

507



United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

NATIONAL
REGISTER

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

1. Name of Property

historic name Decareaux House

other names/site number Creole House Museum

2. Location

street & number 16021 LA Hwy 16 N/A not for publication

city or town French Settlement N/A vicinity

state Louisiana code LA county Livingston code 063 zip code 70733

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Gerri Hobdy 4/3/92
 Signature of certifying official/Title Gerri Hobdy, Date
 LA SHPO, Dept of Culture, Recreation and Tourism
 State of Federal agency and bureau

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

 Signature of certifying official/Title Date

 State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

- entered in the National Register. See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the National Register See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register.
- removed from the National Register.
- other, (explain:)

Signature of the Keeper

Entered in the
National Register

Date of Action

Arlene Byers

5/4/92

Decareaux House
Name of Property

Livingston Parish, LA
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

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

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

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

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

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

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

Louisiana's French Creole Architecture

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

Domestic/single dwelling

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

Recreation and Culture/Museum

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

Other: French Creole

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation brick

walls weatherboard

roof shake

other _____

Narrative Description

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

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Decareaux House, Livingston Parish, LA

Section number 7 Page 1

The Decareaux House (c. 1898) is a one story, frame cottage in the French Creole style. It is located in the Village of French Settlement and stands about 150 yards behind the community's municipal building on Louisiana Highway 16. Although it has experienced some change over the years, it retains its National Register eligibility.

Creole features found in the Decareaux House include the following:

- 1) French joinery with angled wind braces at the corners,
- 2) a Class III gabled roof with central chimney,
- 3) a full length gallery,
- 4) exposed unbeaded ceiling beams, both on the gallery and on the ceilings of all four original rooms,
- 5) two wraparound mantels, and
- 6) a floorplan reflecting Creole geometry. This plan consists of two equal sized rooms in front and rooms of unequal size in the rear.

Other features of interest found in the cottage include interior three-batten doors, variable width flooring, two sets of double leaf outer shutters composed of three battens each, six inch shiplap siding on the sides and rear, four inch flush board facing on the facade, and interior flush horizontal wall boards ranging in size from four to seven inches.

Alterations to the Decareaux House since its construction include the following:

- 1) the replacement of its detached kitchen building. This structure stood only a few feet from the main house and was connected to it by means of an uncovered raised wooden walkway. Because of severe deterioration, it was replaced in 1978 by another historic kitchen building moved from a site two miles away. The replacement kitchen is attached to the rear of the main house at the opposite corner than was the original, creating a rear wing. A covered gallery connects the two buildings and also wraps around the side of the two-room kitchen structure.
- 2) the replacement of some pieces of original siding,

CONTINUED

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Decareaux House, Livingston Parish, LA

Section number 7 Page 2

- 3) the replacement of the facade's original doors, as well as a side door, with multi-pane single leaf doors,
- 4) the addition of a closet in the larger of the rear rooms, and
- 5) the attachment of a false gallery to the main roof of the home.

Despite these changes, the Decareaux Home's identity as an example of the Creole building tradition is clearly evident. Its French joinery, wraparound mantels, exposed unbeaded ceiling beams, and Creole floorplan all remain intact. The false gallery changes the roof shape slightly, but is easily dominated by the large and pronounced original Creole roofline. Although the doors are not original, they are in keeping with the architectural character of the house since they are derivatives of single-leaf French doors. Although the replacement of the Decareaux Home's original kitchen is regrettable, the change is located at the rear of the cottage, has a minimal visual impact upon the Creole massing of the home, and is not visible at all from the principal elevation. As a rare and intact example of the final flowering of the Creole style in Livingston Parish (see Part 8), the Decareaux House is a strong candidate for National Register listing.

Non-Contributing Element

A large board and batten shed built in the 1980s from salvaged parts stands directly behind the kitchen addition of the Decareaux House. It is being counted as a non-contributing element for the purposes of this nomination.

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

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

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

Criteria Considerations

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

Property is:

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

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

architecture

Period of Significance

c.1898

Significant Dates

c.1898

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Harris and Alexander Lambert (builders)

Narrative Statement of Significance

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

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

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

Previous documentation on file (NPS): N/A

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary location of additional data:

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

Name of repository:

Decareaux House
Name of Property

Livingston Parish, LA
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of Property less than one acre

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1

1	5	7	1	1	6	8	0	3	3	5	3	7	0	0
Zone		Easting						Northing						

3

Zone		Easting						Northing						

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

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

Please refer to enclosed sketch map.

Boundary Justification

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

11. Form Prepared By

name/title National Register Staff (based on draft nomination prepared by Dr. Jay Edwards, as referenced in bibliography)

organization Division of Historic Preservation date March 1992

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

city or town Baton Rouge state LA zip code 70804

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

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

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

Photographs

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

Additional items

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

Property Owner

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

name Village of French Settlement

street & number P. O. Box 3 telephone (504) 698-6100

city or town French Settlement state LA zip code 70733

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

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

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service****National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Decareaux House, Livingston Parish, LA

Section number 8 Page 1

The Decareaux House is locally significant in the area of architecture because it is a rare and intact example of the French Creole style within Livingston Parish.

A Historic Structures Survey has not yet been implemented for Livingston Parish. However, the area was settled primarily by persons of Anglo descent, and few structures influenced by the Creole building tradition were erected there. Just one French enclave--the Village of French Settlement--is known to exist. A windshield survey of French Settlement has identified only twenty surviving houses which can be classified as Creole. All but two of these dwellings are the result of a lumber boom which occurred between 1880 and 1915. Many French Settlement men worked in the lumber mills and had access to inexpensive or free lumber, which they used to build new houses for their families. Almost all of French Settlement's older homes were replaced at this time. For the most part, these new houses used late nineteenth century building technology (stud walls) and materials rather than the older, more traditional Creole methods of construction such as the use of bousillage. However, they very much resembled the Creole houses built several generations previously because they copied the floorplans, the central chimney location, the full length front galleries, and the gabled umbrella roofs which characterized these earlier Creole homes. They often also retained Creole stylistic motifs such as wraparound mantels and exposed ceiling beams. Thus, they illustrate the enduring importance of the Creole tradition in Southern Louisiana and represent the final flowering of that tradition in Livingston Parish.

Unfortunately, however, the majority of French Settlement's eighteen late Creole homes have lost their historic integrity. For example, many have sustained inappropriate additions. Others have lost original features. Still others are falling apart and abandoned. The Decareaux House is one of only a small group whose physical integrity and Creole character remain basically intact. Thus, its integrity, its rarity in a parish not generally recognized as a center of Creole culture, and its status as an example of the last phase of the expression of the Creole tradition in Livingston Parish make the Decareaux House a prime candidate for Register listing.

Historical Note

The cottage was constructed as a home for Mr. and Mrs. Alex Decareaux by Harris and Alexander Lambert, who were Mrs. Decareaux's father and brother, respectively. The family worked in lumbering and farming. In 1977 the house was donated to the Village of French Settlement, which in turn gave the French Settlement Historical Society a long-term lease on the structure. It is now known as the Creole House Museum.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Decareaux House, Livingston Parish, LA

Section number 9 Page 1

Edwards, Jay

1982 "Old Creole House Museum." A Survey of Louisiana French Vernacular
Architecture. Vol. II, Baton Rouge: LSU Museum of Geoscience. A
Report to the Division of Historic Preservation and the Louisiana
Division of the Arts. pp. 69-71.

Windshield survey of French Settlement, LA by Dr. Jay Edwards, Department of
Geography and Anthropology, LSU.

Site visit by National Register staff.

Edwards, Jay. Draft National Register Nomination, Department of Geography and
Anthropology, LSU, Baton Rouge.

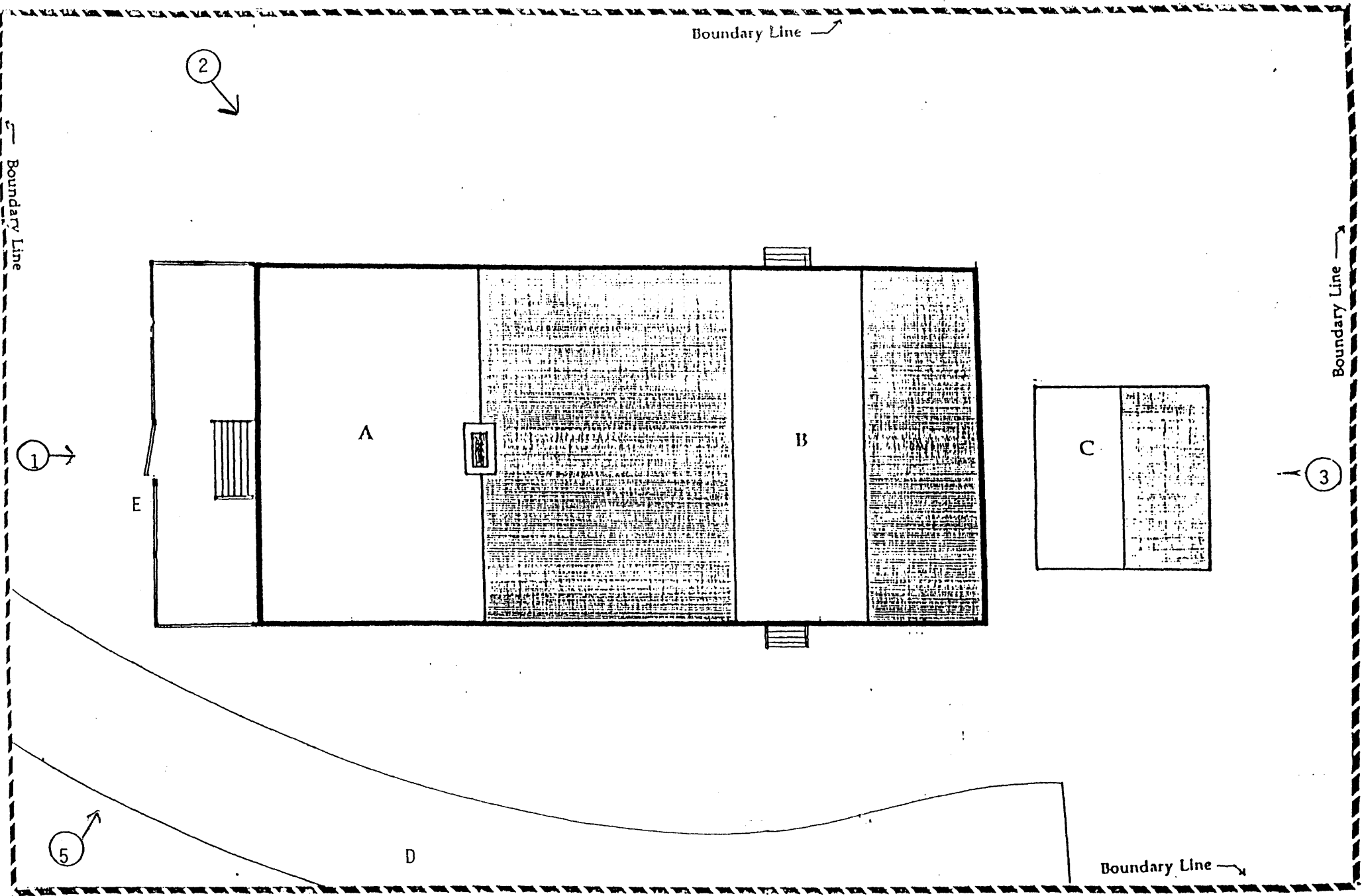
**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Decareaux House, Livingston Parish, LA
Section number 10 Page 1

Boundary Justification:

The Decareaux House is owned by the Village of French Settlement and is located some 150 yards from the village hall. To have followed property lines would have meant including the latter structure. Instead, boundaries were chosen to conform to the parcel of land leased to the French Settlement Historical Society for use in operating the house as a museum.



MAP OF THE DECAREAUX HOUSE
 Located in French Settlement,
 Livingston Parish, Louisiana.

Scale 1" = 10'



North



- | | |
|-------------------------------------|------------------|
| A - House | D - Gravel Drive |
| B - Kitchen Addition | E - Pieux Fence |
| C - Shed (Non-Contributing Element) | |