

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES NOMINATION

NPS Form 10-900

USD/ NPS NRHP Registration Form (Rev. 8-86)

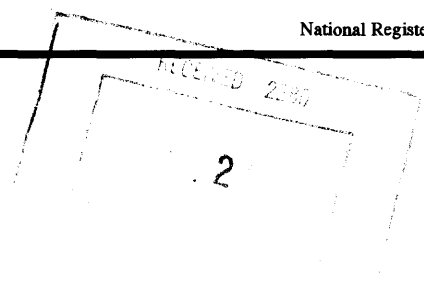
OMB No. 1024-0018

Dupre, Jacques House, Pointe Coupee Parish, LA

Page 1

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form



1. NAME OF PROPERTY

Historic Name: Dupre, Jacques House

Other Name/Site Number:

2. LOCATION

Street & Number 13987 Chenal Road

Not for publication: NA

City/Town Jarreau

Vicinity: X

State: Louisiana Code: LA County: Pointe Coupee Code: 077

Zip Code: 70749

3. STATE/FEDERAL AGENCY CERTIFICATION

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this X 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 X meets does not meet the National Register Criteria.

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

Nationally: Statewide: Locally: X

Signature of Certifying Official/Title Jonathan Fricker Deputy SHPO, Dept of Culture, Recreation and Tourism

Date 10/21/03

State or Federal Agency and Bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of Commenting or Other Official/Title

Date

State or Federal Agency and Bureau

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES NOMINATION

NPS Form 10-900

USDI/NPS NRHP Registration Form (Rev. 8-86)

OMB No. 1024-0018

Dupre, Jacques House, Pointe Coupee Parish, LA

Page 2

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

4. NATIONAL PARK SERVICE CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify that this property is:

- Entered in the National Register
Determined eligible for the National Register
Determined not eligible for the National Register
Removed from the National Register
Other (explain):

Signature of Keeper

Date of Action

5. CLASSIFICATION

Ownership of Property
Private: X
Public-Local:
Public-State:
Public-Federal:

Category of Property
Building(s): X
District:
Site:
Structure:
Object:

Number of Resources within Property
Contributing
1

Non contributing
1 buildings
sites
structures
objects
1 Total

Number of Contributing Resources Previously Listed in the National Register: 1 (re-listing request)

Name of Related Multiple Property Listing: Louisiana's French Creole Architecture

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES NOMINATION

NPS Form 10-900

USDI/NPS NRHP Registration Form (Rev. 8-86)

OMB No. 1024-0018

Dupre, Jacques House, Pointe Coupee Parish, LA

Page 4

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

Describe Present and Historic Physical Appearance.

The purpose of this nomination is to re-list the Jacques Dupre House, which was moved to its present site subsequent to Register listing. (On a technical note, it will first have to be de-listed.) The house was listed on the Register in 1990 in its rural St. Landry Parish location. It was moved in 1994 to a rural location in an immediately adjacent parish, Pointe Coupee. It is a two story French Creole house which assumed its present appearance c.1815. (The architectural evidence indicates an earlier period of construction – see * footnote below – that was totally incorporated in a c.1815 remodeling.) The upper story is of pegged timber frame construction with *bousillage* infill. The brick lower story is a reconstruction of the one that would have existed c.1815 (per the architectural evidence). Thanks to an in-progress restoration, the house looks far closer to its c.1815 appearance than in its previous location. (For explanation of use of term “previous” location rather than original, see ** note below.)

Note: This form supersedes the original, particularly in terms of the architectural analysis. What follows is more exhaustive because the move and in-progress restoration made certain important clues visible that were not previously accessible.

Previous versus Present Setting:

The house was moved from one rural location in a French parish to another rural location in an adjacent French parish. The new location is entirely compatible, from both a physical and cultural standpoint. The house is set back several hundred feet from the road, much as it was in St. Landry. The viewsheds are all rural.

The Move:

The house in its former location had been vacant for years and was badly deteriorated. There is no question that it was a prime candidate for demolition by neglect. There had also been various alterations. The c.1815 brick lower story had been replaced by a timber frame basement fastened together using round spikes. Constructional clues indicated a late nineteenth century date at the earliest. (Additionally, it is very unusual for a French Creole house of this type to have a timber frame basement. They are almost always brick.) There was also a late-nineteenth century wing. Wishing to do a museum quality restoration of the house to its c.1815 period, the present owner did not move the wing and did not reconstruct the timber frame basement.

The upper story, the main living space in a house of this type, was moved in one piece. The character-defining umbrella roof with its Norman truss was painstakingly taken apart, numbered, and put back together. The roof is finished in wood shakes, as it would have been c.1815. The front gallery was also removed and carefully reassembled.

Description:

The Jacques Dupre House is the largest type of French Creole house built in Louisiana. Houses such as these, with their enormous umbrella roofs, were raised a full story above grade. The upper story was the main living space. The lower story, or basement story, was utilitarian (storage, for example).

A gallery spans the façade on both stories. The lower columns (reconstructed) are round, using the

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES NOMINATION

NPS Form 10-900

USDI/NPS NRHP Registration Form (Rev. 8-86)

OMB No. 1024-0018

Dupre, Jacques House, Pointe Coupee Parish, LA

Page 5

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

typical pie-slice shaped bricks. In the old location the upper gallery posts were made of planks nailed together. The c.1815 balustrade had been lost as well. As part of the current in-progress restoration the owner removed the planks to reveal the c.1815 colonnettes with their lamb's tongue chamfering. They had been damaged on one side and were repaired by splicing in wood. Only one is totally replaced. The c.1815 balustrade was replicated based on "ghost marks" in the colonnettes and one surviving upper rail which showed the shape of the balusters. The simple balusters are placed at a 45% angle, so that the corners face outward.

The original sheathing on the sides and rear of the upper story had been covered in the former location. This has been removed, revealing the original flush board siding. Instead of a conventional tongue and groove treatment, each board has a diagonal cut at the top and bottom to prevent water penetration.

Regrettably, various details had been lost when the present owner acquired the house. The two original wooden mantels had been replaced with bungalow-style brick mantels. Interestingly, the bungalow mantels followed the time-honored tradition of wrapping around the chimney flue in the French manner. These inappropriate mantels have been removed. No mantels are in place at present. (The upper story restoration is in progress.) Two sets of original French doors were in the possession of a former owner. The present owner photographed and measured them to make exact replicas (yet to be installed). The various batten shutters (both windows and doors) are for the most part reproductions. The remainder are salvaged from the house. The home's six over six windows are old but probably not c.1815.

The Jacques Dupre House features a classic French Creole floorplan with no halls. The three-room front range is almost symmetrical, with a large central *salle* (salon) with a room to each side. The two flanking rooms are almost the same size. (French Creole floorplans are not generally as symmetrical as that seen in the front range of the Jacques Dupre House.) The framing of the upper story provides the *salle* with a ceiling approximately two feet higher than any of the surrounding spaces. In typical French Creole fashion, the single chimney is set within the body of the house – in this case, between the *salle* and the room to the left. The rear range is half as deep as the front range with a *cabinet* at each corner. Whether the central room was an open loggia c.1815 cannot be determined. The evidence is inconclusive.

The house's *bousillage* infill is plastered on both the interior and front gallery. Perhaps 25% of the plaster has been lost. It will be replaced. The upper façade in the previous location had been covered in clapboards. This was removed to reveal the c.1815 façade, with portions of extant plaster and studs with hatchet marks to provide a surface to which the plaster would adhere. The pegged timber frame also uses the typical French angle braces. Other details include exposed beam ceilings throughout (beams beaded) and evidence of a chair rail in the front three rooms.

The date circa 1815 has been chosen for the present house based on the following: the few surviving stylistic clues (delicate and intricate Federal molding profiles on door and window frames) and the heavily constructed Norman truss roof. The latter is hardly seen at all after about 1820.

Restoration of Lower Story:

There were two issues in approaching the restoration of the lower story to its c.1815 appearance. Was the house raised a full story above grade and was the basement story brick? Clues demonstrating that it was indeed raised a full story include: (1) The early nineteenth century framing under the front gallery and rear middle room (double framing under the front gallery). The beams are planed and beaded, indicating that

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES NOMINATION

NPS Form 10-900

USDI/NPS NRHP Registration Form (Rev. 8-86)

OMB No. 1024-0018

Dupre, Jacques House, Pointe Coupee Parish, LA

Page 6

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

they were meant to be seen. (2) There is clear architectural evidence indicating a corner stair on the right side of the façade. (3) The previously mentioned pie-slice brick columns on the lower gallery. Beyond the architectural clues, a house of this size and pretension would look oddly proportioned if raised less than a full story.

The fact that the lower story was brick was confirmed by “ghost marks” on the inside of door frames, where lime mortar had stained the wood. Bits and pieces of a brick wall were discovered once the lower story was dismantled. Finally, a brick basement is very characteristic of houses of this type.

In reconstructing the lower story, the present owner generally put back openings where they had been in the former frame lower story and used the same floorplan. To facilitate circulation, a door was cut into each *cabinet* and a stair added in a *cabinet*. Barred windows were retained from the former lower story. These windows as well as the roughly hewn ceiling beams underscore the utilitarian use of this story during the historic period.

Assessment of Integrity:

There are no integrity issues in terms of the move because the house was moved from one rural location to another and from one early area of French settlement to another. In terms of the house itself, admittedly there have been losses over the years, and as a result, various elements have been replicated or reconstructed as part of the on-going project. While the lower brick story is new, it should be emphasized that the upper story in houses of this type was the important one – the principal living area. Even with the losses and replications, the Dupre House retains almost all of its c.1815 French Creole character-defining features. (See list of features in Item 8.)

*The following clues suggest an earlier house that was incorporated into the present house c.1815:

- 1) On the right side of the front gallery the framing shows evidence of a room. Slots in the framing show a wall bisecting what is now a Federal door surround. (Hence this construction pre-dates the Federal period.)
- 2) There is evidence under the side eaves where sills and plates may have extended to incorporate side galleries of an earlier configuration. If this is true, the early house would have had a different roofline (i.e., pre-present Norman truss).

**Because of the unusual lower story in the former location, there is speculation that the house may have been moved in the late nineteenth/early twentieth century. (Generally speaking, a move is the reason fully raised French Creole houses lose their brick basement story.) There is no documentation however for a move prior to the recent one. But because of the possibility, the term “previous location” has been used to reference the St. Landry site from whence the house came.

Non-contributing element:

An endangered small historic cottage has been moved to the rear of the Jacques Dupre House to serve as a guesthouse.

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES NOMINATION

NPS Form 10-900

USDI/NPS NRHP Registration Form (Rev. 8-86)

OMB No. 1024-0018

Dupre, Jacques House, Pointe Coupee Parish, LA

Page 7

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

8. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Applicable National Register Criteria: A__ B__ C X D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions): A__ B X C__ D__ E__ F__ G

Areas of Significance: architecture

Period(s) of Significance: c.1815

Significant Dates: c.1815

Significant Person(s): NA

Cultural Affiliation: NA

Architect/Builder: unknown

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES NOMINATION

NPS Form 10-900

USDI/NPS NRHP Registration Form (Rev. 8-86)

OMB No. 1024-0018

Dupre, Jacques House, Pointe Coupee Parish, LA

Page 8

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

State Significance of Property, and Justify Criteria, Criteria Considerations, and Areas and Periods of Significance Noted Above.

The Jacques Dupre House, in its new location, is eligible for the National Register under Criterion C at the local level because it contributes to southern Louisiana's distinctive French Creole architectural identity. (While the original form evaluated the house within St. Landry Parish, the house is eligible within a broader context, as explained below.)

French Creole (or French Colonial style) architecture is one of the nation's three major colonial architectural traditions. It takes its place alongside British Colonial, as exemplified by the saltbox houses of New England and a later generation of "Georgian" houses, and Spanish Colonial, as seen in the missions of California and the Southwest. The French Creole building tradition appeared in "New France" – i.e., in the United States, the Mississippi Valley. Because the region was sparsely settled at the time, little French Creole architecture was built outside Louisiana. Today Louisiana is home to the overwhelming majority of surviving examples. (Other French settlement sites, such as Mobile, Alabama and Ste. Genevieve, Missouri, have only a scattering of examples.)

Within Louisiana the French building tradition is found in the southern part of the state (with the notable exception of Natchitoches Parish, a French enclave in an otherwise Anglo-Saxon North Louisiana). Very few extant examples actually date to the colonial period. The tradition continued to dominate local architecture well into the nineteenth century. Hence one has full-blown totally French houses being built as late as circa 1830. By the 1830s, generally speaking, Anglo-American architectural traditions began to make inroads, resulting in a generation of so-called "half-breed" houses – for example, an otherwise French Creole house that has acquired a central hall.

The most important features of the typical rural French Creole house are as follows: 1) generous galleries, either across the front or on three and even four sides; 2) a broad spreading roofline under a so-called umbrella roof; 3) an overly built medieval-looking Norman truss roof on the earliest examples; 4) gallery roofs supported by light wooden colonnettes; 5) placement of the principal living space well above grade; 6) a form of construction utilizing a heavy timber frame combined with an infill made of brick (*brique entre poteaux*) or a mixture of mud, moss and animal hair called *bousillage*; 7) multiple French doors; 8) a floorplan that lacks halls; 9) exposed ceiling beams on the gallery and interior, and 10) interior chimneys with mantels that wrap around the flue. The previously mentioned timber frame incorporates French joinery – i.e., angle braces that are extremely steep, running all the way from sill to plate, in contrast to English joinery where the brace is almost at a forty-five degree angle. The French Creole tradition embraces everything from one room cottages to large residences, finding its highest expression in the major, two-story Creole plantation house, with the principal story being raised a full story on a brick above-ground basement.

It could be argued that French Creole is Louisiana's most important building tradition – that which sets the Pelican State apart from others. And because the southern part of the state was fairly well populated by the early 1800s, French Creole houses once would have existed by the thousands. While the state still retains an impressive collection, far more have been lost than have survived. By the most recent educated guesses, perhaps 200-300 examples survive (in varying states of integrity) outside New Orleans. Collectively, from an architectural standpoint, these buildings "say" South Louisiana, and in the opinion of the LA SHPO, any example that retains sufficient integrity is important because it contributes to this

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES NOMINATION

NPS Form 10-900

USDI/NPS NRHP Registration Form (Rev. 8-86)

OMB No. 1024-0018

Dupre, Jacques House, Pointe Coupee Parish, LA

Page 9

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

distinctive architectural identity. (Probably less than 100 French Creole houses survive in rural Louisiana with sufficient integrity to merit Register listing.) Within South Louisiana, the Jacques Dupre House would be regarded as a relatively major example – based solely on the size of the almost completely intact upper story. And, very importantly, the house retains an abundance of French Creole features and is resolutely French, with little, if anything, in the way of American influence. (Some might argue that the pattern of façade openings shows the influence of Anglo architecture because it is more symmetrical than typical for “pure” French Creole.) Finally, its Norman truss roof is found on only the earliest examples (from before c.1820), and they are relatively few in number.

Historical Note:

The house takes its name from Jacques Dupre (1773-1846), who is best known for his one-year term as Acting Governor (1830-31). He also served in both the House and Senate of the Louisiana legislature. The Dupre family lived in the house until 1950.

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES NOMINATION

NPS Form 10-900

USDI/NPS NRHP Registration Form (Rev. 8-86)

OMB No. 1024-0018

Dupre, Jacques House, Pointe Coupee Parish, LA

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

Page 10

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Historic structures surveys of southern Louisiana parishes, on file in the Louisiana Division of Historic Preservation Office, and LA SHPO staff knowledge of the region.

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- 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: # LA 1201
- Recorded by Historic American Engineering Record: #

Primary Location of Additional Data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State Agency
- Federal Agency
- Local Government
- University
- Other (Specify Repository):

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES NOMINATION

NPS Form 10-900

USDI/NPS NRHP Registration Form (Rev. 8-86)

OMB No. 1024-0018

Dupre, Jacques House, Pointe Coupee Parish, LA

Page 11

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

Acreeage of Property: approx. 1 acre

UTM References:	Zone	Easting	Northing
	15	655300	3387720

Verbal Boundary Description: Boundaries parallel building elevations, each at a distance of 100 feet.

Boundary Justification: There is no historic setting to recognize for this moved building.

11. FORM PREPARED BY

Name/Title: National Register staff

Address: Division of Historic Preservation, P. O. Box 44247, Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70804

Telephone: (225) 342-8160

Date: July 2003

PROPERTY OWNERS

Marjorie Hollensworth
13987 Chenal Road
Jarreau, LA 70749