled in multiple Southern states, and while he did much of his business a short distance away in Louisiana, his Greek Revival home is characteristically Texan. The Greek Revival style home was popular throughout the United States in the 1850s, but it was the dominant style for homes in Texas. Its simplicity and adaptability likely contributed to its popularity, especially in the remote areas of Texas, itself already on the frontier. The basic plan consisted of identical rooms on either side of a central hall. The size of the rooms varied as desired by the owner, but symmetry was generally upheld. Examples can be found of wood, brick, and stone construction, but wood was most often the material of choice. Other characteristic details include a main entry surrounded by sidelights and transom, an emphasized entablature, and multi-paned sash windows. The most readily identifiable characteristic is the columned porch or portico. In the truest examples, the columns and entablature were faithful executions of one of the Greek orders and were topped by a low gable or pediment; these were extremely rare in Texas.

As was customary for the time, Julien and his contractor likely selected the various components of the house from popular pattern books of the time, perhaps Asher Benjamin's *The American Builder's Companion* and Miniard Lafever's *The Beauties of Modern Architecture*. These books contained all the information a craftsman needed to put the entire building together, including design and detail of the columns and various options for windows, doors, stairs, and other moldings. Few Texas Greek Revival homes featured fully developed classical moldings and orders, especially outside of urban areas. However, it was relatively easy to achieve the look of the style by adding to the basic plan a porch lined with a few square posts and some simple moldings. Its wood construction; shallow, full-façade porch; traditional plan, proportion and symmetry; and the simplest of classical details distinguished the Monte Verdi plantation as a Texas Greek Revival style home.

Many associate Greek Revival style domestic architecture with the antebellum South, a symbol of Southern nationalism. However, Kenneth Hafertepe's recent study of the style, particularly as it developed in Texas, leads him to conclude that this notion is architecturally and culturally unfounded, a product of outdated and biased analysis.³⁵ While past interpretations of the style found it to be uniquely American, Hafertepe points out that it actually is an international style, with significant early examples found throughout Europe. Once it made its way to America (via Philadelphia), it spread west, north, and south. Greek Revival homes were constructed for a diverse clientele with varying political beliefs in a wide variety of geographical locations. Furthermore, he also notes that while it's true that many Southern plantation mansions were Greek Revival in style, just as many were constructed in the popular Federal style. He concludes that the Greek Revival style can and could mean different things to different people: "A Southern slaveholder might associate Greek columns with the Aristotelian doctrine that some human beings are born fit only for slavery, but to others those same columns may speak of the birthplace of democracy and of a profound cultural heritage. The Greek Revival style had—and has—many associations, but . . . Southern nationalism was not at the root of the style."³⁶

Since Julien served as state legislator in Austin during most of the house's construction, Sarah managed the hired craftsmen and paid some of the smaller bills. Although Julien wrote letters detailing how Sarah should manage the construction, Sarah maintained great authority.³⁷ By January 1856, Sarah oversaw the completion of the first floor, and she and the children left the temporary house and moved into their new home. By the end of

³⁵ Kenneth Hafertepe, *Abner Cook: Master Builder on the Texas Frontier* (Austin: Texas State Historical Association, 1992), 142-143.

³⁶ Hafertepe, 142-143.

³⁷ Snider, "Sarah Devereux," 492.

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January, Julien Devereux left the Texas legislature because of his deteriorating health and returned to Monte Verdi.³⁸

After Julien returned home, his spleen worsened, and he died on May 1, 1856, at the age of fifty. Sarah buried Julien near the Monte Verdi main house next to his father in the family plot.³⁹ At his funeral, Sarah planted a cypress tree next to Julien's grave and a second next to the newly finished house to represent his symbolic presence in their home. (Both of these trees remain, and serve as natural traces of the Devereuxs' influence in the area.) In the last years of his life, the Devereuxs had four children that survived to adulthood: Albert, born on December 15, 1848; Julien Sidney, Junior, born February 2, 1851; William Penn, born April 11, 1853; and Charles born on August 15, 1855.⁴⁰ With Julien, Senior's two illegitimate children, Antoinette and Sidney, Sarah was left to raise the family and manage Monte Verdi by herself.

Sarah Devereux as Planter

Although Sarah Devereux had never owned land before, the twenty-nine-year-old widow proved proficient at managing the large plantation. Since Julien often traveled for his health, business, and politics, he often had left Sarah to manage the plantation's daily operations. Although Julien wrote Sarah detailed letters, she maintained the authority to oversee the main house's construction and keep an eye on Monte Verdi's hired plantation overseers. Her letters to Julien also demonstrate that Sarah learned how to determine the plantation's economic viability, which Julien highly valued.⁴¹

Since Texas prohibited married women from owning property, Sarah's intensive plantation management during Julien's life is particularly unique and illustrates the symbiotic relationship between a politician-planter and his wife in Texas antebellum society.⁴² Sarah's experience as proxy-planter in Julien's extended absences skilled her in plantation management and enabled the plantation's continued success after Julien died.

After Julien's death, Sarah maintained Monte Verdi's prominence in Rusk County. Hiring a tutoress to help raise and educate the Devereux children, Sarah fully accepted her responsibilities as Monte Verdi's owner. Now widowed, Sarah owned the second largest plantation in Rusk County and acknowledged her responsibility to maintain her family's income, business, and social status. She first contracted local builders to construct the main house's second floor in June 1856, and devoted her time to harvesting the season's cotton crop. Although she lost some of the plantation's slaves and land to Julien's two oldest children and to pay debts after Julien died, Sarah Devereux owned sixty-one slaves and almost 7,000 acres in 1858, with an estimated taxable property of \$74,205.

Although her managed property decreased after Julien's death, Sarah maintained more than a twelve percent investment return in 1858, which is comparable to other planters in Texas.⁴³ The economic successes of the plantation's agricultural output led to her becoming the second wealthiest person in Rusk County with a total

³⁸ Winfrey, *Julien Sidney Devereux*, 118, 120.

³⁹ The family burial plot is currently located in the Glen Fawn Community Cemetery, approximately a mile east of the Monte Verdi plantation house, well outside the nominated boundary. This public cemetery began as the Devereux family cemetery. *Ibid.*, 120.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 96.

⁴¹ Snider, "Sarah Devereux," 488.

⁴² Angela Boswell, *Her Act and Deed* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2001), 6.

⁴³ Snider, "Sarah Devereux," 498-499.

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real and personal estate wealth of \$136,000 in 1860.⁴⁴ As legal property owner, Devereux also sued a neighboring planter over the destruction of much of the plantation's 1860 harvest.⁴⁵ Although Devereux lost this suit in the Texas Supreme Court, filing the suit demonstrates Devereux's uniqueness among nineteenth century American women. Since married women had little to no legal rights in the South, Devereux's ability to become economically enfranchised and a respected leader, depicts her status as a planter.

Despite her early successes, the Civil War greatly affected the plantation's economic prosperity and way of life. During the war, Devereux's tax bill increased approximately 1200 percent from \$85 to \$935. Additionally, the Confederacy required Rusk County slaveholders to donate one-third of their male slaves to the government in 1863 and pay "in kind" taxes throughout the War.⁴⁶ In an attempt to maintain her lifestyle and keep her children in school, Devereux sold over 4,000 acres during the war.⁴⁷ With an agricultural operation dependent almost exclusively on slave labor, and with more than half of her wealth represented by slave value, emancipation left her little resources with which to sustain her operations.

After the Civil War, Devereux remarried to Jim Garrison and Monte Verdi's prosperity decreased. Garrison was Antoinette's brother-in-law, and Sarah Devereux had hired Garrison as Monte Verdi's overseer in 1867. After a two-year courtship, the couple married in April 1869 and Sarah transferred Monte Verdi's ownership to Garrison.⁴⁸ Before and during the marriage, Sarah and Jim utilized the sharecropping system, which decreased the number of bales of cotton produced yearly to fifteen. Additionally, Jim Garrison sold off land to repay "saloon debts" and eventually sold the plantation house and remaining 1300 acres in 1873 and moved to Timpson, Texas in the 1880s.⁴⁹ To help finance the Garrisons' expenses, Garrison borrowed money from Sarah's sons Charlie and Julien, which he never repaid in full. Despite her sons' continued encouragements to leave Garrison, the couple stayed together until 1897 when Sarah moved to Decatur, Texas to live with her son Albert. By her death in 1900, the once wealthy female planter owned an estate totaling \$600.⁵⁰ Although her life ended unhappily, Sarah Devereux Garrison's ability to successfully manage one of Texas' largest cotton plantations over the course of thirteen years illustrates her aptitude and significance as a planter.

Research about what happened to the Monte Verdi slave community after emancipation is ongoing. Descendants of the families still live in the Rusk County area and can trace their lineage directly to Scott and Tabby. Their granddaughter Helen (known as Mahala) was born to Amey on the Monte Verdi Plantation in 1846. Helen married Anthony Caddell in 1869 (see Figures 27 and 28 on page 36). Anthony was born a slave in Alabama; it's not known when he arrived in Texas. Anthony and Helen were first recorded as a married, free couple in the 1870 census. They were enumerated in Precinct 4, Rusk County, in a home they did not own. Twenty-five year-old Anthony was a farm laborer, while 23 year-old Helen kept house. Neither could read or write.

By the time of the 1880 census, Anthony and Helen Caddell owned their own home and small farm. Four children, ranging in age from 2 to 10, are also enumerated. The oldest, Isham, is listed as "working on farm,"

⁴⁴ United States Census Bureau, *Population Schedules of the Eight Census of the United States, 1860*, 19; and Winfrey, *A History of Rusk County*, 38.

⁴⁵ Winfrey, *Julien Sidney Devereux*, 129.

⁴⁶ Snider, "Sarah Devereux," 500-501.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 503.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 503.

⁴⁹ Sarah Devereux Garrison's Autobiography, 1898, quoted in Snider, "Sarah Devereux," 504.

⁵⁰ Snider, "Sarah Devereux," 506-507.

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presumably his father's. The agricultural schedule of the 1880 census indicates that the Caddells owned 200 acres, 45 of which were improved. The farm was valued at \$300 and consisted of 18 acres of corn, 30 acres cotton, 1 horse, 2 mules, 2 milk cows, 5 head of cattle, and 5 hogs.

Period of Significance

The period of significance for Monte Verdi begins in 1852, which coincides with the earliest extant resource on the property—the brick lined water well, which was constructed partly by slave labor. It ends when Jim Garrison sold the property in 1873, severing the property's association with the Devereux family. The year 1856 was selected as a significant date because that's when the architecturally significant main plantation house was complete.

There is plenty of archival evidence that documents the history and significance of the plantation as early as 1846. There is also a very high probability that the 100-acre property contains intact archeological deposits associated with the slave quarters, agricultural outbuildings, the gins, and other nonextant resources. Should a formal archeological study of the property ever be undertaken, and pre-1852 resources with good integrity can be confirmed, this nomination could be amended to reflect those additional resources and an expanded period of significance.

Summary of Significance under Criterion A (Agriculture and Ethnic Heritage)

Monte Verdi Plantation is significant under National Register Criterion A for agriculture as a good example of Rusk County's plantation economy. Numerous scholars, such as Randolph Campbell and Angela Boswell, have focused significant attention to Harrison County and southern Texas counties' plantation economies and often neglect Rusk County's contributions. As Monte Verdi's history and contemporary United States Censuses depict, Rusk County developed a thriving cotton industry and became the state's sixth largest cotton producer by 1860.⁵¹ As the county's second largest plantation in 1860, Monte Verdi comprised approximately 7 percent of the county's total improved acreage and almost 10 percent of the county's total cotton production.⁵² Additionally, functioning as a gin and mill site for local, small planters demonstrates Monte Verdi's role in the economic development of Rusk County. Monte Verdi also contributed to the inter-state cotton market since the plantation primarily sold its cotton in Shreveport, Louisiana.⁵³ Monte Verdi's fragmentation and share cropping after the Civil War is illustrative of the region's postbellum agricultural trends and helped develop the county's share cropping system.

The institution of slavery was integral to the success of the plantation system. A large community of enslaved African Americans planted, tended, harvested, processed, and delivered the cash crop. They built the infrastructure crucial to the ongoing operations of the plantation. They made and mended their own tools and clothes; ensured a sufficient food and water supply for the entire plantation population; performed domestic chores for the owners first, and for themselves last; and carried out nearly every activity necessary for the

⁵¹ *The Galveston News, The Texas Almanac for 1860*, 242-245.

⁵² Numbers factored from Sarah Devereux, "List of Taxable Property, 1858," republished in Snider, "Sarah Devereux," 499; and United States Census Bureau, *Agriculture of the United States in 1860: Compiled from the Original Returns of the Eighth Census* (Washington D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1864), 144-145.

⁵³ Winfrey, *Julien Sidney Devereux*, 80.

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survival of the plantation's inhabitants and the accumulation of wealth for their owner. Recognizing the significance of agriculture in the settlement and economic development of antebellum Texas cannot be accomplished without also recognizing the role slavery played in those events. Agricultural history and ethnic history are tightly interwoven during this period of significance, nearly impossible to separate. For that reason, Monte Verdi Plantation is nominated under Criterion A in the area of Ethnic Heritage (Black) as well.

Summary of Significance under Criterion B (Sarah Devereux)

Monte Verdi Plantation is significant under National Register Criterion B in the area of agriculture for its associations with Sarah Devereux, an influential female planter. Although many women served as planters throughout the South by the last years of the Civil War, Garrison's uniqueness lies in the length of her tenure—13 years. Fox-Genovese and Anne Scott explain that numerous planters' wives managed plantations during the Civil War in their husbands' absences. These women, as Elizabeth Fox-Genovese explains, often gave the male plantation overseer full authority and only served as the official head. Furthermore, women often permitted their sons to manage the plantation and gave little to no input.⁵⁴ Angela Boswell illustrates that Texas diverged from this common southern pattern because of the state's extended "frontier" period. Because it remained a newer settled area, many Texas widows received their deceased husbands' estates.⁵⁵ Even in Texas though, many female planters quickly remarried or transferred the plantation's management to their male relatives. Devereux is unique from other female planters because she assumed her role well before the Civil War, and she did not quickly remarry or allow male relatives to manage the property, but prospered as an effective, independent planter for thirteen years.⁵⁶ Devereux's ability to maintain her holdings independently enabled her to remain one of the few independent female planters in the United States.

Summary of Significance under Criterion C (Architecture):

Monte Verdi is significant under National Register Criterion C in the area of architecture because the main house is an excellent example of the Greek Revival style in Texas. Characteristic features include wood construction; shallow, full-façade porches; a traditional plan, proportion and symmetry; a central entry surrounded by sidelights and transom; and the simplest of classical details. These characteristics are intact and readily identifiable even though the original colonnade has been altered. It is one of very few antebellum resources still standing in rural Rusk County and the only known example associated with a pre-Civil War-era cotton plantation. Large frame homes such as this one at Monte Verdi were unusual on all but the largest of Texas plantations due to the state's frontier nature. Most of antebellum Texas farmers lived in a "big house" that was a hewn-log or timber-framed, one- or one-and-a-half story house with a wide central hall or center passage and a full-length front porch. The scale of the Devereux home reflects the family's tenure in Texas and the economic success of the plantation's agricultural operations. Designated a Recorded Texas Historic Landmark in 1964, architectural historian Drury Blakely Alexander once proclaimed the house one of the best examples of antebellum architecture in East Texas.⁵⁷

⁵⁴ Elizabeth Fox-Genovese, *Within the Plantation Household* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1988), 203-205.

⁵⁵ Boswell, *Her Act and Deed*, 68.

⁵⁶ Snider, "Sarah Devereux," 503.

⁵⁷ Drury Blakeley Alexander and Todd Webb, *Texas Homes of the 19th Century* (Austin: Amon Carter Museum of Western Art by the University of Texas Press, 1966,) 250.

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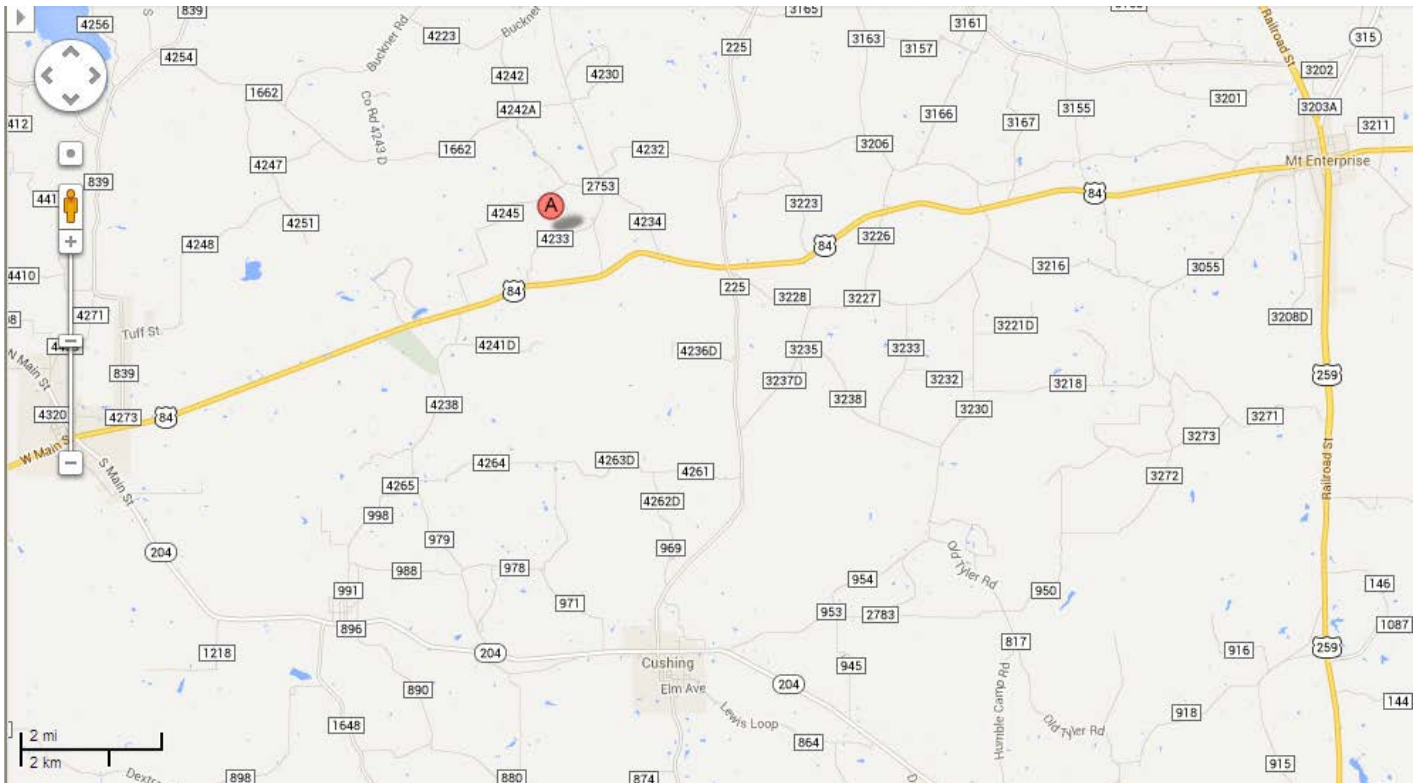
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Map 1: Rusk County (shaded) is located in central East Texas.

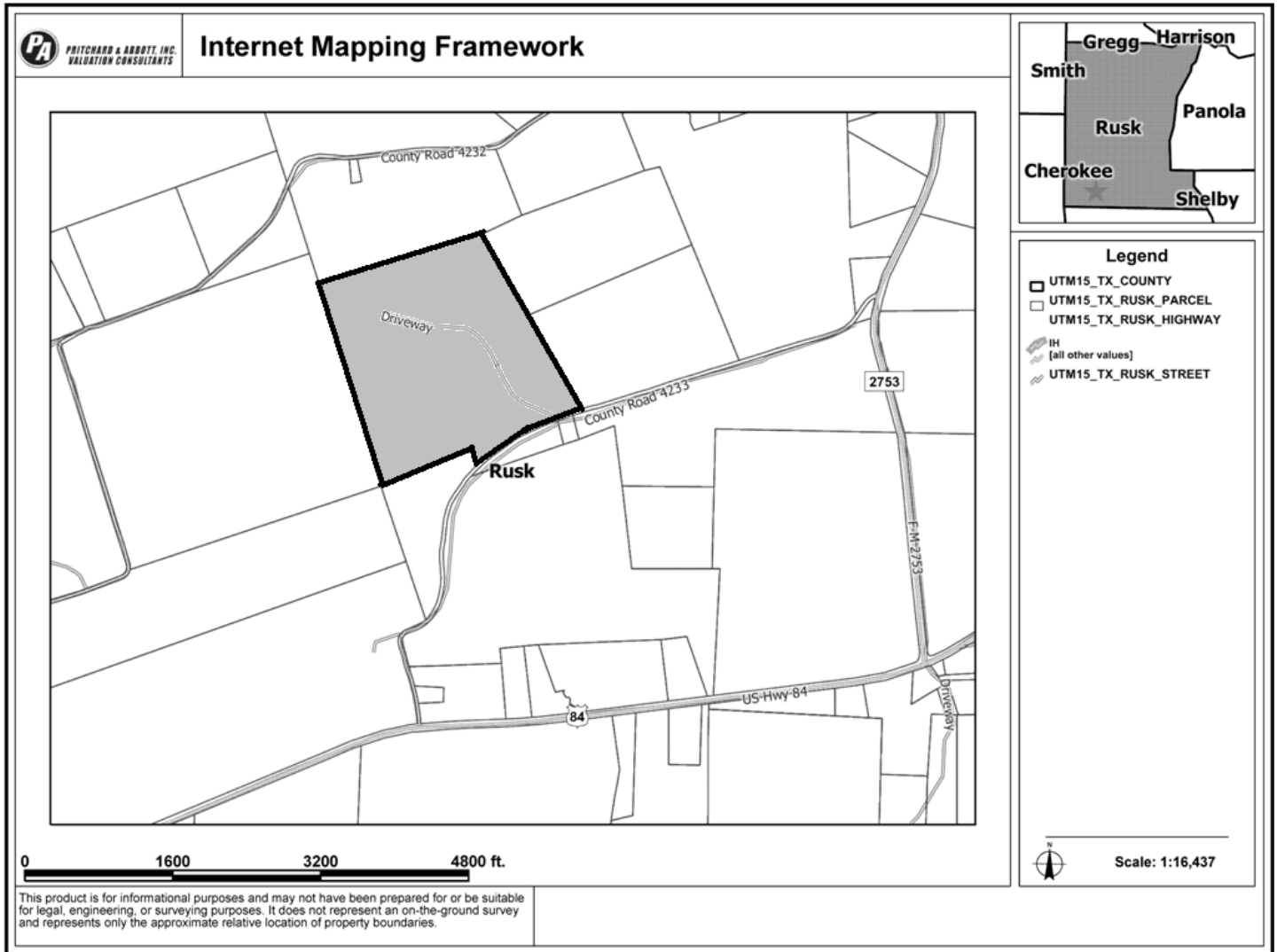


Map 2: Monte Verdi Plantation (Point A) is located approximately ten miles north of Cushing, Texas, on County Road CR 4233 W in southern Rusk County. (Note: The town of Cushing is located in Nacogdoches County, but Monte Verdi Plantation is located within Rusk County.) Top edge is north.



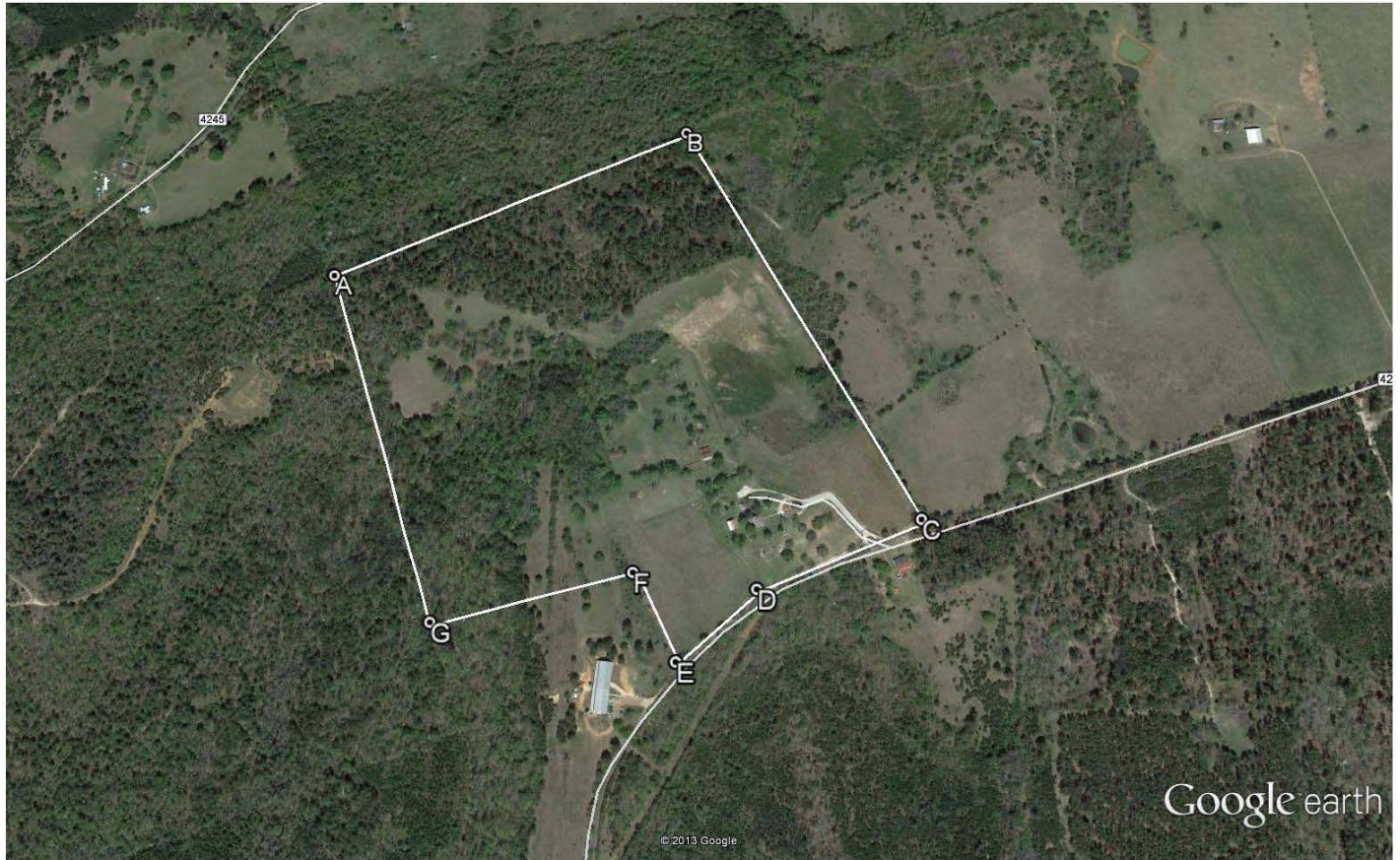
Monte Verdi Plantation, Cushing (V), Rusk County, Texas

Map 3: The nominated property (shaded) is 100 acres in size. Map created using parcel maps available on Rusk County Appraisal District's website. All resources are clustered in the southeast quadrant of the property.



Monte Verdi Plantation, Cushing (V), Rusk County, Texas

Map 4: Scaled Google Earth map depicts boundary of the nominated property.



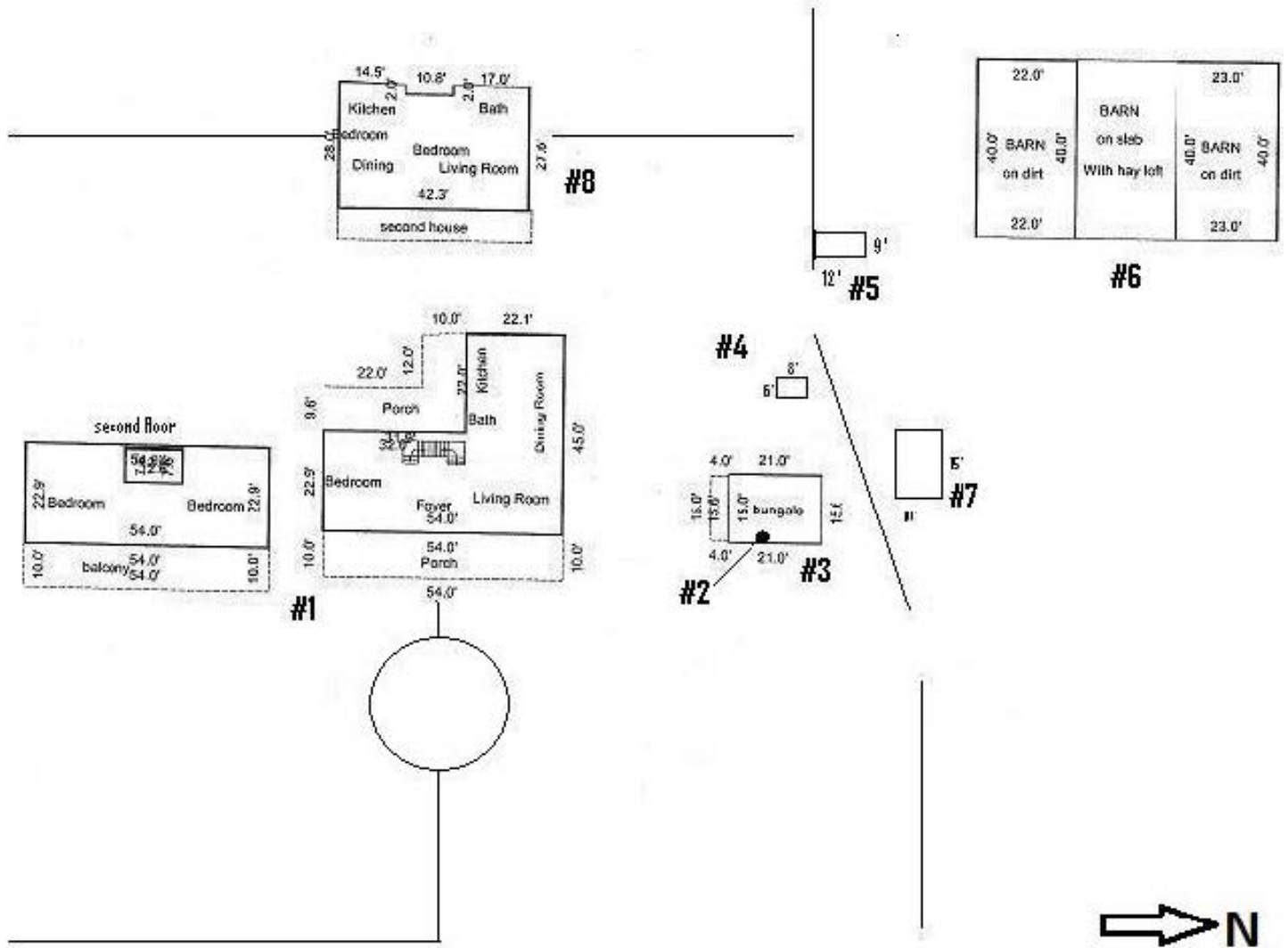
Google earth



A.	Latitude: 31.904788	Longitude: -94.877121
B.	Latitude: 31.906813	Longitude: -94.871829
C.	Latitude: 31.901638	Longitude: -94.868457
D.	Latitude: 31.900797	Longitude: -94.870819
E.	Latitude: 31.899942	Longitude: -94.871956
F.	Latitude: 31.901000	Longitude: -94.872569
G.	Latitude: 31.900420	Longitude: -94.875445

Monte Verdi Plantation, Cushing (V), Rusk County, Texas

Map 5: Sketch map of all resources. Not to scale, but does include the building dimensions and approximate locations on the property.



Contributing Resources:

- #1-Monte Verdi Plantation House
- #2-Well

Noncontributing Resources:

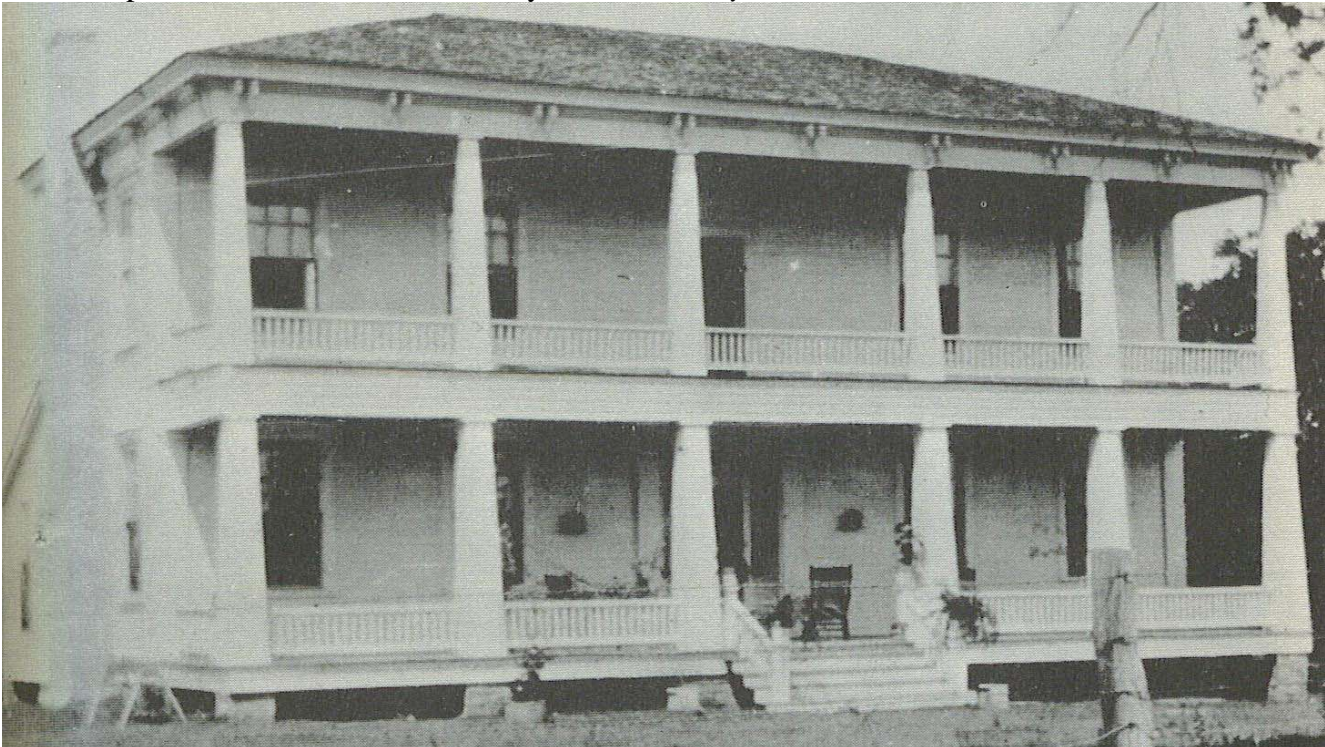
- #3-Bungalow
- #4-Ancillary Building #1
- #5-Ancillary Building #2
- #6-Barn
- #7-Ancillary Building #3
- #8-Birdwell House

Monte Verdi Plantation, Cushing (V), Rusk County, Texas

Figure 1: Southeast elevation of Monte Verdi Plantation House, current.



Figure 2: Southeast elevation of Monte Verdi Plantation House, c. 1920, the oldest known photograph of Monte Verdi. Reproduced from Dorman Winfrey's *Julien Sidney Devereux and His Monte Verdi Plantation*.



Monte Verdi Plantation, Cushing (V), Rusk County, Texas

Figure 3: Southeast elevation of Monte Verdi Plantation House, 1959. Reproduced from Dorman Winfrey's *Julien Sidney Devereux and His Monte Verdi Plantation*.

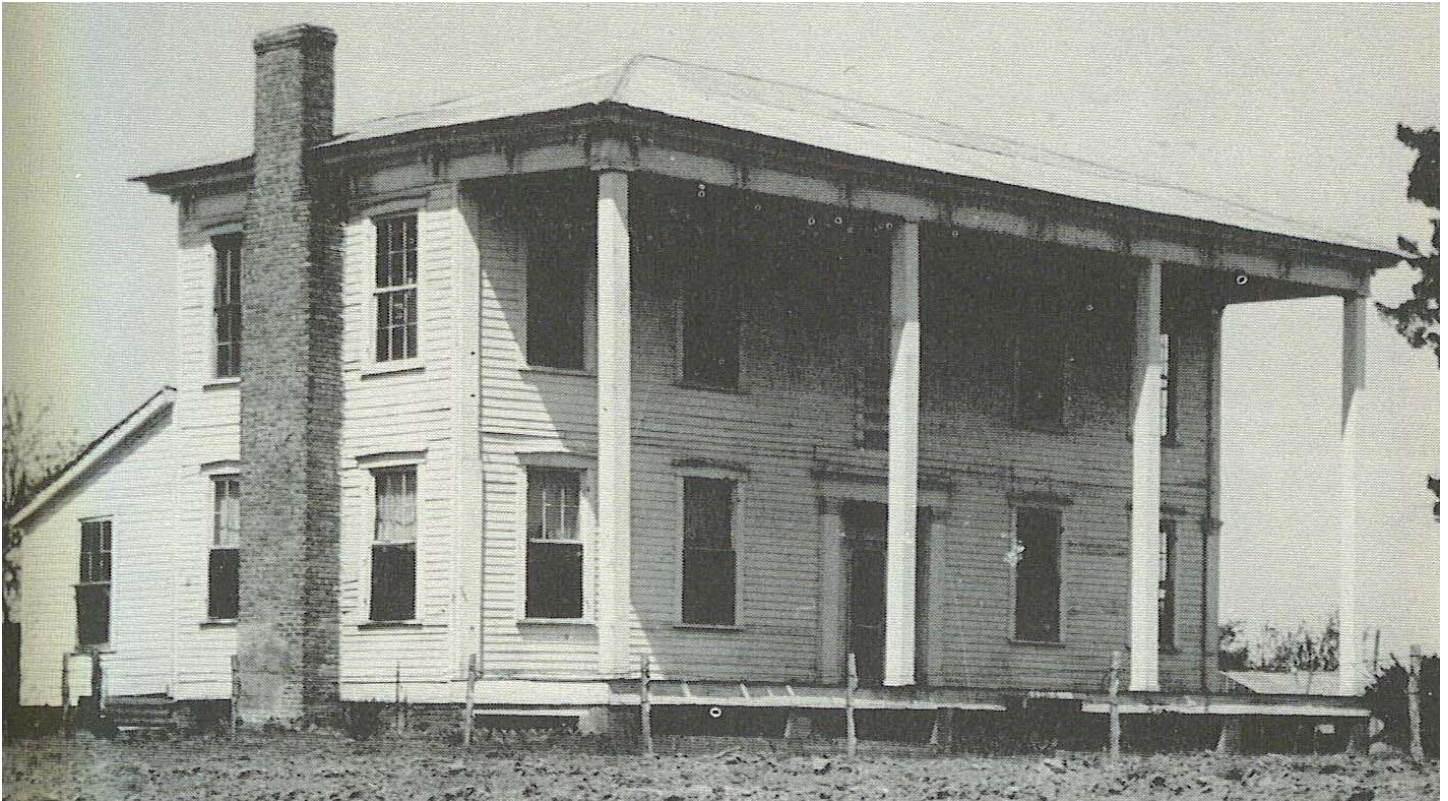


Figure 4: Primary elevation. Undated historic photo, likely from just before the 1960s restoration effort. Reproduced from THC survey files.



Monte Verdi Plantation, Cushing (V), Rusk County, Texas

Figure 5: Entry detail. Undated historic photo, likely from just before the 1960s restoration effort. Reproduced from THC survey files.



Figure 6: North elevation. Undated historic photo, likely from just before the 1960s restoration effort. Reproduced from THC survey files.



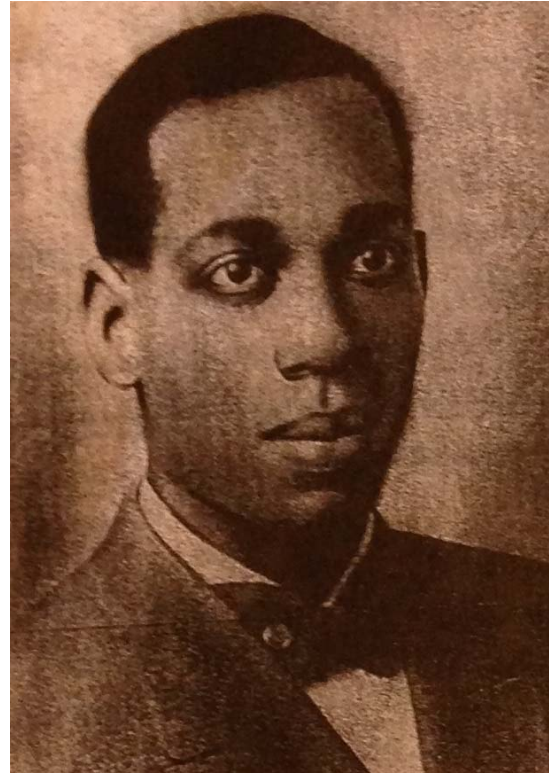
Monte Verdi Plantation, Cushing (V), Rusk County, Texas

Figures 25 and 26: Julien Sidney Devereux and Sarah Ann Devereux Garrison. Julien's photo reproduced from Dorman Winfrey's *Julien Sidney Devereux and His Monte Verdi Plantation*. Sarah's photo reproduced from Joleene Maddox Snider's "Sarah Devereux: A Study in Southern Femininity."



Monte Verdi Plantation, Cushing (V), Rusk County, Texas

Figures 27 and 28: Helen “Mahala” Devereux Caddell and Anthony Caddell. Reproduced from the collection of Joleene Maddox Snider.





















UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY Monte Verdi Plantation
NAME:

MULTIPLE
NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: TEXAS, Rusk

DATE RECEIVED: 2/12/14 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 3/12/14
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 3/27/14 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 3/31/14
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 14000104

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N
OTHER: N PDIL: N PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N
REQUEST: N SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: N NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

ACCEPT RETURN REJECT 3-31-14 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

Entered in
The National Register
of
Historic Places

RECOM./CRITERIA _____

REVIEWER _____ DISCIPLINE _____

TELEPHONE _____ DATE _____


DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N

If a nomination is returned to the nominating authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the NPS.

TEXAS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
real places telling real stories




TO: Edson Beall
 National Park Service
 National Register of Historic Places
 1201 Eye Street, NW (2280)
 Washington, DC 20005

FROM:  Carlyn Hammons
 Texas Historical Commission

RE: New Submission, National Register Nomination
 Monte Verdi Plantation, Rusk County, TX

DATE: February 5, 2014

The following materials are submitted:

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Original National Register of Historic Places form and electronic locational data (in .kmz format) on CD.  The enclosed disk contains the true and correct copy of the nomination for the <u>Monte Verdi Plantation</u> to the National Register of Historic Places.
	Resubmitted nomination.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Original NRHP signature page signed by the Texas SHPO.
	Multiple Property Documentation form on disk.
	Resubmitted form.
	Original MPDF signature page signed by the Texas SHPO.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	CD with nine (9) TIFF photograph files.
	Correspondence

COMMENTS:

- SHPO requests substantive review (cover letter from SHPO attached)
- The enclosed owner objections (do) (do not) constitute a majority of property owners
- Other:

