

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

For NPS use only

**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**

received SEP 18 1984  
date entered OCT 18 1984

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*  
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

**1. Name**

historic Calumet Plantation House

and or common same

**2. Location**

street & number ~~LA HWY 182, 3.4 miles west~~<sup>W</sup> of Patterson on LA 182 N/A not for publication

city, town Patterson vic.  vicinity of

state LA code 22 county St. Mary Parish code 101

**3. Classification**

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	N/A in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	N/A being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

**4. Owner of Property**

name Mr. and Mrs. William D. Hunter

street & number P. O. Box 2464

city, town Morgan City N/A vicinity of state LA 70381

**5. Location of Legal Description**

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. St. Mary Parish Courthouse

street & number Main Street (no specific address) P. O. Box 1231

city, town Franklin state LA 70538

**6. Representation in Existing Surveys**

title LA Historic Sites Survey has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date 1983  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records LA State Historic Preservation Office

city, town Baton Rouge state LA

## 7. Description

<b>Condition</b>		<b>Check one</b>	<b>Check one</b>
<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 <u>    N/A    </u>
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

### Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION - PAST AND PRESENT: BY Robert E. Smith

Calumet Plantation House today is the product of three major periods of construction: 1) The original 45-foot wide by 40 feet deep, one and one-half story (7-room) center hall house c.1830, 2) an addition of five rooms, and general remodeling c.1850-70, and 3) an addition of three rooms and general remodeling c.1950.

The oldest section of the structure is of heavy mortised and pegged cypress construction, infilled with brick. It retains its original exposed beaded beams and beaded overboards, presently hiding behind a super-imposed sheetrock ceiling. The majority of the walls are in their original location, but some short walls to the rear of this section have been removed or re-located. The roof framing and roof pitch over this early section is also original and unaltered.

The second phase in Calumet's development took place c.1850-70. This phase of construction is not only what transformed the house to its present general appearance, but also is the appearance which corresponds with the most available historical, pictorial and graphic documentation--as well as the ownership of its three most prestigious owners: Daniel Thompson, Harry Williams and Marguerite Clark. In this phase, the house maintained most of the architectural configuration of the original structure, but enlarged it by the addition of rooms to each side, doubling its width to 86½ feet, but maintaining the same front to rear cross-section of the early house (i.e., the same gallery depth and height, the same interior ceiling heights, the same roof pitch, etc., were maintained in the new construction). (A house which grew in similar fashion is "The Cottage" near St. Francisville.) No longer present, but well-documented by measured drawings and photographs of the period, were three wing additions to the rear of the structure, all interconnected by galleries. At this time, additional doorways, louvered shutters, and turned cypress columns were installed to further "update" the structure.

The third phase, c.1950, was one of unfortunate demolition and unsympathetic additions. Demolition included the three rear c.1850-70 wing additions, porch columns, railing and steps.

Unsympathetic additions included a large glassed-in "garden room," a bed and bathroom wing to the west side and a portico to the east kitchen side, along with various interior refurbishing such as narrow plank flooring, doors, door moldings, and sheetrock ceilings, all super-imposed on the early house with little regard for its original character. The three 1950 appendages are scheduled for removal during the planned restoration.



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Continuation sheet

Calumet

Item number 7

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ITEM 7 ADDENDUM BY STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE (CONTINUED)

For the record, the following features have been lost or replaced at Calumet since the late nineteenth century:

- (1) The two aforementioned rear dependency wings.
- (2) A small gabled rear porch extension.
- (3) Three of the five mantels.
- (4) The front gallery columns and railing.
- (5) The three aforementioned front gallery doors.
- (6) The interior staircase.

In addition, the original exposed interior beams have been covered over.

## 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 checked="" 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 checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> invention		

**Specific dates** c.1830, c.1850-70, **Builder/Architect** uncertain

**Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)**  
c.1950

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE - By Robert E. Smith

From an architectural standpoint, Calumet is important as an example of a very successful conversion and major enlargement of an early nineteenth century "cottage" sized house into a mid-nineteenth century large "plantation house."

This conversion successfully preserved the integrity of the original structure, maintaining the original arrangement and functions of its rooms; yet sympathetically added two bedroom additions and three service wings, which increased its size to three times the original square footage. The conversion was sensitive to air circulation, natural lighting, human circulation, landscape views, as well as the scale, proportions, and site orientation of the original structure. Such a sympathetic conversion demonstrates the designer-builder's sensitivity to the original structure and its site, Louisiana environmental conditions, the current architectural vocabulary fashionable, as well as the owner-need for a much larger residence. Certainly, it is more difficult to achieve a successful architectural expression starting with the limitation of an established house than when one starts with a clean slate, so-to-speak.

Of major architectural as well as landscape architectural significance are the numerous, professional, and detailed photographs, measured drawings, and narrative inventories and descriptions of the plantation house, house garden, and entire plantation complex c.1870-1879. The 1879 house garden plan is an unparalleled document in Louisiana garden historical research. These priceless documents become more significant when one realizes they document the appearance of the house and grounds back when it was owned by its most important residents-- Daniel Thompson, Harry Williams and Marguerite Clark.

If one is capable of visually subtracting the superficial additions of the c.1950 renovation and visually restoring the architectural and landscape features, so well-documented in the available contemporary sources, one will see Calumet to be a plantation house and garden complex of major significance for its area.

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE - By Ruth R. Fontenot

"Calumet Plantation" was the name given by Daniel Thompson to a group of adjoining sugar plantations along Bayou Teche that he began assembling about 1866. The residence now known as "Calumet" was the "O. and N. Cornay Plantation" which he purchased in 1871. It was the home of Octave Cornay, who, with his brother, Numa, had built up a large sugar mill complex on land inherited from their mother, Mrs Henry Cornay (nee Francoise Radeville Haydel), in an area known as Dutch Settlement. She had inherited from her parents, George Haydel and Marguerite Bossier. The original land grant was to Jean Baptiste Bossier.

CONTINUED

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

SEE ITEM 8

# 10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property @ 9 acres

Quadrangle name Patterson, LA

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References

A 1 5 | 6 6 0 1 5 0 | 3 2 8 7 7 9 0  
Zone Easting Northing

B | | | | | | | | | |  
Zone Easting Northing

C | | | | | | | | | |

D | | | | | | | | | |

E | | | | | | | | | |

F | | | | | | | | | |

G | | | | | | | | | |

H | | | | | | | | | |

Verbal boundary description and justification Boundaries are shown on the attached map. Approximately nine acres surrounding the house was deemed sufficient to take in the house and its immediate setting. The eastern boundary was drawn at a distance of 400', at the owner's request, in order to include the foundations of historic stable buildings which were once part of the plantation complex.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state N/A code county code

state code county code

# 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Robert E. Smith, Restoration Consultant

organization N/A

date May 28, 1984

street & number Route 2, Box 1220

telephone 318-332-2852

city or town Breaux Bridge

state LA 70517

# 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.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

Robert B. DeBlieux

title State Historic Preservation Officer

date September 13, 1984

For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

Keeper of the National Register

Entered in the National Register

date 10-18-84

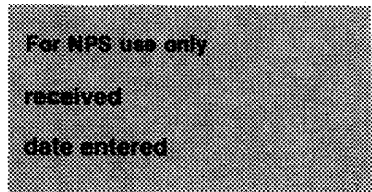
Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

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8. Significance (continued)

The historical significance of Calumet is multiple. During the Civil War, it was the site of a number of engagements, most notable being the Battle of Bisland, in which 25,000 men were involved, and the naval encounters of the Confederate steamer "Cotton," which ended in flames at Cornay's bridge.

Daniel Thompson, who acquired the Cornay homesite and occupied it for thirty years until his death in 1900, was a sugar planter of great importance. He was a pioneer in the research and application of the chemical aspect of the sugar industry, and maintained a year-round study with laboratory analyses by chemists working in conjunction with the U. S. Department of Agriculture in Washington, D. C. His work was considered the single-most important contribution since DeBore to the development and advancement of the sugar industry in the United States. His son, Wibray, continued his work for several years after his father's death.

The third highly important owners of Calumet were Harry Palmerston Williams and his bride Marguerite Clark. When they married in 1918, she was at the height of stardom, having moved from a career on the stage in New York to being the most highly paid movie actress in Hollywood. Harry P. Williams was the son of a lumber magnate whose business in the small town of Patterson, Louisiana became the largest of its kind in the world. Harry himself became famous as a pioneer in aviation, starting as a playboy pilot and ending up creating with his partner, an aviation great, Jimmy Wedell, the fastest racing planes in the world. At Calumet, opposite the home now owned by Mr. and Mrs. W. D. Hunter, was developed one of the first airports in the South and one of the first airplane manufacturing plants in the United States. Following two tragic plane crashes that caused the deaths of both Wedell and Williams, Marguerite Clark Williams sold her husband's U. S. Mail contracts and other contracts to Eastern Airlines, and donated the airport to the State of Louisiana. It is still in operation and has a fine museum dedicated to Wedell and Williams, containing some fascinating aeronautical memorabilia.

**BIBLIOGRAPHY:**

St. Mary Parish, 1898 - Glass  
 American State Papers on Lands - Volume II  
 St. Jean Baptiste des Allemonds 1753-1803 - Conrad  
 War of the Rebellion - Volume XV  
 Journal of Southern History - Volume VI #4  
 Southwest Louisiana Records - Volumes 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 - Hebert  
 Battle in the Bayou Country - Raphael  
 Catholic Church Records - Diocese of Baton Rouge - Volumes 1 and 2  
 Yankee Autumn in Acadiana - Edmonds  
 Down Among the Sugar Cane - Butler  
 Plantation Homes of the Teche Country - Stahls  
 Louisiana Today - Thomson  
 Marguerite Clark - Nunn  
 Louisiana - Saxon  
 Natchitoches - Mills      Ledoux - Thomas      Archives-St. Martin and St. Mary Parish  
 (SHPO COMMENTS ON CONT SHEET)      Courthouses

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ITEM 8 ADDENDUM BY STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE

In the opinion of the State Historic Preservation Office, Calumet is locally significant in the area of agriculture based upon its long and close association with Daniel Thompson. In the late nineteenth century Calumet was a major center in southern Louisiana for scientific research in sugar production. Noteworthy study and experimentation was done in the areas of seed cane selection, the introduction of commercial fertilizers, and the use of tropical cane varieties.

The man responsible for making Calumet a center of progressive agricultural methods during this period was Daniel Thompson, who owned the plantation and lived in the main house from 1871 until his death in 1900. J. Carlyle Sitterson, in Sugar Country: The Cane Industry in the South, 1753-1950, notes that Thompson and another Louisiana planter named T. Mann Cage "led Louisiana and perhaps the entire country in the undertaking of costly scientific research in agriculture as a private business venture solely dependent on their own funds." In regard to Thompson's experimentation with commercial fertilizers, Sitterson concludes: "The experiments of Cage and Thompson were important not so much for the results obtained as for the systematic and scientific methods employed. Even so, these two leaders must be given the major credit for the introduction of commercial fertilizers in the sugar region." In addition to these accomplishments at Calumet, Thompson was also one of the founders (in 1888) of the Louisiana Planter and Sugar Manufacturer, a weekly periodical which was the organ of the Louisiana sugar industry in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Level of Significance:

The agricultural history of southern Louisiana in the late nineteenth century was dominated by sugar. Viewed within this context, Thompson's contributions are of local significance. Hence Calumet is being nominated at the local level of significance.

The Association:

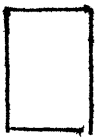
Although much of the entire Calumet plantation complex is extant, only the main house is being nominated. (The remainder is under separate ownership.) In any event, the main house has a closer association with Daniel Thompson because it was where he lived and from where he ran the plantation. Unlike quarters houses and other plantation outbuildings, the main house was the center of administration for the plantation and should be regarded as the focus of its historical significance.



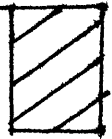
# CALUMET

SHOWING ALL 3 PERIODS OF CONSTRUCTION IN PRESENT HOUSE

c 1830



c 1850-70



c 1950

