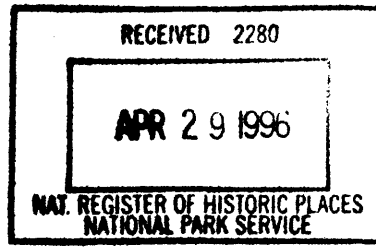


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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 Polmer Store

other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number 1849 Highway 311 N/A not for publication

city or town Schriever vicinity

state Louisiana code LA county Terrebonne code 109 zip code 70395

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.)

Jon Fricker 4/22/96
Signature of certifying official/Title Jonathan Fricker, Deputy SHPO, Dept of Culture, Recreation and Tourism Date
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 5/30/96

Palmer Store
Name of Property

Terrebonne 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)

- buildings
- district
- site
- structure
- object

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

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>3</u>		buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
<u>3</u>	<u>0</u>	Total

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

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

Store: Commerce/trade - department store
Cabin & House: domestic/single dwelling

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

Commerce/trade - specialty store (store)
domestic/single dwelling (storekeeper house)
vacant; not in use (cabin)

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

Store: no style
House: Queen Anne Revival, Eastlake
Cabin: No style

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation brick
walls Other: board and batten
weatherboard
roof metal
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**

Polmer Store, Terrebonne Parish, LA

Section number 7 Page 1

The Polmer Store (c. 1880) is a one story frame structure located near the intersection of Louisiana highways 311 and 309 in a rural portion of Terrebonne Parish known as Central. It is adjacent to Ellendale and Ardoyne plantations and served principally their workers. An example of vernacular architecture, it is being classified as having no style for the purposes of this nomination. The store is very well preserved, both on the exterior and interior. Also included in the nomination are a c. 1905 one story frame storekeeper's residence and a nearby c. 1890 one story frame tenant cabin. Each has received some alteration since construction but remains eligible for National Register listing.

Sheathed in board and batten siding, the store is rectangular in shape and stands with its large front gable facing the road. Its windows and doors are protected by heavy shutters formed of beaded boards in a diagonal pattern. A shed roof gallery supported by plain posts spans the facade. Square nails are visible in the attic framing, within the sheathing, and within the interior counters. An early addition is appended to the structure's south side. Because it was intended for use as a warehouse, its construction is rougher than that of the store. The gallery's shed roof has been expanded to cover a handicap ramp attached to the warehouse's facade.

A double door leads to the store's large rectangular sales room, which has a beaded board ceiling and walls. Counters and shelving line the room on two sides. One rolling ladder, used to reach stock on the higher shelves, survives on the building's south side; a second ladder formerly located on the opposite wall has been removed but is stored inside the warehouse. A steep, almost ladder-like stair located in a rear corner leads to the attic. A small, narrow office spans half of the store's rear wall. Its partition wall is constructed of two parts: a band of windows and a supporting wall of beaded boards whose gauge is narrower than those on the other walls. For this reason, it is believed that the office is a later but historic addition to the store. Restrooms located near a rear corner of the sales room are a recent addition.

The warehouse is reached through doors located behind one counter. The existence of a thick wooden threshold dividing its floor and the presence of different sized floor boards on each side of the threshold indicate that the warehouse was expanded toward the rear at some point after its initial construction. The entire building is covered by a continuous metal roof which is not original. This roof changes pitch where the store and warehouse meet.

CONTINUED

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Polmer Store, Terrebonne Parish, LA

Section number 7 Page 2

Contributing Elements

A storekeeper's residence and a nearby tenant cabin are being counted as contributing elements to this nomination because they help to illustrate how the post-bellum plantation system worked. The position of store clerk became increasingly important after the Civil War because clerks kept account records in addition to selling supplies to plantation laborers. Thus, the provision of a house for the storekeeper reflected his status and served as an incentive for keeping a good employee. The c. 1905 house standing a few feet north of the Polmer Store is such a residence. Originally built as a separate structure, it was later attached to the store via a frame connector which joins the sales room at a rear corner (see below). The house shows the restrained influence of the Queen Anne Revival style in its wraparound gallery with Eastlake columns and its projecting bay with forty-five degree corner cuts. The middle window formerly in the bay has been replaced by a solid wall. The building originally had clapboard siding on its facade and board and batten sheathing on its other exterior walls. Most of the board and batten was covered by clapboards some time after 1959, leaving only the wall on the side gallery displaying the original siding material. The home's chimneys have been removed above the line of its hipped roof. The interior has been altered through the addition of paneling, carpet, and ceiling tiles and the construction of two bathrooms. However, three mantels remain in the home. A period room divider survives in the room formerly used as the parlor. Composed of posts rising from a low wall, it features a floral design on its entablature as well as upon the bases and capitals of the posts.

The connector joining the store and house was originally in the form of a screened porch. Although its exact construction date is unknown, this porch was in place by c.1920. It is now sheathed in board and batten siding which appears to have been salvaged from other buildings. A ghost mark suggests that at one point after the screened porch's enclosure a gallery extended across the connector's small facade. Openings on its rear elevation appear to have been repeatedly changed and a door leading from the residence's wraparound gallery to the connector has been replaced with a metal storm door and screen. In addition, the connector's interior has been completely remodeled to create a modern kitchen for the home.

The cabin is being counted as a contributing element because it appears to be the only surviving example of the once numerous homes which sheltered the Polmer Store's many customers (see Part 8). It is a rare survivor of a former group of at least sixty-three which once housed the workers of nearby Ellendale Plantation. Featuring board and batten walls and doors, it stands slightly up the road from the store and residence. Its plan contains a moderately sized front room connected to two smaller rooms at the rear. In addition, a badly

CONTINUED

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Polmer Store, Terrebonne Parish, LA

Section number 7 Page 3

deteriorated front gallery also stands beneath the mass of the cabin's gable end roof. The mantel and chimney have been lost. The resulting opening is covered by metal, as are several other openings. The interior has been altered by the addition of sheetrock and baseboards in the front room and the construction of a closet in one rear room. Holes in the ceiling reveal wooden shingles beneath the building's metal roof.

Assessment of Integrity

Because the Polmer Store is so well preserved, former customers would have no problem recognizing it if they were to return to this portion of Terrebonne Parish today. And, although the house and nearby tenant cabin have experienced alteration, both also would be easily recognized by their former residents.

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)

Commerce

Period of Significance

c. 1880 - 1946

Significant Dates

N/A

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:

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

Name of repository:

Polmer Store
Name of Property

Terrebonne Parish, LA
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreege of Property @ 1.2 acres

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1 | 1 | 5 | 7 | 1 | 1 | 6 | 3 | 0 | 3 | 2 | 8 | 0 | 9 | 5 | 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 1996

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 Gary Arceneaux, Peggy A. Boudreaux, Gene Arceneaux

street & number 204 Melrose Drive telephone (504) 446-1858 (Gary Arceneaux)

city or town Thibodaux state LA zip code 70301

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**

Polmer Store, Terrebonne Parish, LA

Section number 8 Page 1

The Polmer Store is locally significant in the area of commerce within Terrebonne Parish because it is a rare example of a plantation store. General mercantile emporiums such as the Polmer Store played a vital role in the system of plantation agriculture from the post-bellum years until well into the twentieth century. This store's period of significance ranges from c. 1880 through 1946, the fifty year cutoff. It continued to serve as a plantation store in the manner described below into the post-World War II era.

With the end of the Civil War and the loss of slave labor, planters were forced to find other means to get their crops planted and harvested. In Louisiana's cotton growing parishes, the plantation system shifted to a practice known as share-cropping in which a landless farmer worked a portion of the planter's land for a share of the crop, generally one-third. However, this system was not suited to sugar growing parishes such as Terrebonne. Instead, planters hired gangs of laborers who were given housing on the plantation and a small weekly or monthly wage. The amount of this wage depended upon whether or not the planter also provided food for the worker. Although wages were occasionally paid in cash, script and credit vouchers redeemable at the plantation store were often used. Because the planters feared that their laborers might leave before the crop was in, they often withheld part of these wages until the end of the year.

Like share-cropping and paid gang labor, plantation stores were a phenomenon of the post-bellum period. They provided a wide variety of goods, ranging from manufactured clothes to foodstuffs to tools to patent medicines -- in short, everything the rural householder could want. Although many were owned by the planters themselves, some were owned by businessmen merchants who cooperated with nearby planters yet were independent of them. The Polmer Store was such an enterprise.

Very little is known of the early history of the Polmer Store. It was chosen as the post office for nearby Ellendale Plantation in 1882. According to Rai Porche Pellegrin, her father, Vital Porche, went to work there as clerk in 1915. Although Raoul Toups actually owned the store at that time, it was Porche and his family who lived in the residence. Toups apparently sold the store to Samuel and Leon Polmer, brothers who established a chain of four stores in Terrebonne Parish during the 1920s. The facility primarily served the workers on nearby Ardoyne and Ellendale plantations, although the presence of a delivery truck in a historic photograph indicates that the store also had a wider clientele. Documents in the possession of the current owner indicate that Ellendale's owners paid their workers with credit vouchers. After making their purchases, the shoppers received change in the form of store tokens which

CONTINUED

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Polmer Store, Terrebonne Parish, LA

Section number 8 Page 2

could be used to purchase additional merchandise but were of no use outside the store.

Although most plantation stores declined after the 1930s, the Polmer store remained in operation in the above described manner until after World War II. Then it became a general mercantile store. The Polmers sold the business to employee Vital Porche around 1940. He retired and sold the emporium to Whitney Arceneaux in 1959. Arceneaux and his family also resided in the former clerk's house. Arceneaux closed the store in 1984 and sold it to his son Gary in 1994. The store is now leased to a tenant who operates an antique and gift shop; the clerk's house is rented to a local family not associated with the store.

In assessing the significance of plantation stores, it should be noted that almost every plantation of any size either had one or was served by one such as the Polmer Store. If an average of 50 to 100 large plantations per parish is accepted, it can be seen that they were once numerous within the rural landscape. However, the Division of Historic Preservation's Historic Standing Structures Survey of Terrebonne Parish and staff knowledge indicate that the Polmer Store is the only remaining plantation store. In addition, the store is particularly important because it is so remarkably well preserved.

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Polmer Store, Terrebonne Parish, LA

Section number 9 Page 1
 10 1

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Division of Historic Preservation, Historic Standing Structures Survey of Terrebonne Parish.

Credit voucher and tokens in possession of owner.

Hair, William Ivy, Bourbonism and Agrarian Protest: Louisiana Politics 1877-1900. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1969.

Interview with Rai Porche Pellegrin.

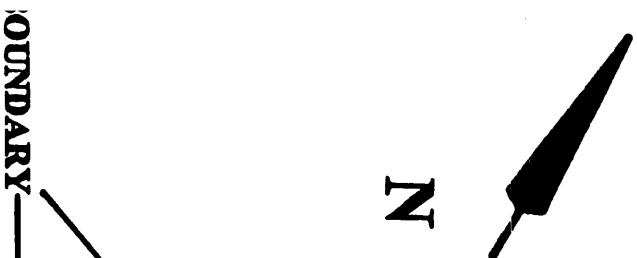
Wurzlow, Helen Emmeline. I Dug Up Houma Terrebonne, Vol VI. Published by the author: 1984-1986 (includes historic photograph of Polmer Store).

Boundary Description: See enclosed plat map.

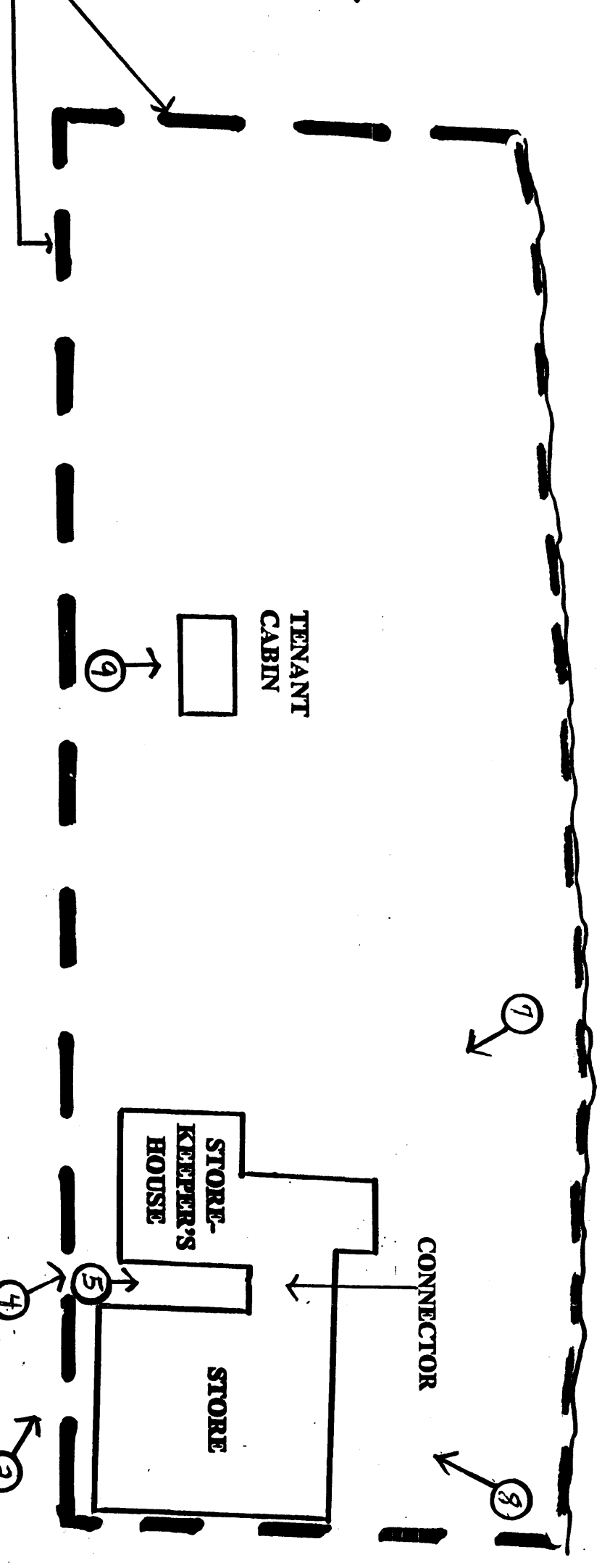
Justification: Boundaries follow property lines. They include the store and its two related resources. As a point of information, the main houses at Ardoyne and Ellendale plantations are each about 1/2 mile away.

LITTLE BAYOU BLACK

N



BOUNDARY

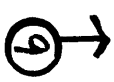
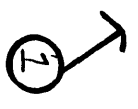


STATE HIGHWAY 311

POLMIER STORE

TERREBONNE PARISH, LA

SCALE: 1" = 40'



CONNECTOR

