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INTERAGENCY RESOURCES DIVISION
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Colonial Sugars Historic District

other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number 1250 South Fifth Avenue N/A not for publication

city or town Gramercy N/A vicinity

state Louisiana code LA county St. James code 093 zip code 70052

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this 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 meets does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Jonathan Fricker 7/7/94
Signature of certifying official/Title Jonathan Fricker, Date
Deputy SHPO, Dept. of Culture, Recreation & Tourism
State of Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

- entered in the National Register.
 See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the National Register
 See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register.
- removed from the National Register.
- other, (explain:)

for Signature of the Keeper Date of Action
Mal M. [Signature] 10/11/94

Colonial Sugars Historic District
Name of Property

St. James Parish, LA
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
39	9	buildings
		sites
7	4	structures
		objects
46	13	Total

Name of related multiple property listing
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

INDUSTRY/processing/extraction-manufacturing facility

DOMESTIC/single dwelling

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

same as historic function

same as historic function

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

no style

Neo-classical

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation concrete, brick

walls brick, metal, concrete, weatherboard

roof metal, asphalt

other

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Colonial Sugars Historic District, Gramercy, St. James Parish, LA

Section number 7 Page 1

The Colonial Sugars Historic District consists of a sugar refinery and adjacent company town founded by New York based investors in 1895. It is located in the small town of Gramercy on the east bank of the Mississippi River in rural St. James Parish. The vast majority of the historic buildings date from between 1895 and 1920. The complex features wood frame, brick and concrete construction with building heights ranging from a single story to nine stories. There is also a chimney stack that towers above the complex. With a few notable exceptions, the buildings are low key with little in the way of architectural embellishment. Overall, the district has a 22% intrusion rate, which is lower than one might expect given the fact that the industrial complex is still in operation. Indeed, it is remarkable that so much is left.

The Colonial Sugars Company archives has a voluminous collection of historic maps and correspondence detailing the many changes that have taken place over the years. Some buildings and equipment have been lost. For example, at one time there were a company store and a company jail with two cells. In addition, there was once more company built housing than exists today. Furthermore, various facilities were replaced during the historic period. All of this has given the district a very complex constructional history -- too complex to set forth in this submission. Thus for the most part this nomination will confine itself to a discussion of the buildings and equipment that presently exist.

The Colonial Sugars District is laid out along the Illinois Central rail line which has spurs servicing the plant and warehouses. The heart of the district is the industrial complex in which raw sugar is refined into white table sugar in its various forms. Molasses is also produced as a by-product of the refining process. East of the industrial complex is a series of mainly single story warehouses dating from between 1903 and 1929. South of the complex across the rail line is Fifth Avenue, which is lined by twelve company built frame worker's cottages dating from between 1910 and 1917. West of the complex is a row of six frame houses. The five which are original to the site were built for higher ranking employees. The house which appears in the inventory as #7 was moved in from elsewhere in the compound within the last fifty years (see inventory). The "executive row" fronts onto a tree lined company park which contains the company's former Roman Catholic chapel.

CONTINUED

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Colonial Sugars Historic District, Gramercy, St. James Parish, LA

Section number 7 Page 2

The Industrial Complex

When the industrial complex was first built in 1895, it had both a milling operation and a refining operation. Milling is defined as converting sugar cane into raw brown sugar which, at this stage, still has some molasses (syrup) content. Refining is defined as converting the raw sugar into refined white table sugar. The company claimed to be the first in the United States to combine milling and refining in one factory. However, in 1914 Colonial elected to discontinue the raw sugar milling operation and devote the plant solely to refining. Then, or relatively shortly thereafter, the "U" Building, which had housed the milling operation, was reduced to a third of its former length.

The following is a brief explanation of the steps involved in the refining process. Most of the steps take place in historic buildings as noted below. In addition, in most cases the steps that took place historically in a given building are still taking place there, albeit sometimes with newer equipment. For example, the boiler house is historic and it is still used as the boiler house, but the present boilers date from the 1950s. There are, however, exceptions, most notably the "Y" Building. At one time it housed much of the entire refining process, but today it is given over largely to packaging and bagging the finished sugar.

1. **Affination and Clarification:**
This involves washing the raw sugar to remove impurities and melting it into a liquid called liquor. This step takes place in the talo clarification building and the wash plant (non-historic).
2. **Decolorization:**
This involves flowing the liquid sugar through massive filters filled with bone char to remove the brown color. This takes place in the char house (1902).
3. **Evaporation:**
This involves boiling off the water from the liquid sugar, creating a thick liquor. This takes place using non-historic equipment attached to the "U" building.

CONTINUED

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Colonial Sugars Historic District, Gramercy, St. James Parish, LA

Section number 7 Page 3

4. **Crystallization:**
This involves growing white sugar crystals from the thick sugar liquor. It takes place in vacuum pans located in the "U" building (1895).
5. **Centrifugation:**
This involves separating the syrup from the newly formed white sugar crystals using centrifugals. The separated syrup is then recycled to the crystallization step for the growing of additional white crystals. This takes place in the "U" building (1895).
6. **Drying and cooling:**
Drying and cooling the wet and hot crystals takes place in the "U" building (1895).
7. **Screening:**
This involves sorting and separating the sugar according to crystal sizes. This takes place in the "Y" building (1895).
8. **Conditioning:**
After screening, the sugar is stored in a massive concrete silo for additional drying and conditioning. The silo was constructed in 1970.
9. **Packaging:**
Sugar is packaged in the "Y" building (1895) and in a modern second story addition that stands atop "Z" warehouse.
10. **Shipping:**
Sugar is shipped from a complex of warehouses, the majority of which date from the historic period.

Some of the equipment involved in the above process is historic; some is not. The building inventory references pieces of historic equipment where they are known to exist.

CONTINUED

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Colonial Sugars Historic District, Gramercy, St. James Parish, LA

Section number 7 Page 4

BUILDING INVENTORY

1. c.1910; Company chapel purchased from the Woodmen of the World and remodeled for religious use c. 1920. This curious blocky, flat roof brick building originally featured a worship space on the ground floor and a Knights of Columbus space upstairs. However, the building's interior has been gutted and now serves as storage space. The former worship space is lit by lancet windows. The upper story features square head windows. The building is divided into bays by slender brick pilasters.

East Park Avenue (Executive Row)

2. 1910; Historically the plant manager's home, this structure is the largest and most pretentious of the houses in the compound. Two rooms wide and three rooms deep, this frame building culminates in a two story Eastlake gallery and a massive forward facing gable, vinyl sided. From 1928-1956 the residence served as the home of George P. Meade, who served as Colonial's general manager during those years. A co-author of the Cane Sugar Handbook, Meade was recognized by his peers as the dean of the cane sugar refining industry.
3. c.1910; Story and a half galleried residence under a pitched roof with gablet sides, vinyl sided.
4. 1910; Two story frame residence with pitched roof, galleried main block and large rear wing, vinyl sided.
5. 1910; Story and a half pitched roof residence with front porch partially enclosed c.1940; vinyl sided.
6. 1910; Frame carriage house with a second story above and sheds attached on each side. This building stands behind building no. 5.
7. 1920; Single story large rambling frame cottage with forward projecting gabled side wing, vinyl sided. Moved within the last fifty years from elsewhere on the Colonial Sugars property. Originally located in worker housing section which was adjacent to

CONTINUED

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Colonial Sugars Historic District, Gramercy, St. James Parish, LA

Section number 7 Page 5

surviving row (#s48-59 on map). Although moved to "executive row," it does not look out of place there. The houses to each side of it are of comparable size and character (see Photos G & H).

8. 1915; Single story large rambling frame cottage with forward projecting gabled side wing, vinyl sided.

Industrial Complex

9. Concrete water settling basins constructed in 1923 and enlarged in 1930.
10. Steel filter tank originally installed in 1908; relocated to its present site in 1924.
11. Steel filter tank originally installed in 1909; relocated to its present site in 1924.
12. 1923; Water plant - This facility is used to filter river water and pump it for various uses in the plant. It is a masonry stuccoed single story building reminiscent of the bungalow style with decorative casement windows, a jerkinhead gabled roof and a small porch. Inside is a Worthington Steam Pump which was installed in 1923.
13. 1941; Water storage tank made of riveted steel sheets.
14. Non-contributing - Small one story visitor center.
15. Non-contributing - Small brick single story gatehouse and security office.
16. 1905; Carpenter shop - One story pitched roof heavy timber building with corrugated tin siding. Until 1916, the south side of this building was used as the sheet metal shop.
17. 1905; Storeroom building - Three story heavy timber building with a flat roof. The building is sheathed in corrugated tin and features wooden sash windows.
18. 1929; Power House - This facility is used to generate electric power for the plant and some workers' residences. For a time it also provided power for the town of

CONTINUED

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Colonial Sugars Historic District, Gramercy, St. James Parish, LA

Section number 7 Page 6

- Gramercy. Designed by the firm of McKim, Mead and White, the building features handsome neo-classical articulation with a rusticated base and two story piano noble culminating in a more or less full entablature and a pediment with parapet. Its Doric pilasters are coupled at the ends of the facade. The piano noble is a two story space which contains three steam turbine generators, the oldest of which was built by General Electric and installed in 1930. The power plant acquired a rear addition with a fourth generator in 1968.
19. 1927; Refinery office building - Two story stucco over masonry, domestic-looking building with six over six windows, transoms over some of the doors, and a jerkinhead roof. The building was enlarged three times with the addition of a front extension, a small gabled side wing and a small rear extension. On the whole, the additions complemented the original style of the building. An original brick vault installed in 1928 survives on the interior.
 20. 1922 steel standpipe/water tower, 90 feet tall.
 21. 1909; Boiler house - A three story steel frame building with corrugated tin siding and a brick base. The original portion culminates in a monitor roof used for ventilation. Two gable roof additions were built in 1918 and 1920. These do not have monitors. Inside the Boiler House are two Hoppe Feed Water Heaters and Purifiers, each five feet in diameter and twenty-five feet long, which were installed in 1915. The present boilers date from the 1950s or later.
 22. 1927; Heine tapering reinforced concrete smoke stack connected to the boiler house by a chute. It is 211.5 feet high with a decorative blind arcaded top.
 23. c.1900; Fire pumper house - small single story brick structure.
 24. 1910; one movable Knowles Steam Pump (Fire Pump Number One). When not in use, it is housed in building no. 23 (Fire pumper house).
 25. 1923; Machine Shop - One story brick building with monitor type roof supported by a steel truss. The brick has been subsequently stuccoed over. The building contains much of its original shaft and belt drive system, although it is no longer connected to

CONTINUED

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service****National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Colonial Sugars Historic District, Gramercy, St. James Parish, LA

Section number 7 Page 7

- any machinery. The building has three small additions on the south side dating from 1926, 1927 and 1975.
26. Non-contributing - Valve Shop - Small two story corrugated metal building.
 27. 1911; Filter press building (no longer used for filtration) - This is a three story brick building with a flat roof. Its segmentally arched openings have all been filled in. The building received a small addition in 1978.
 28. 1902; Char house - This nine story brick structure was designed by George Newhall. It is used to decolorize liquid sugar. It features round head and segmentally arched openings. The original wooden multi-paned casement windows are still in place. The building culminates in a distinctive penthouse. Floors are of concrete and additional support is provided by cast-iron interior columns. The building contains twenty-seven char filters. These are round filtering chambers twenty feet high mainly with spherical tops and conical bottoms. Fifteen were originally installed in 1908. Another three were installed in 1930. Three more were installed in 1942. Liquid sugar flows through the char filtering material to remove impurities and color. The building received a relatively small metal sided addition in 1977 with six additional char filters.
 29. 1895; "U" Building - As previously mentioned, this building was shortened to approximately one-third of its former length in about 1914 when Colonial went out of the milling business. It is a heavy timber four story squarish building with corrugated tin siding, six over six wooden sash windows and a more or less flat roof. This building contains vacuum pan "E" which was installed in 1912 and is still in service. Also in this building are two granulator drums built by the Hershey Manufacturing Company and installed in 1910. Each is six feet in diameter and twenty-three feet long.
 30. Non-contributing - White Sugar Bin - This hopper type facility varies in height from three to five stories.
 31. Non-contributing - Rail Car Loading - This is a corrugated metal open-air building used for rail car loading.

CONTINUED

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Colonial Sugars Historic District, Gramercy, St. James Parish, LA

Section number 7 Page 8

32. Non-contributing - Silo - Somewhat shorter than the historic smokestack, this concrete silo is used for conditioning and drying refined sugar.
33. Non-contributing - Small starch silo.
34. 1895; "Y" Building - This is a heavy timber three story building with six over six windows and corrugated tin siding. Unlike the "U" building, this long structure retains its original size. Originally the "Y" building housed much of the refining operation. Today it contains part of the packaging operation.
35. Non-contributing - Hershoff kiln for cleaning and rejuvenating char. Structure constructed 1977.
36. 1903; "A" Warehouse - This is a single story brick building with a steel truss pitched roof. Its segmentally arched openings have been bricked in, but are still visible. There is a narrow addition on the south side. When this addition was installed in the 1970s, the original south wall was taken out.
37. Non-contributing - "M" Warehouse - Single story metal sided building.
38. 1916; Sheet Metal Shop - One story flat roofed heavy timber building with corrugated tin siding.
39. Non-contributing - Talo Clarification Building - Small three story metal frame building.
40. 1903; "Z" Warehouse - Originally this was a one story brick warehouse, but in the 1950s a metal sided second story was added. Presently this building houses part of the packaging operation.
41. Non-contributing - Wash Plant - Small single story metal frame building.
42. 1915; "X" Warehouse - Large single story brick warehouse with steel truss flat roof. This building has traditionally been used for train loading and off-loading.

CONTINUED

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Colonial Sugars Historic District, Gramercy, St. James Parish, LA

Section number 7 Page 9

43. Non-contributing - single story metal sided over metal frame building housing raw sugar bins.
44. 1929; "C" Warehouse - This is a large heavy wood frame warehouse with a pair of pitched roofs forming a valley in the middle; corrugated tin siding. It was built as a temporary facility, but is still in use for general storage.
45. Non-contributing - "B" Warehouse - single story metal sided over metal frame. Constructed in 1947 and enlarged in 1969.
46. 1915; "XA" Warehouse - This is a single story brick warehouse also used for railroad loading and off-loading.
47. 1920; Executive Offices - Rambling frame multi-gable single story residence, vinyl sided. Note: This building was moved a very short distance c.1980 from an immediately adjacent area of worker's houses which no longer survives.

Fifth Avenue (Workers' Row)

48. 1915; Galleried cottage with forward projecting gabled side wing, vinyl sided.
49. 1915; Galleried cottage with forward projecting gabled side wing, vinyl sided.
50. 1915; Galleried cottage with forward projecting gabled side wing, vinyl sided.
51. 1915; Galleried cottage with forward projecting gabled side wing, vinyl sided.
52. 1915; Galleried cottage with forward projecting gabled side wing, vinyl sided.
53. 1915; Galleried cottage with forward projecting gabled side wing, vinyl sided.
54. 1917; Galleried cottage with forward projecting gabled side wing, vinyl sided.

CONTINUED

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Colonial Sugars Historic District, Gramercy, St. James Parish, LA

Section number 7 Page 10

55. 1917; Galleried cottage with forward projecting gabled side wing, vinyl sided.
56. 1910; Four bay frame Creole cottage, vinyl sided.
57. 1910; Four bay frame Creole cottage, vinyl sided.
58. 1910; Four bay frame Creole cottage, vinyl sided.
59. 1915; Medical Department - Single story shotgun style frame structure with forward facing gable, vinyl sided.

Assessment of Integrity:

Although some of the buildings have been variously altered over the years, this is very much expected given the fact that most of the buildings are industrial and utilitarian in nature. What is remarkable is that many have survived so well intact. Most changes have taken the form of replacing the equipment on the interior and have not significantly affected the structure itself. Some of the industrial buildings have acquired additions, but in all cases these are much smaller and less visually impressive than the building to which they are applied. Some buildings, such as the all-important Char House, are virtually intact. The largest addition, when compared with the original building, is to the Power House. Here the addition is as big as the original building. However, this addition is set to the rear and is not visible from the front. Hence its visual impact is minimal.

The company built houses have all been resheathed in vinyl siding. However, the siding is of a gauge and character which mimics the look of the original clapboarding. In addition, the massing and placement of the housing still gives that "quarters row" feeling so characteristic of company towns.

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

N/A

Property is:

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** a birthplace or grave.
- D** a cemetery.
- E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F** a commemorative property.
- G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

industry

Period of Significance

1895-1944

Significant Dates

1895 (founding)

1914 (conversion from combination mill/refinery to refinery)

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

power house--McKim, Mead & White

char house--George Newhall

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS): N/A

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- 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

Name of repository:

Colonial Sugars, Inc.

Colonial Sugars Historic District
Name of Property

St. James Parish, LA
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property @ 35 acres

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1 | 1 | 5 | | 7 | 2 | 2 | 7 | 4 | 0 | | 3 | 3 | 2 | 6 | 0 | 8 | 0 |
Zone Easting Northing
2 | 1 | 5 | | 7 | 2 | 3 | 7 | 4 | 0 | | 3 | 3 | 2 | 6 | 7 | 3 | 0 |

3 | 1 | 5 | | 7 | 2 | 3 | 5 | 0 | 0 | | 3 | 3 | 2 | 6 | 0 | 4 | 0 |
Zone Easting Northing
4 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Please refer to sketch map.

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

ASSISTED BY COLONIAL SUGARS, INC.

name/title National Register Staff

organization Division of Historic Preservation date April-May, 1994

street & number P. O. Box 44247 telephone 504-342-8160

city or town Baton Rouge state LA zip code 70804

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name Colonial Sugars, Inc., Jean L. de Chazal, Vice President-Operations

street & number P. O. Box 3360 telephone 504-869-5521

city or town Gramercy state LA zip code 70052

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Colonial Sugars Historic District, St. James Parish, LA

Section number 8 Page 1

The Colonial Sugars Historic District is significant in the area of industry on the national level because of its sugar processing component and on the state level in the area of industry as a rare surviving company town.

INDUSTRY -- NATIONAL SIGNIFICANCE

The Colonial Sugars Historic District is nationally significant in the area of industry because it is a symbol of the consolidation which occurred in the sugar refining industry in the United States during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Colonial's refinery is also significant at the national level because it is one of a small number of historic refineries which survive to illustrate an industry which once supported many such factories. The period of significance for the nomination ranges from 1895, the construction date for Colonial's first building, to the fifty year cut-off date of 1944. (Colonial continued in its role as a major sugar refinery up to and past the fifty year cutoff.)

As far as the State Historic Preservation Office staff is aware, and has been able to research, there has never been a comprehensive inventory of historic sugar refineries and related facilities. Also, there has never been complete historical work on the subject. The staff has contacted sources around the country to gain information on how many refineries once existed and how many survive and in what state of integrity. Although not all possibilities and sources could be thoroughly explored, the staff feels comfortable with the following statement of significance.

Sugar refining is one of a number of major historic American industries. In the mid-nineteenth century sugar refining was a risky, highly speculative business. It took place in scores of local plants, mostly small, some staying in business for only a few years. Vast consolidation took place in the closing decades of the century, including an emerging Sugar Trust that gained a near monopoly in the industry. Every effort was made to limit and control production to keep prices favorable. By the turn of the century the plethora of small refineries was replaced by a limited number of large corporate refineries. These were invariably located in or near large cities with easy access to a major waterway. This was both to facilitate transport and to provide the enormous quantities of water needed in the refining process. As far as the SHPO staff can determine, approximately twenty-five of these large refineries existed at the turn of the century. Some refineries were added later, but the overall figure of twenty-five does not appear to have been significantly exceeded

CONTINUED

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Colonial Sugars Historic District, St. James Parish, LA

Section number 8 Page 2

during the historic period.

Colonial Sugars was one of the country's major refineries. Originally known as the Gramercy Sugar Company, it was founded in 1895 by a group of New York investors. In 1902, a new firm, the Colonial Sugars Company, was organized to take over the facility. Colonial competed successfully with the Trust until 1908 when it was acquired by the Cuban American Sugar Company, an ostensibly separate concern that was actually controlled by Trust President Henry O. Havermeyer. Colonial operated as part of Cuban American, or its successor North American, until 1971. In that year the company was acquired by Borden, Inc., which sold the factory in 1980. The new owner was Colonial Sugars, Inc., a corporation organized by a former employee of Borden. He held the company until 1985, when it was purchased by Georgia Sugars. In late 1986 Savannah Foods and Industries became Colonial's owner. A Fortune 500 company, Savannah continues to operate the historic refinery at full capacity.

As far as the SHPO staff can determine, approximately twelve historic refineries survive in various states of integrity. With the exception of one greatly changed factory dating to the late eighteenth century, the refineries range in date from c.1880 to c.1920. Virtually all have various ancillary buildings from different periods. It appears that less than half are still operating.

Generally when a plant closes all the equipment is sold and removed. Thus Colonial is one of a minority of examples that has its equipment, some of which is historic, some of which is not (see description). In this Colonial is undoubtedly typical of older refineries still in operation.

In our opinion all of the major surviving historic refineries are nationally significant because collectively they represent a historic and important shift in the sugar industry. Moreover, the Colonial Sugars Refinery derives additional significance from the historic equipment it contains.

INDUSTRY -- STATE LEVEL

The complex of buildings at Colonial is also significant at the state level in the area of industry as a rare surviving company town from the late nineteenth and early twentieth

CONTINUED

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Colonial Sugars Historic District, St. James Parish, LA
Section number 8 Page 3

centuries. The period 1880-1920 saw rampant industrial growth in Louisiana, most of which was fueled by out-of-state capital. It was during these years that mainline railroad trackage grew from under 700 miles to over 5,000 miles. Various industries matured during this period, including large-scale centralized sugar processing, industrial lumbering and oil exploration.

Because most of the industrial enterprises associated with this growth were established in rural areas, the company town was a crucial feature of the emerging landscape. It was customary for the company to provide for all aspects of the workers' lives, including housing, churches, recreational facilities, stores, etc. Although one will never know the exact number of company towns in Louisiana, it is clear from the available data that they numbered over 100. However, today only about a dozen survive with any semblance of integrity. Colonial is conspicuous among this group because it is one of only two that still retain their industrial component. And, of the two, it is easily the best preserved.

As noted previously, Colonial was founded by a group of New York investors in 1895. Originally, the company was called Gramercy Sugars (presumably after Gramercy Park, New York), and the community where the facility is located is called Gramercy.

Surviving non-industrial related components of the Colonial company town include the row of executive housing, the street of workers' housing, and the church. Historically, there were more houses, a store, a jail, and a swimming pool. Although diminished in size, Colonial nonetheless is very obviously a company town, and, in fact, retains more integrity than most of the few surviving company towns in Louisiana.

The period of significance for Colonial as a company town spans from 1895, the earliest date of construction, to 1944, the fifty year cutoff. (Colonial continued to operate as a company town up to and past the fifty year cutoff.)

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Colonial Sugars Historic District, Gramercy, St. James Parish, LA
Section number 9 Page 1

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

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Colonial Sugars Historic District, Gramercy, St. James Parish, LA

Section number 10 Page 1

Boundary Justification

Boundaries were chosen to encompass the historic resources at Colonial while excluding non-contributing resources. Note that the eastern boundary follows a party wall in order to exclude a non-contributing building.