

PH035 4236

DATA SHEET

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY
RECEIVED MAR 25 1976
DATE ENTERED JUN 23 1976

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 Stoker House

AND/OR COMMON
Old Stoker House

LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER *NE of Many*
La. Hwy. 6 (On the old San Antonio Trace)

CITY, TOWN *Many, La.* VICINITY OF Fort Jesup CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT 8th - Joe Waggonner
STATE Louisiana CODE 22 COUNTY Sabine CODE 085

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 type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL <input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL <input checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT <input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL <input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME Rebecca Stoker Kyle

STREET & NUMBER P. O. Box 507

CITY, TOWN Lake Jackson VICINITY OF STATE Texas 77566

LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Sabine Parish Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER Corner of Capital and Courthouse Streets

CITY, TOWN Many STATE Louisiana

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE None known

DATE FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN STATE

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The property being described, commonly known as The Old Stoker House, has been in its present location since its construction in the late 1840's. Its original log construction, although not readily apparent, can still be observed as supported by accompanying photographs. Modifications of its original design have been accomplished over the years. Accurate details of all of these modifications are not available; however, the significant changes are described below:

The original log construction was completed in the late 1840's by slave labor owned by Henry Stoker. The basic design can be characterized as that of a hewn log dog-trot design. This is a design which includes one or more rooms in two separate enclosures, or pens with an open hallway in between, all under one roof. The general plan of the house included one large room and one small room on each side of a long hall. A stairway in the hall led to a half story area which housed additional sleeping quarters. The large rooms were 20 feet by 20 feet. They were constructed of hewn logs 4 inches by 5 inches. These logs were dove-tailed or notched such that they made a perfectly square corner. Each log interlocked with the others so that only the top log could be removed. The logs were hewn so evenly that they fit together with such ease that no cracks were visible. The sills of the house are hewn of long leaf pine and are about 18 inches square and some 27 feet in length. They were notched and pinned together with wooden pegs. These sills were placed on native stones. These logs have remained intact under the materials that have been used in subsequent renovations. The native stones and sills are also still visible. The flooring was hand sawn in 1 by 8 widths of long leaf pine and is still visible. There was an open fireplace at the east end of the house. The overall dimensions of the house were 54 feet by 38 feet.

The exact date of the first renovation is not known. At that time the logs were boxed in with 1 by 12 planks both inside and out. In and around 1895 the second renovation occurred. At this time the hall was closed in and the stairway removed. All of the inside walls were covered with beaded siding made of long leaf pine lumber. The outside was covered with drop siding. One of the most significant changes occurred in the large west room. Here the ceiling was raised to reflect the high ceiling style of this era. This was done in such a unique and ornate manner that this room remains an excellent example of turn-of-the-century design. At the same time, a fireplace was added to the west room. Each fireplace has its original mantel. This second renovation also included the addition of a kitchen and dining area. Prior to this time, both had been located behind the house.

At present, the house remains as it was at the end of the second renovation. The only additions have been indoor plumbing and periodic paintings.

The house is surrounded by both hardwood and coniferous trees. The yard contains fruit trees of several varieties. A seven acre lake lies directly behind the house.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
RECEIVED	MAR 25 1976
DATE ENTERED	JUN 23 1976

CONTINUATION SHEET 1

ITEM NUMBER 7

PAGE 2

7. Description

About 50 yards to the West is the barn, which was built at approximately the same time as the house. The barn is built of logs notched together. The plates are notched and pegged together with wooden pegs. The sills are hewn from solid oak logs. The split board roof remained until 1925, at which time tin roofing was applied. Harness pegs fashioned of native wood still adorn the walls of the barn. On each side of the log pens are somewhat deteriorated stables. Feed troughs hewn from hollow logs lie directly beneath the original hay racks. The barn is of the typical double-pen design.

Plans presently underway to restore the house and barn include removal of all contemporary furniture and accessories from the house. These will be replaced with period reproductions or authentic pieces reminiscent of the life and times of the Old Stoker House. These plans are to be executed under the direction and at the expense of Riley J. Stoker, a fourth generation descendent of Henry Stoker, and his daughter, Rebecca Stoker Kyle. No specific plans or details of restoration are available at this time.

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 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 checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)		
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION				

SPECIFIC DATES

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Stoker House is being nominated to the National Register because of its significance in Architecture, Agriculture and Exploration/Settlement on a local and regional level.

The house is architecturally significant because its original log construction has been at its present site since the late 1840's. Records indicate that it is the oldest house in Sabine Parish still at its original site. The Stoker House is also an excellent example of a house which illustrates well the series of changes which typically occurred from period to period to accommodate changing family needs and stylistic considerations in the nineteenth century.

The agricultural significance is apparent in the fact that the Stoker House sits on acreage that was once part of one of the earliest flourishing farms in Sabine Parish, Louisiana. Henry Stoker, original owner of the property, furnished produce to Ft. Jesup, a nearby military outpost begun in 1823. The old barn which lies adjacent to the house still contains reminiscences of local agricultural history. Items from the original blacksmith shop behind the house have been recovered by the family with the use of a metal detector and will be used in the restoration of the house and barn. This barn was also used as a way station for the stagecoach that traveled the El Camino Real.

The Exploration/Settlement area is perhaps the strongest in terms of historical significance. The Stoker House has been the stronghold of one of the oldest families along the El Camino Real for five generations. In 1818, the land upon which the house sits was settled by Henry Stoker and his wife, Nancy Varnell Stoker. They arrived in the area riding two horse^s and leading two pack horses. The area appealed to them because it reminded them of their native Kentucky. There was ample game and food so they decided to settle.

They built a lean-to a few yards from the present house site to serve as a temporary home. The lean-to was constructed between two trees, a small beech and an oak. The lean-to poles were covered with moss, leaves, and mud. Riley J. Stoker, a fourth generation descendent of Henry Stoker, recalls the beech stump which formed the remains of the lean-to.

On a hill, near the lean-to, a log cabin was constructed. This became the home of Henry and Nancy Stoker. Henry Stoker became a respected and prosperous member of the parish community. In the period that followed he acquired an

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Belisle, John G. History of Sabine Parish, Louisiana. Many, Louisiana:
Banner Press, 1912.
Family Bible, Charles Stoker Family.
Final Land Claim, Register of Land Office, Opelousas, Louisiana
Interview with R. J. Stoker, September 2, 1975.
Last Will and Testament, Henry Stoker.
(cont'd)

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY less than 1

UTM REFERENCES

A	1,5	46,3	4,5,0	3,4,98	6,0,0
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		
C					

B					
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		
D					

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

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: Rebecca Stoker Kyle
 ORGANIZATION: _____ DATE: October 1975
 STREET & NUMBER: P. O. Box 507 TELEPHONE: _____
 CITY OR TOWN: Lake Jackson STATE: Texas 77566

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: *Geeth S. DeCompte*

TITLE: Assistant State Historic Preservation Officer DATE: March 17, 1976

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

Acting DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION
 ATTEST: *Charles DeYoung*
 Acting KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE: 6/23/76
 DATE: 6-23-76

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED MAR 25 1976

DATE ENTERED

JUN 25 1976

CONTINUATION SHEET 2

ITEM NUMBER 8

PAGE 2

8. Significance

undetermined number of acres in this district between the Rio Hondo and Sabine Rivers. Records indicate that he acquired these lands by virtue of occupation as well as by buying portions from the Adais Indians. One such record indicates that he acquired several acres by trading ponies to the Indians. A family document dated August 22, 1839 seems to indicate that he purchased land at that time from a Spaniard named Marian Sanchez.

Henry Stoker later became a member of a vigilantes organization which greatly assisted in quelling the banditry of the Neutral Strip. His activities as a member of this group are well known to local historians as evidenced by his presence in the pages of such books as Reverend Devil and History of Sabine Parish. Pages sixty-seven through seventy of Reverend Devil relate how he killed horse thief Hiram Midkiff, who is referred to by Mr. Phares as the "boldest of Murrells' lieutenants". Rebecca Stoker Kyle, great-great granddaughter of Henry Stoker has in her possession the gun referred to in this incident. (Upon complete restoration, the gun will be returned to the house.)

In 1824, Henry Stoker applied for a claim to this land through the Register of Land at Opelousas, Louisiana. It was not until 1878 that his heirs received a legal title. This Federal Land Grant Deed is in possession of the Stoker Family. It contains the Presidential Seal and Signature. This was accomplished during the administration of Rutherford B. Hayes.

It is apparent from family records that Henry Stoker became a well-to-do member of the parish community. His will, which remains in readable condition, proves that he was owner of a substantial number of slaves. In History of Sabine Parish, page 148, Nancy Stoker is listed among those having more than six slaves. It is known that Henry Stoker died before 1848. His will, dated January 1844, was written shortly before his death. It appears that he was very ill at the time that his will was written.

Henry Stoker and his wife, Nancy Varnell Stoker, had four sons: William, Riley, Matthew, and Richard. Matthew and Richard were both killed in the Civil War. William later became parish coroner and according to family records may have been acting sheriff of Sabine Parish at one time. Henry's son Riley was born in or around 1826. He married Elizabeth Fox and they had ten children - six sons and four daughters. Family records indicate that the house being nominated was built by Riley and his wife Elizabeth in the late 1840's. It is known that Riley eventually became sole owner of his father's holdings. It is not clear how this happened, although it can be partially explained by the early deaths of Matthew and Richard in the Civil War. It is probable that Riley purchased William's interest in the property.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
RECEIVED	MAR 25 1976
DATE ENTERED	JUN 22 1976

CONTINUATION SHEET 3

ITEM NUMBER 8

PAGE 3

8. Significance

All of Riley and Elizabeth's ten children were born in the Stoker House. This fact alone places its construction before 1853. Charles, the oldest of the children known to have been born in the house, was born in 1853.

Riley, like his father Henry Stoker, was well respected in the community. He was very active in masonic work and was widely respected for his knowledge of masonry. He was quite active in parish governmental affairs.

All of Riley Stoker's holdings were divided between four sons: Riley, Allen, Henry, and Jim. His other children were bought out of the property either because of other interests or because of marriage. His son Henry's part of the property included the Stoker House with the understanding that Henry and his wife Janie Cutrer Stoker would care for him until his death. It was also stipulated that they take care of Jessie Mary Stoker, an unmarried daughter.

Henry Stoker and his wife Janie lived in the house until their deaths. It was then occupied for a period of approximately ten years by their only daughter, Edna Stoker Jordan.

The house is now in possession of Rebecca Stoker Kyle, a fifth generation descendent of the original Henry Stoker. The house was presented to her as a gift from her father, Riley J. Stoker, youngest son of Henry and Janie Stoker. This gift was made in view of her interest in restoring and preserving this house as a living monument to the entire Stoker family.

The Old Stoker House has played a significant role in the development of the history of the area known as the El Camino Real. Its occupants for four generations have made an impact upon the progress of the El Camino Real upper territory. Also important is the fact that the Old Stoker House stands as the oldest original house in Sabine Parish. For these reasons the house is being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places, and plans are being formulated to preserve the house for the benefit of future generations.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED MAR 25 1976

DATE ENTERED JUN 23 1976

CONTINUATION SHEET 4

ITEM NUMBER 9

PAGE 2

9. Bibliographical References

- Letter from Nancy Varnell Stoker to Register of Land Office, Opelousas, Louisiana.
Nardini, Louis R. My Historical Natchitoches, Louisiana and Its Environment,
Natchitoches: Nardini Publishing Co., 1963.
_____. No Man's Land. New Orleans: Pelican Publishing
Co., 1961.
Phares, Ross. Reverend Devil. New Orleans: Pelican Publishing Co., 1941.
Sabine Index Supplement, November 30, 1972, Many, Louisiana, pg. 13. Edward
J. Stoker Reflects on History of Ft. Jesup.