

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES NOMINATION

NPS Form 10-900

USD/I/NPS NRHP Registration Form (Rev. 8-86)

OCT 2001  
OMB No. 1024-0018  
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Rivet, Pierre Ernest, House, Plaquemine, Iberville Parish, LA

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

NAT. REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

1235

1. NAME OF PROPERTY

Historic Name: Rivet, Pierre Ernest House

Other Name/Site Number:

2. LOCATION

Street & Number 58159 Plaquemine Street Not for publication: NA  
City/Town Plaquemine Vicinity: NA  
State: Louisiana Code: LA County: Iberville Code: 047 Zip Code: 70764

3. STATE/FEDERAL AGENCY CERTIFICATION

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this X 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 X meets \_\_\_ does not meet the National Register Criteria.

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:  
Nationally:\_\_\_ Statewide:\_\_\_ Locally: X

Jonathan Fricker  
Signature of Certifying Official/Title Jonathan Fricker  
Deputy SHPO, Dept. of Culture, Recreation and Tourism

9/24/01  
Date

State or Federal Agency and Bureau

In my opinion, the property \_\_\_ meets \_\_\_ does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of Commenting or Other Official/Title

Date

State or Federal Agency and Bureau

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4. NATIONAL PARK SERVICE CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify that this property is:

- Entered in the National Register
Determined eligible for the National Register
Determined not eligible for the National Register
Removed from the National Register
Other (explain):

Entered in the National Register
Signature of Keeper

11-17-01
Date of Action

5. CLASSIFICATION

Ownership of Property
Private: X
Public-Local:
Public-State:
Public-Federal:

Category of Property
Building(s): X
District:
Site:
Structure:
Object:

Number of Resources within Property
Contributing
1

Non contributing
1 buildings
sites
structures
objects
1 Total

Number of Contributing Resources Previously Listed in the National Register: 0

Name of Related Multiple Property Listing: Louisiana's French Creole Architecture

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**6. FUNCTION OR USE**

Historic: Domestic  
Current: Work in Progress

Sub: Single Dwelling  
Sub: NA

**7. DESCRIPTION**

Architectural Classification: Greek Revival  
Other: French Creole

Materials:

Foundation: brick  
Walls: weatherboard  
Roof: metal  
Other:

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### Describe Present and Historic Physical Appearance.

The Pierre Ernest Rivet House (c. 1860) is a one-and-one-half story frame cottage in the Greek Revival style. It also shows some influence from the French Creole building tradition. It stands within a landscaped corner lot in a residential neighborhood of Plaquemine, Iberville Parish's governmental seat. Although the house has received some alterations, its architectural character and National Register eligibility remain intact.

The cottage's restrained Greek Revival styling is found on the exterior. Its three bay gallery is composed of Greek Revival boxed columns supporting a Grecian entablature. The facade also has two four-panel doors surmounted by transoms. This type door was common during the Greek Revival era. The residence has two features which place it within Louisiana's French Creole tradition. The first is its hall-less Creole floor plan, which is reflected in the fenestration pattern (window-door-door-window) of the façade. The plan is composed of a full-width front gallery, two rooms in the front range, and three spaces in the rear range. The latter consists of two rooms and a central *loggia* with a staircase leading to the attic. The *loggia* probably remained open until the 1920s (see below). The home's other Creole characteristic is the decorative treatment of its two mantels, both of which feature diamond shaped lozenges on their entablatures. (Both are subdivided into two panels which have a single lozenge within each.)

Other features found in the house include six-over-six windows (containing old glass with waves and bubbles) whose surrounds have Roman Numerals carved into them beneath several layers of paint, plaster walls and board ceilings in the front rooms, and flush board walls and ceilings in the original rear range. The attic (where square nails are visible in uncovered areas) contains one large rectangular space, part of which is finished in wide beaded board. Cypress shake shingles can be seen above the rafters beneath the current metal roof.

Alterations to the house came in the 1920s. At that time a two-room board-and-batten kitchen with narrow beaded board walls in one room and wider beaded board walls in the other was moved close to the rear of the original home and an enclosed space was built to connect the two. This caused the enclosure of the formerly open *loggia*. The kitchen (which probably dates to the turn-of-the-twentieth century) and connector were offset from the main house in order to leave an original window in the home's rear wall uncovered. As a result, the kitchen and connector protrude beyond the house on the other side. The connector originally contained the home's bathroom and one other room. At some point a narrow covered space was attached to a side wall to house a hot water heater.

The house was allowed to deteriorate quite a bit before being purchased by its present owner. Some of the changes and repairs listed below are a result of that deterioration. (It should be noted that restoration and repair of the house are ongoing.) Work completed to date includes:

1. Replacement of the gallery floor, the fascia board beneath it, and the front steps. In addition, a few of the gallery balustrade's members had to be replicated.
2. The loss of all the home's original shutters and interior doors. Some of the shutters have been replaced with shutters salvaged from other buildings. The door between the two front rooms has been replaced with French doors. The entrance to the 1920s bathroom is

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now filled by double paneled solid doors. A stained glass door fills the opening between the former *loggia* and the connector. The other interior openings currently lack doors, although those to the kitchen survive in storage.

3. The subdivision of part of the connector to create a half-bath (the 1920s bath remains in place on the opposite side of the connector) and the installation of stained glass windows in both bathrooms.
4. Removal of paint from the mantels, replacement of a coal burning insert placed in the firebox of one fireplace by a previous owner and then removed, conversion of that firebox into a gas log fireplace, and the loss of one of the home's two chimneys.
5. The removal of a wall to make the kitchen into one large room, the closing of one door between the kitchen and the connector, and the installation of modern lower kitchen cabinets.

Despite the historic and later alterations listed above, the house still clearly presents its galleried cottage form, its Greek Revival character, and its Creole influences. It is these features upon which the home's architectural significance (see Part 8) is based. As a rare example of both styles, the Rivet Home is a legitimate candidate for National Register listing.

### Non-Contributing Element

Also on the property is a frame combination garage/storage building. Constructed in 1931 (an attached carport was added much later), the wooden structure post-dates the house by approximately seventy years.

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**8. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE**

Applicable National Register Criteria:      A\_\_ B\_\_ C X D\_\_

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions):      NA  
A\_\_ B\_\_ C\_\_ D\_\_ E\_\_ F\_\_ G\_\_

Areas of Significance:      Architecture

Period(s) of Significance:      c. 1860

Significant Dates:      c. 1860

Significant Person(s):      NA

Cultural Affiliation:      NA

Architect/Builder:      Unknown

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## **State Significance of Property, and Justify Criteria, Criteria Considerations, and Areas and Periods of Significance Noted Above.**

The Pierre Ernest Rivet House is locally significant in the area of architecture because it is one of the few remaining Greek Revival style buildings within Plaquemine, a town which must once have had numerous examples. The house also exhibits Creole influences, a building tradition which has been largely lost within the town.

Incorporated in 1838, the town of Plaquemine is the only community of any size within Iberville Parish. It originally developed as an interior port and a commercial center due to its location on the Mississippi River at the mouth of Bayou Plaquemine. Because the bayou in turn linked with other waterways, a lively steamboat trade centering upon Plaquemine penetrated well into the interior and made the community a bustling commercial hub. This trade was partially disrupted in 1866 when severe flooding problems required that a dam be built to separate Bayou Plaquemine from the Mississippi. Although local civic leaders turned to the railroad to restore their commercial ties, they continued to campaign for waterway improvements until the federal government opened the Plaquemine Lock in 1909. However, the re-linking of Bayou Plaquemine and the Mississippi River played only a temporary role in the community's growth. By 1909 railroads had gained the ascendancy and steamboat traffic throughout the Mississippi Valley was on the decline. As a result, the community's focus shifted inland from the river and bayou to Plaquemine's new railroad corridor. This shift was given additional impetus by the numerous "cave-ins" which occurred along the Mississippi's west bank during the late nineteenth century. Because Plaquemine is situated on a sharp curve of the river, its land has tended to erode away, precipitously plunging streets, businesses, and residences into the river. A major cave-in occurred in 1888, but there were many others.

At the time Plaquemine was incorporated (1838), the Greek Revival was rapidly gaining the ascendancy over the French Creole tradition in South Louisiana. Although the exact number of Greek Revival buildings in the town on the eve of the Civil War cannot be known, there must have been dozens. A number of dwellings (like the candidate) would also have incorporated some French Creole influence. However, due to the river cave-ins and the normal processes of deterioration and neglect, most of the original town of Plaquemine (where many of these houses would have been located) is gone. The majority of Plaquemine's surviving historic residences, a number of which are located within the town's 129 building National Register Historic District, are one-story cottages representing a variety of late nineteenth and early twentieth century styles dating from approximately 1890-1930. They range from shotguns to simple galleried Italianate cottages to small Queen Anne dwellings to 1920s bungalows. A few two-story examples of turn-of-the-twentieth century styles are also found within the mix.

Despite the town's considerable age, only ten buildings survive to represent the Greek Revival taste. These include several small galleried cottages similar to the candidate, a large two-story dwelling, St. Basil's Academy (also a large two-story building, National Register), and the one-story 1848 City Hall (NR). No fully developed French Creole dwellings remain in Plaquemine, and only a few survive that exhibit influences of the tradition (most notably, in floor plans and accompanying fenestration patterns). With its characteristic hall-less French Creole floor plan and mantel lozenges, the Rivet House shows the lingering influence of this tradition (in this case, as late as c. 1860) on Anglo-American architecture.

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## 9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Iberville Parish Historic Structures Survey, Louisiana State Historic Preservation Office.

National Register nomination for Plaquemine Historic District; copy in files of Louisiana SHPO.

Riffel, Judy, ed. *Iberville Parish History*. Le Comite des Archives de la Louisiane, Baton Rouge, 1985.

Site visit by National Register staff.

Previous documentation on file (NPS): NA

Preliminary Determination of Individual Listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.

Previously Listed in the National Register. (partially)

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 (Specify Repository):



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## **10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

Acreage of Property: Less than an acre

UTM References:     **Zone   Easting   Northing**  
                          15     669390   3351780

Verbal Boundary Description:

A certain lot of ground situated in the Parish of Iberville, and in that part of the Town of Plaquemine, formerly called Jefferson and designated on Gill's Map of Plaquemine as Lot No. 30, in Square #5 measuring 60 feet front on Plaquemine Street by 131 Feet in depth between parallel lines, together with all the buildings and improvements thereon and all the rights, ways and servitudes thereunto belonging; bounded on the north by Plaquemine Street, on the east by Washington [now Emde] Street, on the south by Part of Lot #29 of Miss Cora Arbour and on the west by Lot 31 of said Square.

Boundary Justification:

Boundaries follow the historic property lines and encompass the historic yard of this urban residence.

## **11. FORM PREPARED BY**

Name/Title: National Register Staff

Address: Division of Historic Preservation, P. O. Box 44247, Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70804

Telephone: (225) 342-8160

Date: August 2001

## **PROPERTY OWNERS**

Trevor Tulles  
58159 Plaquemine Street  
Plaquemine, Louisiana 70764  
(225) 344-6606  
(225) 687-5387

Rivet House

Iberville Parish, Louisiana

