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Destrehan consists of a central, two story house with open galleries on three sides and flanking two story wings separated from the main body of the house by the side galleries. The central unit, the oldest part of the house, apparently originally had a colonnade surrounding it, composed of masonry columns on the ground floor and wood ones on the upper, in the manner of Homeplace plantation across the river at Hahnville. The roof is double-pitched all around, the steeply pitched center part being framed on to the main walls of the house and then extended over the galleries at a lesser pitch. On the front are three small dormer windows with one only on the rear. These have been altered in detail but retain their original form. The walls of the ground floor are of brick masonry, plastered, scored and painted at one time to imitate granite. The walls of the upper story are of colombage, a wood frame filled in with masonry. The plan consists of six rooms on each floor, three in front and three in the rear. The rear galleries have been enclosed with weatherboards and windows. The original gallery columns were replaced in the 1830's or 40's with massive Greek revival Doric columns of plastered brick and the cornice was altered accordingly. At the same time all the interior details, trim, mantels, etc. were changed.



PERIOD (Check One or More as			
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and one of the best documented structures of the colonial period. It represents three major phases of construction and illustrates the changes in architectural style in Louisiana from the original eighteenth century colonial structure to the post-colonial addition of the semi-detached wings, to the ante-bellum Greek Revival alterations in the colonnade and interior details.

The house was erected when indigo was still the principal plantation crop in Louisiana. The plantation then became an important sugar producing

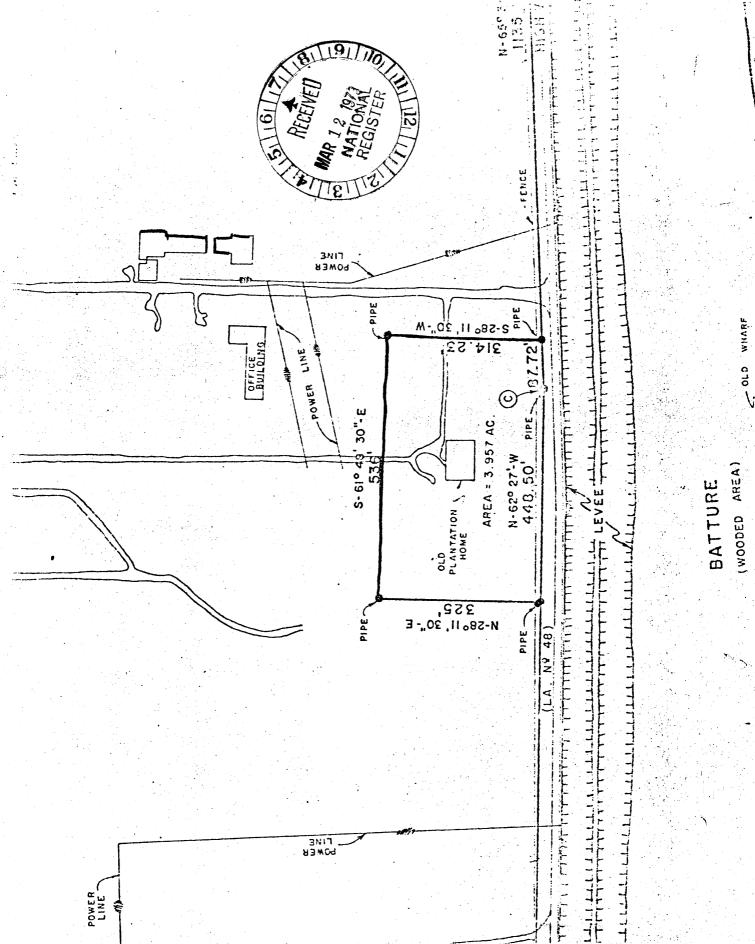
The house was erected when indigo was still the principal plantation croin Louisiana. The plantation then became an important sugar producing one in the nineteenth century and the house served as a facility of a major oil company for a number of years in the twentieth century when Louisiana began the transition from an agricultural to an industrial economy.



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Date

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United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

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ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTATION APPROVED

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

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NATIONAL REGISTER

Destrehan Plantation Additional Documentation, St. Charles Parish, LA

Section number _____ Page _____

1. Name of Property

Destrehan Plantation Additional Documentation (Add 16SC18)

3. State Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination 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 the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant statewide.

Signature of Certifying Official/Title

Gerri Hobdy, LA SHPO

Date

2/16/94

Dept of Culture, Recreation and Tourism

State Agency

5. Number of Resources Within Property

Add 1 contributing site.

8. Significance

Add Criterion D

Area of Significance: Archaeology/Historic-Non-Aboriginal

Period of Significance: c.1780-1890

Cultural Affiliation: Euro-American

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The purpose of this addendum is to add the archaeological component to the Destrehan Plantation National Register listing. This component is located within the 3.957-acre fenced yard surrounding the great house, which was the area defined in the 1972 NRHP listing of the property. Thus, the addition of the archaeological component does not alter the boundaries of the property.

HISTORIC OVERVIEW

In 1787 Antoine Robert Robin de Logny began construction of a new house on his 28-arpent front plantation. The contractor de Logny selected was Charles, a Free Person of Color. He was assisted by six African-Americans, at least three of whom were from the Robin de Logny plantation slave force. On April 22, 1790 Charles put his mark on an affirmation that the house was completed and he had been paid as contracted (Cizek 1982:177-180).

On December 11, 1792, Pierre Robin de Logny, son of Antoine Robert Robin de Logny, purchased the plantation, with 56 slaves, at a public auction. On April 12, 1802, he sold the plantation to Jean Noel Destrehan, his brother-in-law. The house assumed its present size (i.e., a two-story main block with attached flanking *garconnieres*) during Destrehan's ownership. Destrehan also replaced indigo with cane cultivation on the estate. The memoirs of Pierre Clément de Laussat indicate that sugar production was well established at the plantation by 1803 (de Sinclair 1940).

Destrehan died in 1823, and his wife only survived him by two years. On March 23, 1825, Stephen Henderson purchased the plantation and 83 slaves for \$114,400. Henderson continued the intensive sugar agriculture pursued by Jean Noel Destrehan.

Henderson died in 1838. A relatively conscientious and magnanimous slave-holder, he planned to emancipate his slaves after his death. However, the executors of his estate sold the plantation and the slaves attached to it to Pierre Adolphe Rost on April 11, 1839.

Lamb et al. (1983:47-51) state that Destrehan was leased during the Civil War to the partnership of Brott and Denis. This may have been the partnership of Brott and Davis, Northerners who leased a total of six plantations in 1863 (Messner 1978:94). Rost and his family were in Europe at this time, and Rost was serving as the

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Commissioner to Spain for the Confederacy. Brott and Davis paid their laborers a standard wage in addition to a share of the profits. Brott and Davis' overseer reported that the African-Americans on the plantation appeared to be contented with this system, and that they produced fully one-third more than they had as slaves (Messner 1978:94). Despite this, Destrehan had deteriorated by the time it was seized by Union authorities in 1864 (Lamb et al. 1983:48).

Destrehan Plantation, probably because of its size and extensive structural improvements, was assigned to the control of the Freedmen's Bureau for use as a colony for refugee Freedmen. Known as the Rost Home Colony, the plantation had an average population of 700 individuals at any given time. Of the four colonies established by the bureau, the Rost Home Colony was the most successful (White 1970:104). Residents were provided with wages, food, clothing, and health care in exchange for 10 hours per day labor for individuals above the age of 14. Rations were withheld from individuals who did not work (Messner 1978:95; White 1970:104). Cane, corn, cotton, and sweet potatoes were all cultivated at the estate (Lamb et al. 1983:48).

Rost was pardoned in 1866, and he regained title to Destrehan. The Freedman's Bureau arranged to rent Destrehan from him for the remainder of the year for a percentage of the proceeds of the year's sugar and rice crops. After paying the rent on the plantation, the Freedman's Bureau made a profit of \$14,150.

P.A. Rost died in 1868. His son, Emile Rost, assumed management of Destrehan and continued to pursue commercial agriculture until he sold the plantation in 1910.

THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL COMPONENT

In 1983, the Archaeological and Cultural Research Program of the University of New Orleans performed an assessment of the archaeological resources at Destrehan Plantation. Selected areas of the four-acre yard surrounding the great house were gridded and probed to a depth of one foot. All locations where solid contact was encountered were then shovel tested (Lamb et al. 1983:70-71). One of these was a trash pit filled with wine bottles which dated to the third quarter of the nineteenth century. At the front of the yard, adjacent to River Road, an area of paving composed of broken bricks was encountered. Eighteen units were excavated to delineate this feature. The feature was interpreted as a curved walkway varying between 3' and 4' in width leading from the great house to the *pigeonnier*. Lamb et al. (1983:78) state that the walkway was laid sometime after 1830 and repaired sometime after 1840 based on an analysis of the bricks used in its construction.

Structural remains were also encountered within shovel tests in the area immediately southeast and southwest of the wash house. These included several areas of paving composed of broken brick; an exposure of mortared brick which was interpreted as a pier; and three areas where cobbles were embedded in cinders. No units were excavated to further delineate or assist the interpretation of these features (Lamb et al. 1983:79-84).

An excavation unit was placed at the northwest corner of the western garçonniére. An area of paving composed of broken brick and a five-step corbelled foundation were revealed. The garçonniére was dated to the period ca.

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1810 to 1830, and the paving was interpreted as a platform for the cistern which formerly occupied this location (Lamb et al. 1983:87-90). A second unit was placed in the southeastern corner of the western *garçonniére*, adjacent to the great house gallery. This unit revealed two earlier gallery pavements, which were dated to ca. 1830 and ca. 1885 on the basis of their bricks (Lamb et al. 1983:91).

In 1992, Earth Search, Inc., conducted archaeological test excavations at Destrehan. A total of 16.5 acres surrounding the great house was systematically shovel tested at 10 m gridded intervals. Additional shovel tests were judgmentally placed in areas where features were thought to be present. This regimen demonstrated that the archaeological component was confined to the fenced yard surrounding the great house (see attached site map).

An excavation unit (EU1) was placed adjacent to the southeastern corner of the ticket booth. Probing indicated that buried structural remains were present in this area. The unit revealed that the feature was a chain wall two bricks in width. A similar chain wall extended to the south, perpendicular to the first. A probe was then used to determine the plan of the former structure. It appeared to have been a long, narrow building measuring approximately 1.2 m in width (north/south) by at least 4 m in length (east/west). Two north/south extending cross members were identified; these probably served to support a wood floor. The light foundation suggests that the superstructure was probably frame, although the few nails collected may indicate that hardware was salvaged when the building was dismantled. The size and the shape of the structure, as well as the relative paucity of domestic debris, strongly suggest that this was an outbuilding or a shed of some sort rather than a residential structure. One possibility is that it may have been the "small gardner's (sic) house" (shed?) listed in the 1864 inventory of the plantation when it was appropriated by the United States (Cizek 1982:180).

Associated artifacts included coarsewares, creamware, blue transfer-printed pearlware, yellowware, gilded porcelain, square cut nails, and relatively large amounts of architectural debris. Ceramics from the unit yielded a mean ceramic date of 1801.7 (n=24). However, since this was not a domestic building, it should not be assumed that the ceramics recovered necessarily date to the use-life of the structure.

Another excavation unit (EU2) was placed adjacent to a shovel test that yielded a sherd of blue hand-painted faience, a sherd of Albisola Trailed, and a sherd of creamware. It was hoped that additional late-eighteenth-century material would be recovered from this unit. A possible feature was noted at about 10 cm depth. A 13 cm diameter area in the center of the unit appeared to contain somewhat softer, more moist, and less compact soil, although it was the same dark grayish brown as the surrounding matrix. This possible postmold extended to 34 cm below datum.

A small but impressive collection of late-eighteenth-century ceramics was recovered from this unit. Faience and brown faience were both found, including a sherd with a single blue band around the rim.

Coarsewares included Albisola Trailed, Green-Glazed Redware, and Saintonge White-Slipped and Green Glazed Pink Earthenware. The last of these is of French manufacture, and is relatively uncommon in southeastern

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Louisiana collections. The collection from this unit yielded the mean ceramic date of 1775.5 (n=16). Thus, this area appears to contain a concentration of material that may have been deposited prior to the construction of the great house. Features may be preserved, although the possible post hole in this unit was somewhat elusive. However, if features are present in this area, they likely pre-date Destrehan Manor.

Another excavation unit (EU4) was placed adjacent to a shovel test which yielded two sherds of late-eighteenth-century coarseware. Ceramics from this unit consisted primarily of creamware, but two faience sherds, a Saintonge Green-Glazed Buff Earthenware sherd, and three sherds of Flecked Lead-Glazed Redware were collected. In addition, two Aboriginal sherds, which are not uncommon in eighteenth-century contexts, also were found. One of these was unclassified sand tempered, while the second, also unclassified, was shell tempered with a red slip. The unit also yielded kaolin pipe fragments, a gunflint, wrought nails, and cut nails. Like the previous unit, this unit also identified an area of early activity. The abundance of creamware may suggest a slightly later date than that of the previous unit, possibly around the time the great house was constructed. In fact, the collection from this unit yielded a mean ceramic date of 1792.5 (n=77). The architectural debris, as well as nails and window glass recovered from EU4, suggest that a structure was formerly located nearby.

Excavation Unit 3 was placed adjacent to a shovel test that yielded an exceptionally large number of artifacts. A raised structure shown in a late-nineteenth-century photograph of the great house was formerly located in the vicinity. This was by far the most productive unit in terms of artifact recovery. It also yielded the most recent materials recovered during this investigation. No faience or early coarsewares were collected from this unit. Although creamwares and pearlwares were present, a plurality of the ceramics consisted of later-nineteenth-century porcelains, including one decaled sherd. Whitewares and classic ironstone were also found. Other artifacts included tumbler and goblet fragments, a bone button, a ceramic button, and a clear untumbled glass bead. One pharmaceutical bottle neck was identified, as was one whiskey bottle neck, but most of the glass derived from olive-colored wine bottles. EU3 also yielded more bone than any of the other units. An abundance of square cut nails (n=79) and a moderate amount of pane glass (n=27) seem to confirm the former existence of a structure in this locale. Given the artifact assemblage from EU3, it seems likely that the structure formerly located here served a domestic function. While it is possible that it may have been housing for a domestic servant, it seems equally likely that it may have been a kitchen because of its proximity to the great house.

Ceramics recovered from this unit spanned virtually the entire nineteenth century. The collection yielded a mean ceramic date of 1832.0 (n=56). Interestingly, the pane glass from the unit yielded the much later date of 1873.81, and the majority of the glass (n=18) fell into the 1870s-1880s thickness ranges. This may suggest that the structure was glazed long after its original construction. Alternatively, late-eighteenth/early-nineteenth-century artifacts from the sheet midden surrounding the house were incorporated into the sample deriving from the actual use of the structure. The latter case would suggest that the structure was built sometime after the Civil War.

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Destrehan Plantation is of state significance in the area of historic archaeology. The period represented by the archaeological resources is late-eighteenth through nineteenth century (ca. 1780-1890).

HISTORIC ARCHAEOLOGY - CRITERION D

Archaeological test excavations have demonstrated that the sheet midden associated with the occupation of the Destrehan great house is preserved. Examination of the differential distribution of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century ceramics indicates that the deposits are horizontally stratified. Thus, areas of eighteenth-century activity can be identified. In addition, excavations in 1983 (Lamb et al. 1983) and 1992 (Yakubik 1993) have demonstrated that architectural features associated with outbuildings are preserved. Future investigations at this site will further our understanding of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Louisiana plantation lifeways.

As discussed in <u>Louisiana's Comprehensive Archaeological Plan</u>, colonial plantation sites are rare in the state. The extant Destrehan great house was built in 1787, and the artifact assemblage supports deposition from the earliest years of its occupation. Thus, the material record from the period in which the plantation made the transition from indigo to sugar cane is preserved. Then, too, the occupation of the existing great house was not the first residential occupation at the site. Material from excavations indicates that deposits predating 1787 are preserved at the site.

Cultural themes identified in <u>Louisiana's Comprehensive Archaeological Plan</u> for Management Unit V that can be addressed by archaeological data from Destrehan include:

- 1. "The Influence of the Mississippi River on Historic Settlement."
- 2. "Historic Exploration and Colonization of Louisiana."
- 3. "Plantation Archaeology."
- 4. "Euro-American Influence on the Landscape."
- 5. "Culture History."

Specific research goals identified in <u>Louisiana's Comprehensive Archaeological Plan</u> that can be addressed by future investigations at Destrehan include:

- 1. "Examine the development of the plantation from 1720 to 1803.... To what degree were early plantations dependent on European goods?"
- 2. "Examine the role, regional diversity, and history of Louisiana's antebellum plantation society. What differences existed between the cotton plantation and the sugar plantation, and between French and Anglo plantations?"

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3. "Examine the evolution of the postwar plantation. What changes occurred as a result of the change in labor status?"

Data from Destrehan can also be used to address the following issues:

- 1. Diachronic change in activity patterning within a great house complex. The archaeological remains of structures were identified both during the 1983 and the 1993 investigations. In addition, the 1983 excavations found evidence of walkways that were utilized to link outbuildings to the great house, or to each other, or to access gardens. How did the landscape surrounding the great house develop, and what types of structures were added and removed through time?
- 2. Material culture as it is reflected in the archaeological record as compared to the documentary record. An exceptionally fine series of inventories is available for Destrehan Plantation (Cizek 1982). This permits the comparison of the materials that were documented to have been utilized on the plantation to those that actually are preserved in archaeological contexts.
- 3. The foodways of the plantation master. We are only now beginning to understand the diets of Euro- and African-Americans on sugar plantations. The 1993 investigations yielded a small faunal assemblage that was remarkably diverse in terms of the species represented. The faunal material collected to date has assisted in the identification of patterns in sugar plantation foodways (Dukes 1993), and additional data will further our understanding.

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