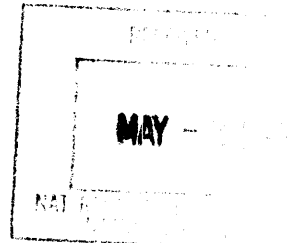


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service



National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If 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 Le Vieux Presbytere

other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number 205 Rue Iry Lejeune N/A not for publication

city or town Church Point N/A vicinity

state Louisiana code LA county Acadia code 001 zip code 70525

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.)

Jonathan Fricker April 24, 1997
Signature of certifying official Title Date
Deputy 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 commenting 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:)

Edson H. Beall Signature of the Keeper Date of Action
5/30/97

Le Vieux Presbytere
Name of Property

Acadia 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>		buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
<u>1</u>	<u>0</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

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

Religion/church-related residence

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

vacant/not in use

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

Eastlake
Italianate

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation concrete
walls weatherboard

roof asphalt
other bousillage

Narrative Description

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

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National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Le Vieux Presbytere, Acadia Parish, LA

Section number 7 Page 1

Le Vieux Presbytere (1887) is a one-and-one-half story frame *bousillage* residence located across from the church square in the small rural French Catholic community of Church Point in northeastern Acadia Parish. Despite two moves and significant alterations, the building retains the characteristics which establish its architectural significance and, thus, its National Register eligibility.

The history of this property began in 1883 with the establishment of the new Roman Catholic parish of the Sacred Heart of Mary in Church Point. Father Auguste Vincent Eby, a twenty-seven year old native of France, was appointed by the archbishop as pastor. In 1887, Father Eby, having successfully completed construction of a new church, turned his attention to the question of a *presbytere* (pastoral residence). In that year, as documented in his annual report to the archbishop, he had the nominated building constructed. It was a square, hipped roof structure forty feet by forty feet, with an eight foot gallery all around. According to one Monsignor Bienvenu, as reported in a 1954 church history, the *presbytere* was of "adobe" construction. This, of course, was an incorrect reference to the building's *bousillage* walls. The plan consisted of a central hall downstairs with multiple rooms on each side and a second, narrower central hall in the upper half-story with a single room on each side. French doors provided access from the gallery into the hall and the rooms. The *bousillage* walls featured heavy timbers with French joinery style angle braces. Significantly, the upper story rooms were constructed of *bousillage* as well.

In about 1950 the *presbytere* was moved from the northern to the southern side of the church square to make way for construction of the present 1954 church building. At that time the building received a major renovation. A former side elevation became the new front, complete with a new front opening (presumably from salvaged materials), and a new front central hall was cut through linking in a perpendicular fashion to the original central hall. This created an overall "T" shaped hallway configuration. In addition, all four sides of the gallery were enclosed and numerous floor plan changes were made. Furthermore, large single story wings (now removed) were added on each side of the new front. With the exception of the addition of a small rooftop cupola, the upper half-story remained unchanged.

In 1995 the church donated the deteriorating *presbytere* to the Town of Church Point on condition that it be removed from the church square. The c. 1950 wings were

CONTINUED

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

Le Vieux Presbytere, Acadia Parish, LA

Section number 7 Page 2

removed and the original building was relocated to a donated piece of property across the street from the church square. The other c.1950 alterations (gallery enclosure, floor plan changes, cupola addition, etc.) remain in place. An effort is currently underway to secure funds to restore the building to its original appearance.

Originally the building was encircled by an Eastlake gallery with turned columns and brackets rising to a delicate decorative cornice. Five of the twenty Eastlake columns survive on a small porch located at the current front entrance. Other surviving historic features include a boldly formed dado in many of the ground floor rooms, four elegant late Italianate style dormers which feature an applied cross motif (one on each plane of the hipped roof), French doors with large panes, four panel interior doors, and beaded chair rails in the upstairs rooms. Approximately seventy percent of the original *bousillage* walls survive on the lower floor. Their counterparts in the upper half-story are completely intact. Originally covered with plaster, the *bousillage* walls are presently covered by either wallpaper or simulated wood paneling.

Assessment of Integrity:

Despite the admittedly severe alterations mentioned above, it should be emphasized that it is the *bousillage* construction that makes the building significant, and it is substantially intact, as explained above. In short, while the loss of the Eastlake gallery has had a significant impact upon the building's appearance, it is not what made the building architecturally significant.

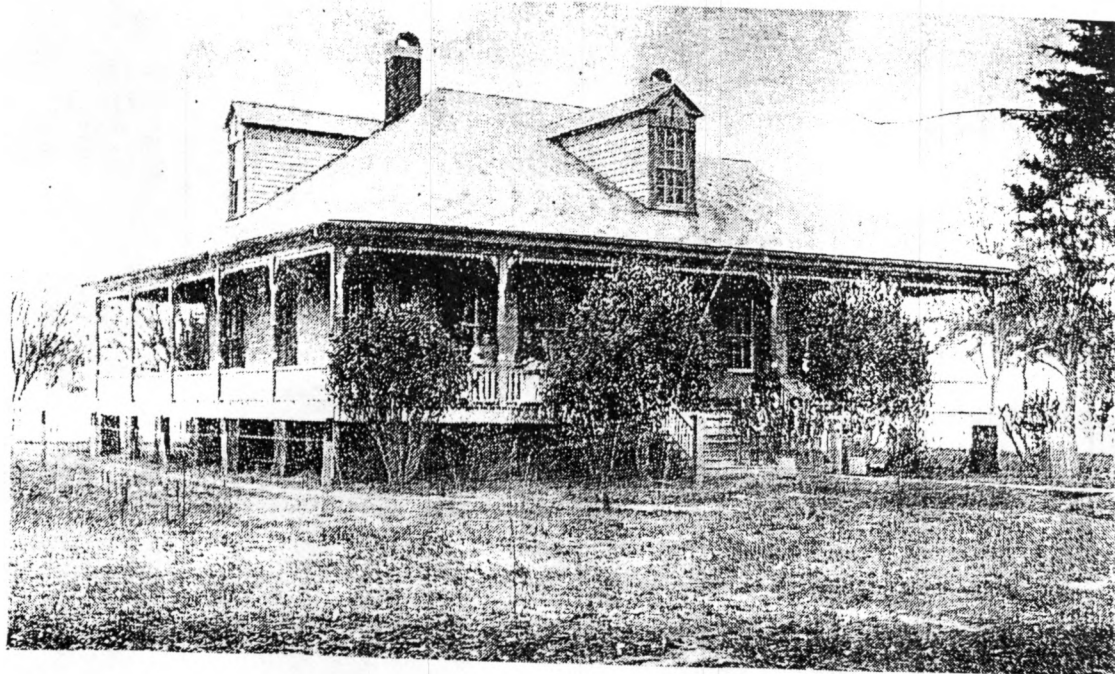
Both moves were very short ones, and very importantly, *Le Vieux Presbytere* is across the street from its original location on the church square. One has an unobstructed view of the church property from the new location.

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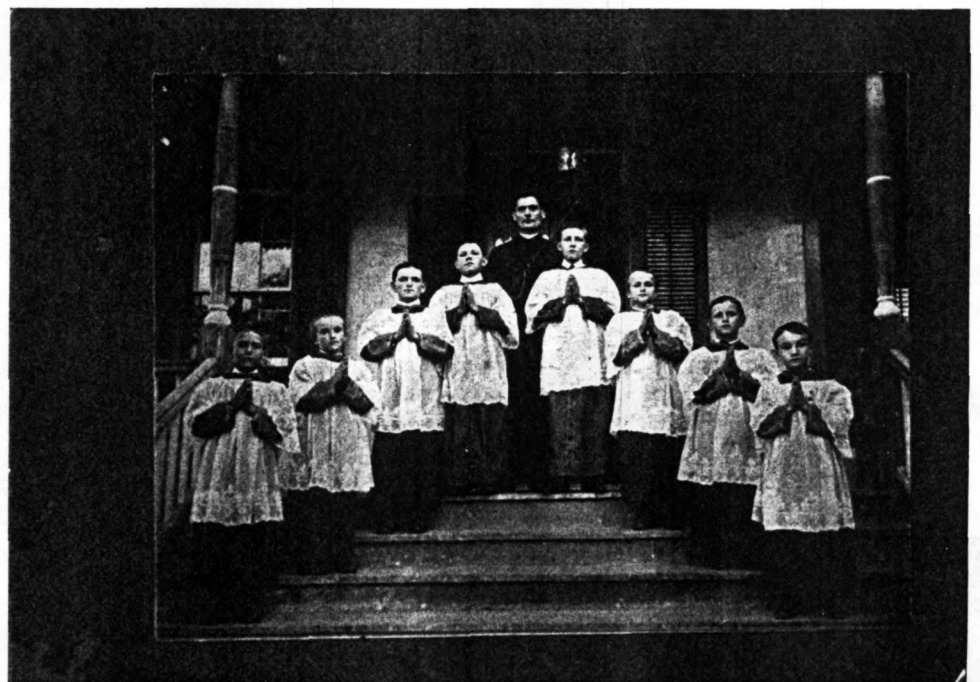
National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Le Vieux Presbytere, Acadia Parish, LA

Section number 7 Page 3



PRESBYTERE PRIOR
TO 1950S REMODELING



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.
XX 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.)

Property is:

- XA owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
XB 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

1887

Significant Dates

1887

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Unknown

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:

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

Name of repository:

Le Vieux Presbytere
Name of Property

Acadia Parish, LA
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property less than an acre

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	1	5	5	7	5	3	6	0	3	3	6	3	8	6	0
Zone	Easting			Northing											
2															

3															
Zone	Easting			Northing											
4															

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

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

Boundary Justification

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

11. Form Prepared By

name/title National Register Staff

organization Division of Historic Preservation date February 1997

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 Town of Church Point

street & number 102 Church Blvd telephone 318-684-5692

city or town Church Point state LA zip code 70525

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.

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National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Le Vieux Presbytere, Acadia Parish, LA
Section number 8 Page 1

Le Vieux Presbytere is of state significance in the area of architecture as a rare and important example of a method of construction associated with Louisiana's very significant French Creole architectural tradition.

Bousillage construction is a primary characteristic of Louisiana's Creole architectural heritage. In this building technique, frame walls, with French joinery, are infilled with a combination of clay, Spanish moss, and sometimes animal hair. Once this material is in place within a wall, it dries and hardens to form a solid structure which, in many ways, is analogous to reinforced concrete. *Bousillage* construction, as it was practiced in Louisiana, should be viewed as the lineal descendent of a medieval European form of construction known as half-timbering. In this case, mud and Spanish moss were substituted for the lime, plaster and straw used in half-timbering.

Le Vieux Presbytere is a significant example of this building tradition in two respects:

1) Of the roughly 200 surviving examples in Louisiana, virtually all are only one story. The Division of Historic Preservation is aware of only one other *bousillage* structure in the state of more than one story (the two story Prudhomme-Rouquier House in Natchitoches).

2) Perhaps of even greater interest is the building's extremely late date of construction (1887) -- i.e., in the era of industrial lumbering when it would have been much more easy to use milled lumber and balloon frame construction. In this, *Le Vieux Presbytere* shows the extraordinarily long time this ancient building tradition persisted in rural Louisiana despite technological advancements. In short, here is a building from 1887 constructed in the same manner as a building from the early colonial period. The staff of the Division of Historic Preservation knows of only a very few other examples of *bousillage* construction from a comparable date.

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Le Vieux Presbytere, Acadia Parish, LA

Section number $\frac{9}{10}$ Page $\frac{1}{1}$

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Baudier, Roger. *The Church of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart of Church Point, Louisiana*. This 1954 church history quotes from Father Eby's 1888 report to the archbishop regarding the construction of the rectory in 1887.

Photos of the *presbytere* prior to the 1950s remodeling, copies in National Register file, Louisiana Division of Historic Preservation. A photo appearing in the above booklet shows the entire building. A closeup photo from another source shows the original front door and porch detailing.

Boundary Description: Lots 8, 9, 10, & 11 of Block 1, Ebey Addition No. 2, Town of Church Point, Acadia Parish, Louisiana.

Justification: Boundaries follow property lines.