

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

FEB 5 1979

DATE ENTERED

AUG 21 1979

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC

Lafourche Parish Courthouse

AND/OR COMMON

same

LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

200 Green Street

___ NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Thibodaux

___ VICINITY OF

3rd - David Treen

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

STATE

Louisiana

CODE

022

COUNTY

Lafourche

CODE

057

CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE	
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL	<input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

Lafourche Parish Police Jury

STREET & NUMBER

200 Green Street

CITY, TOWN

Thibodaux

___ VICINITY OF

Louisiana

STATE

LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTIONCOURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Lafourche Parish Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

200 Green Street

CITY, TOWN

Thibodaux

STATE
Louisiana

STATE

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

Louisiana Historic Sites Survey

DATE

1978

___ FEDERAL STATE ___ COUNTY ___ LOCALDEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

Louisiana State Historic Preservation Office

CITY, TOWN

Baton Rouge

STATE
Louisiana

STATE

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Lafourche Parish Courthouse is located in the city of Thibodaux in the northern portion of the parish. The courthouse is set on a small city block 150 feet to each side. It is bordered to the north by W. 2nd Street, to the south by W. 3rd Street, to the east by Maronge Street and to the west by Green Street, which serves as its entrance. The immediate neighborhood is characterized by low-scale government and commercial buildings.

The heavy masonry central block dates from 1858, but was significantly remodeled about 1903. This remodeling included the addition of the facade treatment, the portico, and the square-domed roof structures. In the twentieth century, 4 wings have been appended to the old square courthouse leaving only the west facade, with its portico, exposed. In 1959 the interior of the old 1858 courthouse was remodeled. The cross corridor plan and the unexposed walls are all that survive of the original courthouse building.

The building is constructed of masonry sheathed in stucco.

The architecturally significant aspect of the building is its exterior. The exterior design of the original portion, which dates from 1903, was inspired by the influence of the Beaux Arts. This can be seen in its overly heavy combination of classical and Baroque elements--its massive concrete Roman Doric portico and in its five square Baroque domes. A large central dome rises from a high square drum and is crowned by a square parapet with a central oval medallion on each side. This motif is in turn surmounted by a second square dome. The oval medallion parapet motif forms the base for each of the four smaller ancillary square domes. Each dome is sheathed in copper. Together the five domes enliven the skyline of the courthouse considerably.

Pains were taken to articulate the twentieth century wings in a classical style. The north and south wings have colossal order pilasters and pedamented ends. Like the facade of the old portion, these wings are ornamented with festoons. The east and southeast wings are more simply articulated.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES ca. 1858-1862 BUILDER/ARCHITECT Favrot and Livaudais(1903)

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Lafourche Parish Courthouse has significance in the areas of architecture and politics/government. The Lafourche Parish Courthouse, the tallest structure in the city, is a local landmark in Thibodaux. It is aggressively monumental in its use of heavy classical and Baroque elements. The combination of bulbous square domes enlivens the skyline and gives a grand pictorial effect which reflects the taste of the late 19th century Beaux Arts, as does the massive portico. Although the courthouse does not represent a sophisticated design, it makes the big, broad, gesture which was so much a part of Beaux Arts architecture during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. It also makes a strong statement about the importance of its role in the community and the parish. In addition it represents, as few government buildings in Louisiana do, a major tendency toward the use of the Beaux Arts style in government buildings around the turn of the century.

As the second oldest courthouse in Louisiana still used for parochial purposes, the Lafourche Parish Courthouse possesses significance in the area of politics/government. The City of Thibodaux has been the seat of parish government since 1808. At that time the parish began using as its courthouse a one-story frame structure located at the intersection of Green and Second Streets. But in 1818, Henry Schuyler Thibodaux, the founder of Thibodaux and of the parishes of Lafourche and Terrebonne, donated a 140-foot square tract of land (the site of the present courthouse) to the parish on the condition that the police jury exempt his hotel and billard hall from taxes. On this site, the parish erected a three-room courthouse measuring 25 by 40 feet. Later, in 1846, a two-story structure was built, but within fifteen years it was replaced by the present building.

Meeting in September, 1852, the Lafourche Parish Police Jury passed a resolution providing that "three members be named to . . . the Building Committee which committee shall cause plans and specifications to be made for the building of a neat and commodeous (sic) Court House in the town of Thibodaux the cost of the said Court House not to exceed Fifteen Thousand dollars." Police jurors named to the committee included John Lyall, F. Michel, and A. B. Thibodaux. Construction began on the building around 1858 and was completed before 1862.

(continued)

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

The Louisiana Historical Records Survey, Service Division, Work Projects Administration, Inventory of the Parish Archives of Louisiana, No. 29 Lafourche Parish (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University, 1942).

(continued)

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 2 acres

UTM REFERENCES

A	1,5	7,11	7,5,10	3,2,9,8	1,2,5	B			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING				ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C						D			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The nominated area encompasses the city block fronting on Green Street on which the courthouse sits.

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Anne Harmon and Dr. Paul Leslie

ORGANIZATION

South Central Planning & Development Commission

DATE

9/18/78

STREET & NUMBER

110 Burns Plaza

TELEPHONE

CITY OR TOWN

Thibodaux

STATE

Louisiana

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL

STATE

LOCAL

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

SIGNATURE

L. Bernard Lamar

TITLE

State Historic Preservation Officer

DATE

1-8-79

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

Carol Shull

DATE

8-21-79

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHITECTURE AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

ATTEST

DATE

106 21 79

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 2

During the twentieth century there have been several major additions to the structure (see attached diagrams). The first of these came in 1903 under the direction of the architectural firm Favrot and Livaudais. Two wings were added to the Third and Maronge street sides, and the copper domes were added to the roof. In addition, a concrete portico similar to but heavier than the one on the Second Street side was erected on the Green Street side. In 1951 the police jury supervised the adding of another wing on Maronge Street, and in 1958 it removed the building's original front and portico, replacing them with yet another wing. As a result of this latest renovation, carried out by J. B. Talley and Co. under the direction of local Thibodaux architect Fernand Picou, the Green Street entrance became the front of the courthouse.

Over the years the courthouse has been the focal point of political activities within Lafourche Parish. U. S. Senator Henry Clay purportedly visited the courthouse while in Thibodaux sometime in the 1840's. But more than casual visitors to the building included the Episcopalian Bishop Leonidas L. Polk (the "Fighting Bishop" of the Confederacy) and Confederate General Braxton Bragg, both of whom owned nearby sugar plantations.

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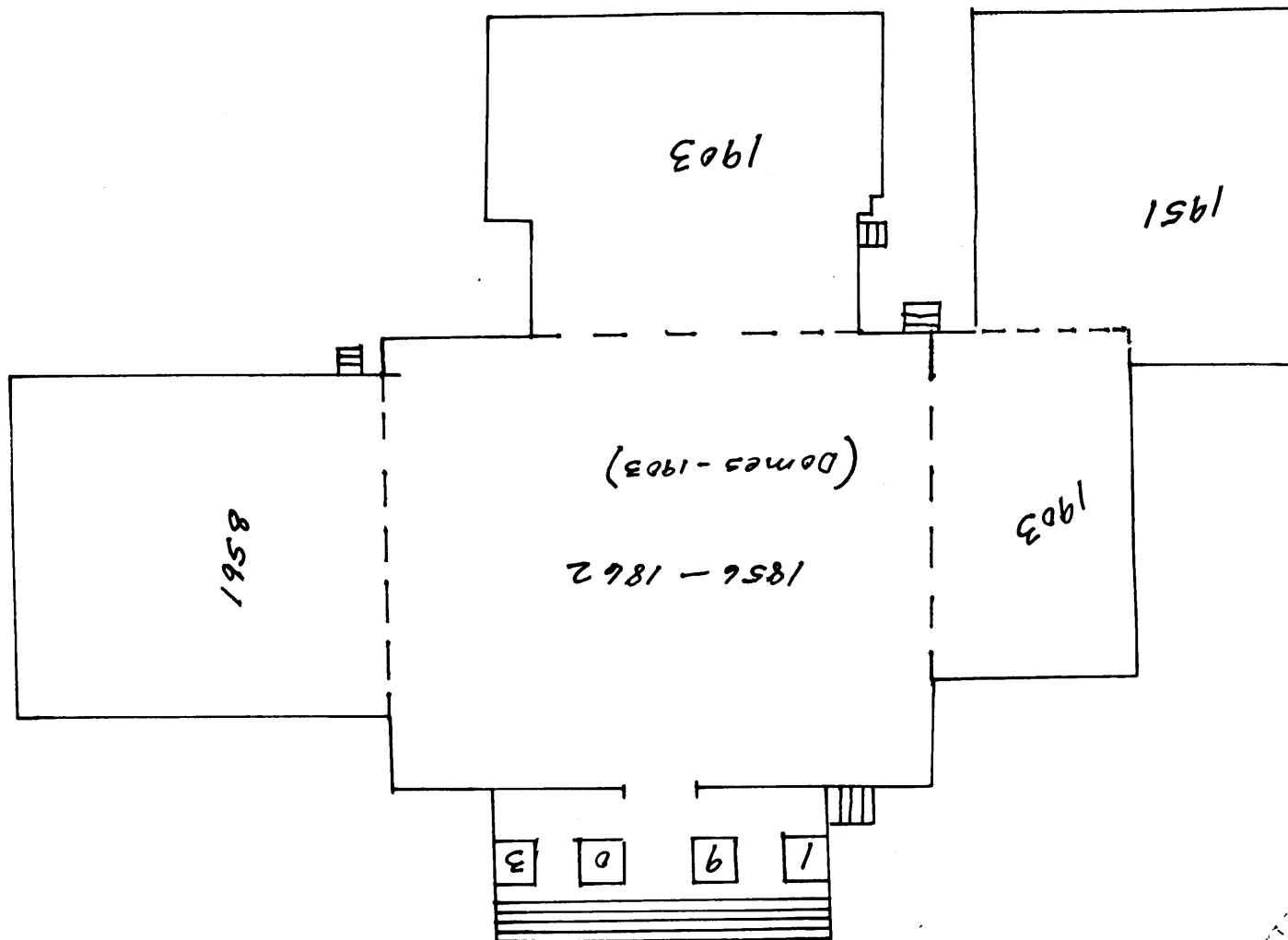
CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 9 PAGE 2

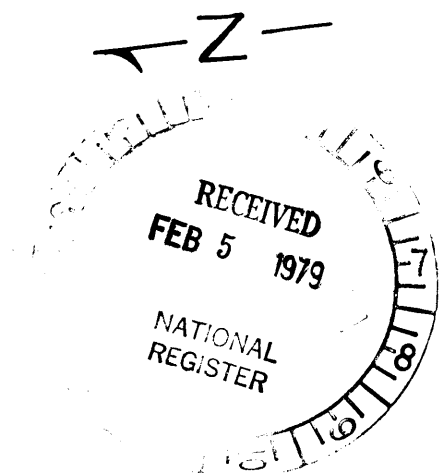
Carl A. Brasseaux, Glenn R. Conrad, R. Warren Robison, The Courthouses of Louisiana (Lafayette, Louisiana: University of Southwestern Louisiana, 1977).

Lafourche Parish Police Jury Minutes, 1852-1861, 1910-1958.

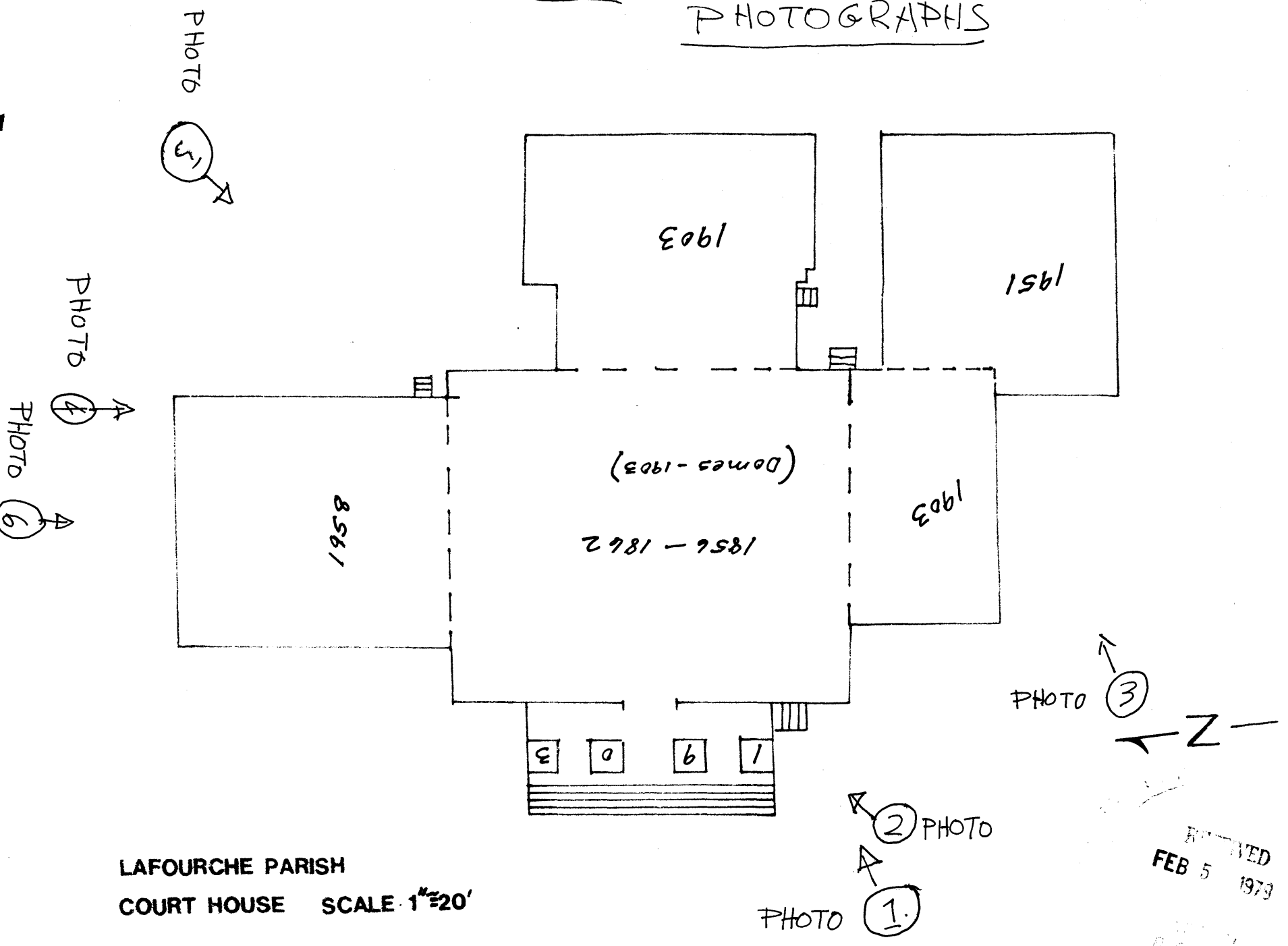
Interview with Thibodaux architect Fernand Picou by Paul Leslie on May 9, 1978.



LAFOURCHE PARISH
COURT HOUSE SCALE: 1" = 20'



PLAN SHOWING DIRECTIONS OF
PHOTOGRAPHS



LAFOURCHE PARISH
COURT HOUSE SCALE 1"=20'

PHOTO 3
N

PHOTO 2
PHOTO 1

