

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form



1982

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

1. Name

historic Moro Plantation House

and/or common same

2. Location

W of Waterproof off LA 566

street & number just north of LA 566, three miles west of
U.S. 65 & three and 1/2 miles west of Waterproof N/A not for publication

city, town Waterproof *ms*, vicinity of ~~congressional district~~

state LA code 22 county Tensas Parish code 107

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 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 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	N/A in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government <input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	N/A 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:

4. Owner of Property

name William R. and Lura Bailey James

street & number Route #2, Box 82

city, town Waterproof vicinity of state LA 71375

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Tensas Parish Courthouse

street & number Court Street (no specific address) P. O. Box 78

city, town St. Joseph state LA 71366

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

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

date 1982 federal state county local

depository for survey records Louisiana State Historic Preservation Office

city, town Baton Rouge state 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 <u>N/A</u>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Moro Plantation House (c.1839) is a two-story Greek Revival country residence set in the flat delta farmland of western Tensas Parish near the Mississippi River. Although the house has undergone several changes since construction, most are superficial and removable. None are detrimental to the overall architectural significance of the property.

Moro began c.1839 as a two-story, central hall, double parlor plan house with stuccoed brick construction on the ground story and pit sawn frame construction on the upper story. Originally the north side of the house (which faces Muddy Bayou) was the front. The second story has always been the main story, but until recently the only access to it was by means of exterior staircases set on the galleries.

The original upper story consisted of four large rooms and a central hall. Large chimneys were set between the front and rear rooms on each side. The central hall was enclosed at each end by double doors with side lights. These were set in massive aedicule motif frames which resembled mantels. There were no transoms. The other noteworthy feature of the hall was the staircase leading to the attic. It had an elaborately cut string and a bannister which terminated with a series of five Sheraton style turned newels.

Each of the four large rooms had its own distinctive woodwork, as follows:

1. The southwest room featured a plain aedicule motif mantel as well as door and window frames with beveled corner blocks and pediment shaped tops.

2. The southeast room featured similar woodwork except that the corner blocks were more elaborately cut.

3. The northwest room featured a plain aedicule motif mantel and door and window frames with heavy shoulder moldings and pediment shaped tops.

4. The northeast room, which was originally the parlor, had the most elaborate woodwork. The mantel featured Greek key motifs set at the ends of the entablature. The door and window frames had similar Greek key motifs as well as guilloche panels and molded boards.

Most of the doors had four panels; however, a few had two. Two of the rooms had closets set next to the chimney flue.

The lower story had an open central hall, four unornamented rooms, brick floors and fireplaces, but no mantels.

The exterior of the house featured a massive pitched roof with two large chimneys and a five-bay, two-story gallery on both the front and the rear. The facades themselves actually had seven bays because all of the rooms had doors opening off the galleries as well as pairs of windows. The lower galleries featured stuccoed brick columns and the upper galleries featured wooden columns with molded capitals and a full entablature.

Moro's present appearance is as described above, but with the changes described below:

CONTINUED

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 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/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900–	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates c.1839 **Builder/Architect** Builders: Jane Murchison & Theophilus

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph) Criterion C Buck

Moro Plantation House is architecturally significant on the local level as an important example of a Greek Revival plantation house. It is one of the few remaining examples in Tensas Parish, where once they must have been quite numerous. Also, among the half dozen or so that have survived, Moro is noteworthy in several important respects, as described below.

The importance of Moro, within the context of Tensas Parish, as a Greek Revival plantation house can be graphically illustrated by examining the census schedules of 1860. On the eve of the Civil War, the population of the parish was 91% slaves and there were 118 large slaveholdings (i.e., fifty or more slaves). Of these 118, the average size of a slaveholding was 100. The absentee ownership rate was 34%. Hence of the 118 large slaveholdings in the parish, 78 of them involved individuals who resided there. Given the above, it is clear that there must have been numerous Greek Revival plantation houses in Tensas Parish on the eve of the Civil War. However, as far as the State Historic Preservation Office can determine, there are only about a half dozen or so remaining examples. Consequently, Moro is of special importance in the architectural heritage of the parish.

In addition, among those few Greek Revival plantation houses that do survive, Moro is noteworthy in the following respects:

1. It has the finest interior woodwork. As a rule, the other Greek Revival plantation houses in the parish feature the same woodwork design throughout. Moreover, in most cases the woodwork is relatively plain (standard aedicule motif door frames and mantels, etc.). By contrast, the woodwork at Moro varies from room to room, with each having its own distinctive, fully articulated design. Moreover, the Greek keys and guilloche panels found at Moro are unmatched elsewhere in the parish.

2. It is one of only two substantially intact two-story examples remaining in the parish.

3. Of the above two, it is the older.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Tensas Parish Conveyance Records, Tensas Parish Courthouse

Menn, Joseph K. The Large Slaveholders of Louisiana: 1860. New Orleans, Pelican Publishing Company, 1960.

10. Geographical Data

Acreege of nominated property approx. .17 acre

Quadrangle name Waterproof La.

Quadrangle scale 1=24000

UMT References

A

1	5	6	4	8	4	3	0	3	5	2	0	8	3	0
Zone				Easting				Northing						

B

Zone				Easting				Northing						

C

Zone				Easting				Northing						

D

Zone				Easting				Northing						

E

Zone				Easting				Northing						

F

Zone				Easting				Northing						

G

Zone				Easting				Northing						

H

Zone				Easting				Northing						

Verbal boundary description and justification

Please refer to sketch map.

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 Carolyn James Bishop

organization Northeast Louisiana Historical Society date May 1982

street & number 9920 Morrison Road telephone 504-246-6996

city or town New Orleans state LA 70127

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

date August 16, 1982

For NHP use only

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

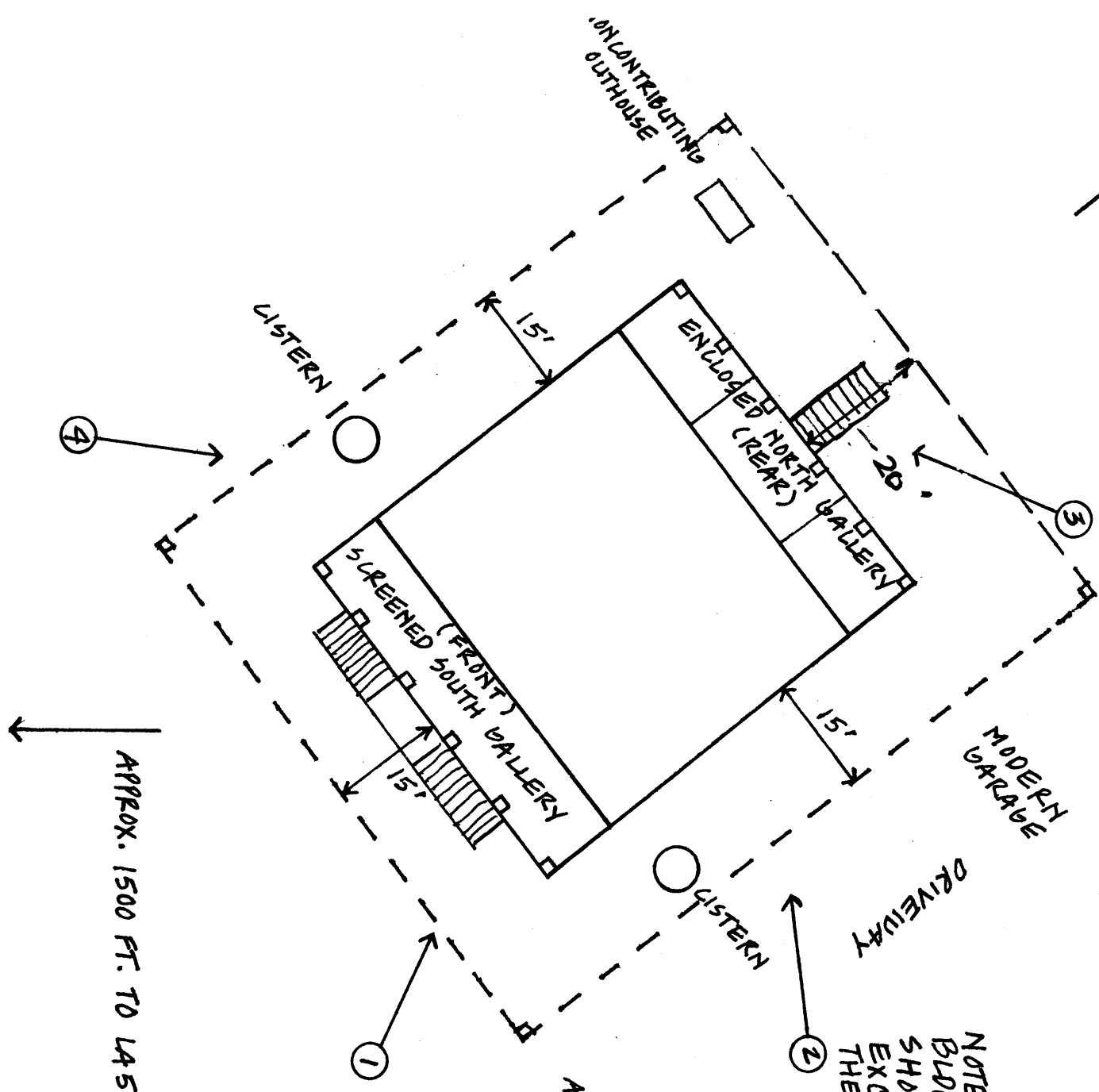

Patricia Andrews
Chief of Registration

date 10/15/82

date 9/30/82

MORO PLANTATION HOUSE
 WATERPROOF VIC., LOUISIANA

APPROX. 1000 FT. TO MUDDY BAYOU



NOTE: SITE BOUNDARIES PARALLEL
 BLDG. FACADES AT DISTANCES
 SHOWN, AND WERE DRAWN TO
 EXCLUDE THE MODERN GARAGE.
 THE NON CONTRIBUTING OUTHOUSE AND
 TWO CISTERNS WERE INCLUDED
 DUE TO THEIR PROXIMITY TO THE
 HOUSE.

APPROX. 3 MILES TO HWY. US 4

APPROX. 3 1/2 MILES TO WATERPROOF

APPROX. 1500 FT. TO LA 566

SCALE 1" = 20' APPROX.