

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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

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

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC **\*\* Julia Street Row or Thirteen Buildings**

AND/OR COMMON  
**Julia Row**

**LOCATION** 602-646 Julia Street - entire block front on the uptown (south)  
STREET & NUMBER side of Julia, between Camp and St. Charles

CITY, TOWN	NEW ORLEANS	VICINITY OF	2ND - LINDY BOGGS	CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT	2ND - LINDY BOGGS
STATE	LOUISIANA	CODE	22	COUNTY	ORLEANS
				CODE	071

**CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE <input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S) *	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input checked="" 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	<b>PUBLIC ACQUISITION</b>	<b>ACCESSIBLE</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT <input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT <input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
*Row	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input 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 Various (See Continuation Sheet #1)

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN	VICINITY OF	STATE
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**LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. **Civil Courts Building**

STREET & NUMBER **421 Loyola Avenue**

CITY, TOWN	STATE
New Orleans	Louisiana

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE **New Orleans Architecture, The American Sector**

DATE	1972	FEDERAL	STATE	COUNTY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> LOCAL
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DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS (1) Louisiana State Museum (2) Historic New Orleans Collection

CITY, TOWN	STATE
New Orleans, La.	New Orleans, La.

## 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 type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

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### DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Julia Row consists of thirteen brick row-houses three and a half stories high, extending for a full block front between Camp Street and St. Charles Street in the Central Business District of New Orleans. Situated on 26.3' x 135' lots, the houses are separated by brick fire walls which punctuate the continuous gable roof line and which contain the chimneys of each unit. At the rear of the lots is a narrow service alley, giving access to the rear courtyards, service wings, and service stairs of the houses.

The plan of each house is ell-shaped, with the main three and a half story block extending the full lot width flush with Julia Street and the three story service wing at the rear running parallel to each side property line from the main block to the service alley. Each service wing is oriented toward Camp Street so that privacy in each courtyard is obtained. The courtyards, running parallel to the side property lines, are thus approximately 12' wide and 58' long.

The ground floors were apparently originally intended for shops, but at an early date many became a part of the residences above. A side hall with stairs off the main street entrance gave access to the principal double parlors on the second floor front. In these parlors, the first decorative detail is concentrated. On the third level front were two large bedrooms, separated by closets, and a bathroom at the street end of the stair hall. The fourth floor front (1/2 story) is identical to the third, but the ceiling slopes with the roof and the street windows are reduced to slits. The service wing at the first level contains three smaller rooms, possibly used as kitchen or pantry and sewing rooms. The second and third levels of the service wing each contain three smaller chambers, two with fireplaces.

The facades of the houses may have been identical originally, but today vary considerably, although the basic three bayed rhythm and overall form of each unit remains to preserve the continuity of the row. Originally, elliptical arched entrances from Julia Street gave access to delicately detailed stairs, rather than to carriageways as in earlier Vieux Carre townhouse examples. Presently only one original entrance remains and it has been somewhat altered. An 1857 watercolor facade rendering of 632 Julia in the New Orleans Notarial Archives shows the original elements and configuration of the facades, with the exception of the ground floor window treatment. A recent physical inspection of Julia Row has uncovered fragments of evidence in the original brickwork on four of the buildings which indicate that the two ground floor square headed, double hung windows were originally round arched, transomed casement shopfront-type doors. There are two possible explanations for the deviation between the Notarial Archives facade drawings and the physical evidence of these four buildings. First, the drawing was done in 1857, and by that time the lower facades may have been remodeled to be more in keeping with the later Greek Revival. Second, every house in the row may not have been identical. Since the Archival drawing depicts 632 Julia, and the evidence of arches is at 604-606 through 614 Julia, the remodeling theory cannot be proved until 632 Julia can be thoroughly investigated for arch fragments.





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4. Owners (cont'd)

602 Julia Parcel No. 4469	Mr. Emmett P. Gustin 991 Harrison Avenue New Orleans, Louisiana 70124 ✓
606 Julia Parcel No. 4468	The Preservation Resource Center of New Orleans 823 Perdido Street Suite 200 New Orleans, Louisiana 70112 ✓
610 & 612 Julia Parcel No. 2267-66	Mr. Bastiano Ragusa 4012 Ferran Drive Metairie, Louisiana 70002 ✓
614 Julia Parcel No. 4465	Mr. Angel Izquierdo, Jr. 409 Elise Metairie, Louisiana 70003 ✓
620 Julia Parcel No. 4464	Mrs. Asma B. Owen 913 Kerlerec Street New Orleans, Louisiana 70116
622 Julia Parcel No. 4463	Mrs. Frank E. Clesi, Jr. 4465 Mandeville Street New Orleans, Louisiana 70122 ✓
626 Julia Parcel No. 4462	Mr. Lawrence P. Giambelluca 1701 Calder Gretna, Louisiana 70053 ✓
630-632 Julia Parcel No. 4461	Mr. E. O. Higgins 5816 Pitt Street New Orleans, Louisiana 70115 ✓
634,638,642,646 Julia Parcel No. 4460	Mr. Sam C. Tong 1833 Milan Street New Orleans, Louisiana 70115 ✓

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7. Description (cont'd)

The facades of Julia Row exemplify the transition phase between the Federal Style and Greek Revival that was taking place around 1832. The lower three stories are typical of the Federal Style, made of hard exposed red brick with very narrow joints, the windows double-hung painted white, and the lowered shutters dark green. Full length 6 over 9 "slip head" windows open from the second level parlors onto a narrow balcony on cantilevered iron supports, surrounded by a criss-cross wrought iron railing. The three 6 over 6 double-hung windows at the third level have fixed wooden panels below similar to those on contemporary Vieux Carre examples.

The treatment of the attic level deviates from the earlier style below. Instead of the usual delicate wooden or brick cornice surmounted by dormer windows, the roof is raised slightly and a heavy wooden Greek Doric entablature is substituted. Attic windows become horizontal slits in the frieze of this entablature which is also decorated with mutules and guttae in the Greek manner. The lintels over all windows of the facade are treated with heavy stone lintels with Greek top moulding rather than the expected flat brick arch, or wooden corner block type lintel of the Federal Style.

The exterior gable end of the row at Camp Street conforms to the earlier Federal Style in its form, with arched attic windows and a square mass of brick elevated between the two chimneys. The St. Charles Street end lacks the double chimneys with raised parapet between. Quarter round attic windows under the sloping gables, probably fan-louvered, have been removed and bricked up at a later date.

The most noteworthy element of the facades was the lavishly embellished elliptical fan lighted front doors. Only through the 1857 watercolor rendering of the facade of 632 Julia and through an old photograph of 610 Julia is there clear evidence of these late Federal openings, with twin Ionic colonnettes supporting a transom bar decorated with carved mouldings. Transom and sidelights were decorated with carved floral motifs producing oval shaped lights. The four panel door appears in the watercolor to have been faux bois painted in the manner of the time. Presently 610 Julia retains some of these original elements and these - along with the watercolor and old photographs - will make possible a correct restoration of these fine sidelighted entrances.

The rear, or service alley, elevations of the row are much less elaborately detailed than the street fronts. The wooden balconies of the service wings were originally supported on traditional French-type turned colonnettes and had plain hand rails. The doors here were casements and had batten shutters hung on wrought iron strap hinges. The ends of each service

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7. Description (cont'd)

wing are shed shaped, as they do not back up to each other alternately. An unusual condition exists with cisterns for each house, which are recessed into the back side of the adjacent property's service wing, so that the upper floors of the wing use "air rights" over the neighbor's cistern. The patio floor was probably flagged originally. The entire patio area is reminiscent of earlier Vieux Carre houses and indicates that the builders reverted back to tried and true habit in what they considered to be utilitarian areas. The original details remain on some of the service wings.

The interior detail of the Julia Row houses is entirely in the Federal manner, and is of unusually fine quality for speculative housing. Doors, windows, mantels, cornices and medallions are similar in detail and quality to work at the 1832 Hermann-Grima House, New Orleans (National Historic Landmark) and the 1830 Shadows-on-the-Teche, New Iberia (National Historic Landmark).

Interior door and window casings were of the reeded corner block type with delicately undercut striations along their faces and carved rosettes in the corner blocks. Interior window frames had paneled jambs, some of which still remain. Doors had eight flat panels each with small applied panel moulds, and were probably faux bois. The moulded baseboards were integrated with plinths at the bottom of door and window frames, and were probably marbelized.

The parlor mantels were black marble with disengaged Ionic colonnettes, corner blocks, and a central panel in the lintel. This central panel is echoed at the head of the double parlor door frame.

Plaster cornices were flat, also corner blocked, and reeded along their length. Ceiling medallions had radiating acanthus leaves recessed into a run plaster dish with scalloped edges, a very rare detail in New Orleans.

The stair rails were mahogany, continuously curved at the landings, with simple round tapered balusters, and with jigsawed applied edging at the stringers.

Many of the original details can still be seen at 604 and at 620 Julia as well as in some of the other buildings on the row.

In summary, the interiors of the Julia Row townhouses were more elegant than most contemporary speculative developments of the period in New Orleans. Although the interiors of a majority of the buildings have been substantially altered, there is enough remaining physical evidence at 604 Julia and elsewhere on the row, along with the Notarial Archives watercolor and old photographs of buildings on the row to make a complete and authentic restoration possible.

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8. Significance (cont'd)

At this auction, house number one at the corner of Camp and Julia was sold to G. W. Pritchard; the next, number two, to Isaac Ogden; the third, to Edward Yorke; the fourth, to Edward Ogden; and the fifth, to Samuel Livermore, president of the company. The sixth, seventh, and eighth houses evidently were not sold until some time later, and the ninth, tenth, eleventh, and twelfth were bought by Edward Yorke on May 18. The thirteenth house, at the corner of St. Charles and Julia, was bought at the auction by Henry G. Schmidt. Prices ranged from \$13,000 to \$14,000.

Incorporated in the acts of sale were several restrictions, including a servitude on a six-foot square corner of one lot for the placing of a cistern for the adjoining house. Another concerned the alley which was cut through at the rear of the new buildings from Camp to St. Charles. The third restriction stated that "the buildings on said lot shall be completely finished agreeably to the plan exhibited at the time of the said public sale and conformably to their contract with Daniel H. Twogood, the builder."<sup>1</sup>

Daniel Halsted Twogood was one of the prominent builders of the day and did other work for the New Orleans Building Company and for its president, Samuel Livermore. For two of these row house projects, (built in 1832 and 1833), the architect was Alexander Thompson Wood, who is best known for designing the Custom House on Canal Street.

It is believed that Julia Row was designed by James H. Dakin of Town, Davis and Dakin in New York. No documentary evidence has been located to prove that Dakin (who later became an important New Orleans architect) designed the row, but both his son and daughter have stated that he was the architect. In the New Orleans Daily Picayune of July 17, 1900, there appeared a letter to the editor from Charles James Dakin, son of the architect James Harrison Dakin, which states in part:

The "Thirteen Buildings" on Julia Street, were also the production of Colonal James H. Dakin. Col. Dakin was but 27 years of age when he came to New Orleans in 1834, and immediately assumed the leading architectural rank of the country.<sup>2</sup>

A recent book on James Dakin expands on this idea:

A very credible theory which agrees with this attribution by Dakin's children has been advanced by the well-known New Orleans architect Samuel Wilson, Jr. He believes that Dakin may have designed the row at the request of A. T. Wood, a one-time New Yorker,



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8. Significance (cont'd)

then (1833) a builder and "architect" in New Orleans. Wilson's theory has since been supported by his discovery in the succession of George Clarkson, also a New York builder, that in 1832, Wood and Clarkson entered into a partnership in New York whereby Clarkson would go to New Orleans and commence some buildings there for "The Company of Architects of New Orleans"; Wood was to follow later. These records also show that payments were made to Dakin for plans, and there is an entry in the Town, Davis, and Dakin records showing a payment made to them between August 15, 1833, and October, 1833, for "Drawings for Mr. Wood, N. Orleans \$140.00"

Furthermore, during this same period, Wood did work for the group of entrepreneurs who built the row, the New Orleans Building Company. Later, in 1847, Wood was to write of Dakin that he had "sixteen years acquaintance with that gentleman," indicating that he had known him since 1831 when Dakin was still in New York.<sup>3</sup>

This could mean that A. T. Wood acted as the local architect supervising the construction using plans drawn by Dakin.

There is additional evidence to support this contention. Other New Orleans buildings are known to have been designed in New York by either Dakin or the Town, Davis, and Dakin firm in the early 1830's. Except as noted above, it is not known whether the owners themselves or the contractors purchased the plans. The last entry referring to New Orleans in the Town, Davis, and Dakin records is for September 1833 and includes "Mr. Florence [sic] - a dwelling house \$15.00."<sup>4</sup> Jacob Florance did in fact build a house not long after the date of that entry at the corner of South and Camp Streets facing Lafayette Square. The building contract, dated January 27, 1834, was signed between Florance and A. T. Wood, and among other things, specified that the cistern was to be identical to the houses "built by the New Orleans Building Company on Julia Street."<sup>5</sup> This offers another strong suggestion that Dakin was connected with Julia Row and that Wood acted as the connecting link.

For many years the neighborhood in which Julia Row is located was the center of the best residential section of the American Sector in New Orleans. (The Lower Garden District and the Garden District, neither as conveniently located to the business area, were developed in the following decades.) But before the turn of the century the character of the Julia Row neighborhood had changed completely. The history of the row is vividly recalled by Eliza Ripley in her Social Life in Old New Orleans. Her father, Richard Henry Chinn, lived in one of these houses when she was a child.

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8. Significance (cont'd)

"I wonder," wrote Mrs. Ripley, "if anyone under seventy-five years of age passes old 'Julia Street row' to-day and knows that those '13 Buildings' between Camp and St. Charles Streets have an aristocratic past, and were once occupied by the leading social element of the American colony residing in the early forties above Canal Street? '13 Buildings' it was called... and a decade later every one of them was tenanted by prominent citizens of New Orleans. There they lived and entertained a host of delightful guests, whose names were a power then, but whose descendants are perhaps little known to-day."

"My personal recollections," continues Mrs. Ripley, "of the guests who came to my father's House in '13 Buildings' are distinct. Henry Clay, a lifelong friend of father's...was a frequent visitor whenever he came to the Crescent City.

...Even the well-known architect Henry Hobson Richardson lived on the Julia row with his family. Ironic that the world renown architect whose work was a total rejection of classicism should have had as a boy, the most classic environment available in America." [It is not known in which house Richardson lived.]

"In course of time, a Mme. Peuch took possession of the house on the St. Charles street corner, and horrors! opened a boarding house, whereupon the aristocratic element gradually fluttered away....The infection spread and in a short time the whole '13 Buildings' pimped out into cheap boarding houses or rented rooms...."<sup>6</sup>

Mrs. Ripley did not acknowledge what were probably truer causes for the changing character of the neighborhood: the preference for more fashionable uptown addresses, the commercialization of the area and the infiltration of laborers into the American Sector. All of this brought neglect to the neighborhood and the row, and along with neglect and unsympathetic uses came alterations to the individual Julia Row buildings.

Now, however, Julia Row may once again be headed toward finer days. The Preservation Resource Center of New Orleans has purchased one of the buildings on the row and intends to restore it, opening up similar possibilities for the entire row.

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8. Significance (cont'd)

Footnotes

<sup>1</sup>Mary Louise Christovich et al., New Orleans Architecture Volume II: The American Sector (Gretna, La.: Pelican Publishing Company, 1972), pp. 174-175.

<sup>2</sup>Charles James Dakin, "Letter to the Editor," Daily Picayune (New Orleans: July 17, 1900), p. 12.

<sup>3</sup>Arthur Scully, Jr., James Dakin, Architect (Baton Rouge, La.: La. State University Press, 1973), p. 13.

<sup>4</sup>Scully, p. 15.

<sup>5</sup>Scully, p. 17.

<sup>6</sup>Eliza Ripley, Social Life in Old New Orleans (New York: Appleton and Co., 1912), as quoted in Christovich et al., pp. 175-176.

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9. Bibliography (cont'd)

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Labouisse, Monroe Jr. "Julia Street Discovery," Preservation Press of New Orleans, Vol.3, No. 2, Dec. 1976.

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Scully, Arthur Jr. James Dakin, Architect. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1973.

Thomas, Christopher Lee. "Julia Row, Volumes 1 and 2." Unpublished Master's Thesis, Tulane University, New Orleans, 1975. [On file at Tulane University Architecture Library.]

Wilson, Samuel Jr. "Julia Street Thirteen Sisters," States Item. New Orleans, October 24, 1953.