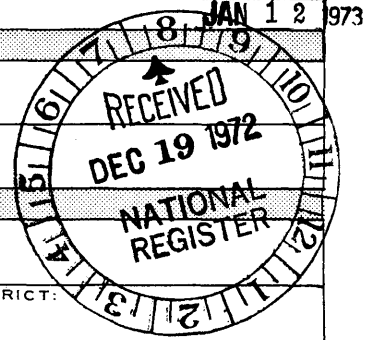


NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: Louisiana
COUNTY: East Baton Rouge
FOR NPS USE ONLY
ENTRY DATE



1. NAME
COMMON: Old Louisiana State Capitol
AND/OR HISTORIC: State House

2. LOCATION
STREET AND NUMBER: North Boulevard and St. Philip Street
CITY OR TOWN: Baton Rouge
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT: 6th District
STATE: Louisiana
CODE: 022
COUNTY: East Baton Rouge
CODE: 033

3. CLASSIFICATION
CATEGORY (Check One): Building
OWNERSHIP: Public
STATUS: Occupied
ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC: Restricted
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate): Government, Industrial, Military, Museum

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY
OWNER'S NAME: State of Louisiana
STREET AND NUMBER: P. O. Box 44095, Capitol Station
CITY OR TOWN: Baton Rouge
STATE: Louisiana
CODE: 022

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION
COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.: Office of Clerk of Court
STREET AND NUMBER: Municipal Building, 300 North Boulevard
CITY OR TOWN: Baton Rouge
STATE: Louisiana
CODE: 022

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS
TITLE OF SURVEY: Historic Baton Rouge by Robert W. Heck; City Parish Planning Commission
DATE OF SURVEY: 1970
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS: City Parish Planning Commission (Community Renewal Program)
STREET AND NUMBER: 805 St. Louis Street
CITY OR TOWN: Baton Rouge
STATE: Louisiana
CODE: 022

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE:
COUNTY:
ENTRY NUMBER:
DATE:
FOR NPS USE ONLY

7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Old Louisiana State Capitol in Baton Rouge is one of the finest examples of Gothic Revival architecture extant in the United States. Described by its architect James Harrison Dakin as "Castellated Gothic," the eight-towered building has a cruciform plan.

The floorplan can be compared to that of a Gothic Cathedral in that it has a "nave" basically composed of the two Legislative Chambers which is crossed by "transepts" of offices with a "crossing" rotunda. A tower adorns each of the eight corners of the building, with only the two western tower being octagonal rather than square and being semi-detached after the style of the Italian campanile. The Senate Chamber occupies the position of the "apse," and the larger House of Representatives' Chamber is in what would be the "nave" and "narthex;" both Chambers have large stained glass end windows reminiscent of those found in 15th century Gothic Cathedrals and tall clear side windows similar to those found in clerestory walls of the same period.

The building sits within sight of the Mississippi River in a rectangle bounded by North Boulevard to the north, St. Philip Street to the east, America Street to the south, and to the west, Front Street, formerly known as Natchez Street. The Mississippi River is to the west of Front Street. The original plot was about 120,000 square feet, or approximately 370 feet by 325 feet. The 1961 widening of Front Street reduced the property by 16 feet along the entire Front Street end, leaving the plot approximately 354 feet by 325 feet, or about 115,000 square feet. The building was laid out so that it would be 25 feet from St. Philip Street and 75 feet from North Boulevard, thus placing it upon the higher ground in the northeastern section of the plot. It is 137 feet long from east to west and 130 feet from north to south.

The exterior of the building is marked by Gothic traceries on windows and facades and by battlements and dentillation. Presently painted "tannish-beige" with trim in two shades of brown, no determination can be made of the original color scheme. However, the many references to "the old gray castle" do indicate it was painted gray for several years.

The building is basically four stories with basement: the "transepts" and each of the eight towers have four stories, while the "nave" and "apse," actually only two stories, reach to third-story height. Perched atop the structure is a square monitor roof with skylight. Built in 1847-1849, the structure was reduced to a shell by fire in 1862. It was then abandoned until 1880, when major restoration work was begun. Since the completion of this work in 1882, there have been four major renovations of the building: 1937-1938, 1946-1947, 1956, and 1967-1968. (See Significance)

The original plan called for only three-story "transepts" and the fourth floor was added there in 1880-1882. Because of materials ordered by the original architect, it can be surmised that some sort of "crossing" rotunda was employed. Also, if one can assume that the original office placement was such that each office had its window (s) centered within the room, then, because the present fenestrations is original, the initial office placement must have been close to the present arrangement.

During the 1880-1882 rebuilding, eight cast iron turrets were added to the towers. These proved to be extremely unpopular and were removed in the 1937-1938 renovation.

The structure is cement-covered brick with a high granite plinth.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

8. SIGNIFICANCE

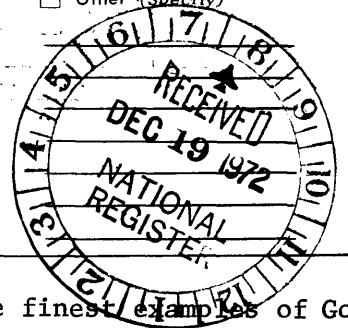
PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- Pre-Columbian; 16th Century 18th Century 20th Century
 15th Century 17th Century 19th Century

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known)

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- | | | | |
|--|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal | <input type="checkbox"/> Education | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Political | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Engineering | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry | <input type="checkbox"/> Science | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture | |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater | |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Commerce | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Military | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications | <input type="checkbox"/> Music | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation | | | |



STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

High on a Baton Rouge bluff stands one of the finest examples of Gothic Revival architecture in the United States. The seat of Louisiana government for over 60 years, it has been replaced by a newer State House, but the Old State Capitol continues its rich and varied history.

After an unsuccessful attempt to move the State Capital away from the evils of the big city of New Orleans to smaller Donaldsonville in 1825, citizens of the state tried to move it again in 1845. Article 112 of the 1845 Constitution provided for the transfer of the capital by vote of the next Legislature. Baton Rouge fit the requirement of being more than sixty miles from New Orleans and the city would donate land for a capitol building, so Governor Isaac Johnson, a lawyer from East Feliciana Parish, eagerly signed what became the third law of his administration, that of making Baton Rouge the capital.

Governor Johnson appointed a three-man commission to select the exact site, let the contract, and supervise the construction. The original members were Colonel Maunsel White, Chairman, Senator from Plaquemines Parish with holdings in a sugar plantation; sugar-planter Dr. Walter Brashear, Representative from St. Mary Parish; and one G. Cook. After Dakin's plan for the building was chosen, Cook resigned and was replaced by Representative Daniel D. Avery, a lawyer from East Baton Rouge Parish. Representative Avery, being from Baton Rouge, may have had a prominent role in the selection of the site: he was delegated the authority to accept the gift of land from the City of Baton Rouge by the other two Commissioners. Avery was subsequently voted a percentage of the construction costs for his work as building Superintendent.

On September 21, 1847, the City of Baton Rouge donated to the State a parcel of land valued at \$20,000 as the site for a capitol building. This plot, the site of the Old Hickey House, had previously been purchased by the City from two brothers, Judge Thomas Gibbs (or Gibbes) Morgan and Morris Morgan. The land may have been owned at one time by Philip Hickey, as U. S. Government land office maps show him owning land adjacent to the Capitol plot. The deed describes the gift to the State as the parcel of land

bounded on the North, by the North Boulevard, on the South by America Street, on the East by St. Philippe Street, and on the West by Natchez Street (today called Front Street), measuring four hundred and ten feet on the Boulevard, four hundred and ten feet on America Street, three hundred and sixty feet on St. Philippe Street and three hundred and sixty feet on Natchez Street, French measure

or 120,000 square feet. The only change in the boundaries has been a loss

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Aucoin, Sidney Joseph. "The Political Career of Isaac Johnson, Governor of Louisiana." The Louisiana Historical Quarterly, Vol. 28, No. 3, July, 1945, pp. 941-989.

Baton Rouge Unit, Louisiana Writer's Project, Work Projects Administration. "Old State Capitol: A Sketch." Sponsored by the Louisiana Library Commission. Baton Rouge, 1940.

Benton, Shirley. "Historic Fourths of Other Years Are Remembered Today." Baton Rouge Sunday Advocate, July 4, 1971.

Biographical and Historical Memoirs of Louisiana: Embracing An Authentic and Comprehensive Account of the Chief Events in the History of the

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	° ' "	° ' "		30° 26' 48"	91° 11' 19"	
NE	° ' "	° ' "				
SE	° ' "	° ' "				
SW	° ' "	° ' "				

UTM
15/673900
3369450
CD

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 4.59 acres

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE: Ruth S. LeCompte for Mrs. J. A. Tucker and Mrs. Irving Dameron and Mrs. P. Chauvin Wilkinson

ORGANIZATION: P. Chauvin Wilkinson DATE: November 15, 1972

STREET AND NUMBER: Old State Capitol

CITY OR TOWN: Baton Rouge STATE: Louisiana CODE: 022

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison 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. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National State Local

Name: George W. Peake
Title: State Liaison Officer
Date: 11 December, 1972

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

Robert M. Utley
Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date: 1/12/73

ATTEST: William M. ...
Keeper of The National Register

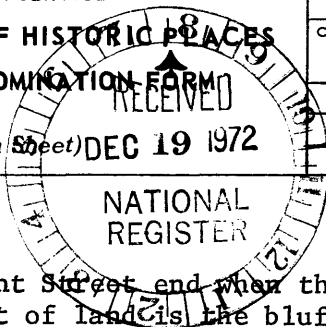
Date: 1.8.73

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INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

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8. Significance (cont'd)

of 16 feet along the entire Front Street and when that street was widened in 1961. Some believe this plot of land is the bluff that marked the site of the red pole ("le baton rouge") noted by French explorers as an Indian boundary marker or as designating a council meeting site.

The Commissioners advertised on January 23, 1847, for plans and specifications for the erection of a State House, and among others, architect James Harrison Dakin (1806-1852) submitted drawings. Dakin, along with his brother Charles and James Gallier, Sr., had formed a firm in New Orleans and they had designed several prominent buildings there. One story credits Dakin's outstanding military record in the Mexican War and the prison record of his nearest competitor as being big factors in his selection. Dakin, in his diary that covered the years of construction of the building, tells in the letter he submitted with his plans for the State House that

By the accompanying drawings (in compliance with your advertisement of the 23rd inst,) I have the honor of presenting to your consideration a Design for the erection of a State Capitol at Baton Rouge and also for making a few observations relative thereto.

In making this Design I have endeavored, First, to give the necessary apartments and accomodations for the State Legislature and the various offices of the State; Second, to adopt such a taste and style of Architecture as would at once give the Edifice a decided distincive (sic), classic and commanding character and be appropriate to its purpose. Third, to accomplish these objects with proper economy in the erection of the Building.

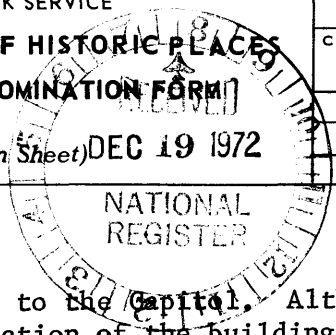
Dakin considered some forty-two apartments or rooms as sufficient "for all present or future purposes," and chose as his style "Castellated Gothic". This could be decorated with cast iron and would therefore be both cheaper and more durable than using wood or stone. The architect submitted an itemized estimate of \$107,606 (which he called "generous") plus salary for the architect and Clerk of the Works, and included in this estimate the specifications for the amounts of brick, sand, cement, nails, etc.

Dakin was notified that his plans were accepted on May 5, 1847, and replied to the Commissioners that he was available to oversee the construction after May 10. However, as the site had not yet been fixed, he traveled north to arrange for the materials and to conduct some personal business. The site was tentatively chosen on June 28 of that year, and then given to the State on the following September 21. Because of a delay in obtaining suitable bricks from McHatton Pratt and Company of Baton Rouge, it was not until October 25, 1847, that the site was specifically chosen and workers began to lay the 36" foundation. On November 3, Master Masons from all over the state converged for the laying of the corner stone. According to the Baton Rouge Gazette, the ceremony was followed by an oration in French by the Honorable Judge Canonge of New Orleans.

Dakin's diary reveals that he was constantly having problems with the Commissioners or the contractors. He received permission from the United States Government to resign as architect of the Custom House in New Orleans (a commission he had received after his State House plans were accepted) so

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INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

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8. Significance (cont'd 2)

he could devote all of his time to the Capitol. Although the Commissioners were to superintend the construction of the building, Dakin did not seem to have been happy at the request of Representative Avery that several basement fireplaces be sealed up, even though they had already been started. He had trouble getting the steel from Pittsburg, and there was a big strike in 1848--he made reference to these and other problems he had getting the materials he had ordered on time and of the quality he had requested. He records one instance when he and the brick contractor actually came to blows over the "inferior brick" and that they were then taken to court by the Mayor for fighting.

The plans called for a building fronting the Mississippi River (facing Natchez or Front Street) and 120 yards from that river, and situated 75 feet from North Boulevard and 25 feet from St. Philip Street. It was to be a total of 137 feet along an east-west axis, and 130 feet from north to south. There were to be four main towers, two octagonal ones on the west or river side, and two square ones at the east entrance, all of which were to be 90 feet high. Each set of towers was to be connected by white marble facades 77 feet high over doorways 19 feet long and 12 feet wide. The whole building was to have a slate roof.

The General Assembly had specified how and when the money for the construction was to be paid. The first \$100,000 appropriated on January 23, 1847, was to be paid in five uneven installments between March, 1847, and January, 1848. In spite of Dakin's "generous" estimates, the structure could not be built for the amount first appropriated, so another bill was passed. This one was dated March 16, 1848, and it gave another \$100,000, half to go for the actual construction, and half to go for the "embellishment of the interior." Once again the Legislature specified uneven installments over a period of several months. Later appropriations brought the total cost of the building to \$396,000. During the construction the site was visited--and approved-- by the Legislature's Committee on Public Buildings (February 16, 1848) and by Governor Isaac Johnson (September 24, 1849).

Surrounding the entire "Capitol Square" was a 7'2" cast-iron fence. Each section of the fence was molded separately and was so constructed that they fit together without bolts. The weight of the pieces still holds the fence together, and the only bolts used are those fastening the fence to its concrete base. At least part of the fence was designed by John Hill at his Baton Rouge foundry. According to his daughter, Hill and his partner Markham operated a foundry only a few blocks from the Capitol, and their fence still stands today, with large sections that have never needed repair. Elements in the fence include pineapples on fence posts (a symbol of welcome), eagles on gate posts (possibly patterned after that on Napoleon's shield), the quatrefoil (which echoes several of the building's windows), and the fleur de lis.

The Capitol was to be dedicated on December 1, 1849, and the citizens of Baton Rouge collected \$30,000 for an elaborate celebration. However, on November 23 of that year, a fire swept through the City, destroying about one-fifth of Baton Rouge. With the consent of Governor Isaac Johnson and Governor-Elect Joseph Walker, a more simple ceremony was substituted and the

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8. Significance (cont'd 3)

money used to aid the fire victims.

On December 3, 1849, Governor Johnson and the other principal state officers moved to Baton Rouge by steamboat. The one major exception was the Attorney General. He stayed in New Orleans temporarily because provisions of the 1813 Legislature required him to prosecute all cases in the First Judicial District (New Orleans). The Legislature met in the new State House for the first time on January 21, 1850, under the direction of the newly sworn-in Governor Walker. It was not until after this that architect Dakin turned the building over to the State.

In 1838 the State Legislature had voted \$2,000 to start a State Library, but the project had received little support from later sessions. When Isaac Johnson took office in 1846, he appointed historian Charles Gayarre as Secretary of State and therefore ex officio librarian. Gayarre made the first real effort to establish the library as a depository of books, documents, and manuscripts, and the library was moved to the new State House along with the rest of the government. By the time of the Civil War, the library had grown to some 30,000 volumes valued at \$80,000.

In April of 1856, one of the many fires to plague the Capitol broke out: someone had apparently set fire to the flagstaff. It was extinguished before it could do more than burn the roof of that tower, but there was quite a bit of water damage to furniture.

It was during the summer of 1857 that the Old State Capitol was first "modernized." The Legislature appropriated \$3,500 for the installation of a system of gas lights to replace the candles they had been using.

According to writer Will Irwin, the Capitol walls were to be decorated with large murals. Charles Chauncey Greene, a popular muralist, was awarded the contract for the work, but the plans were cancelled because of the Civil War.

The building was the site of Louisiana's secession after the Civil War began in 1861, but when Admiral David Farragut captured New Orleans in 1862, the seat of government was moved from Baton Rouge. After the Union troops arrived in Baton Rouge, they used the empty State House as a prison, and then as a garrison for Negro troops under General Culver Grover. It was during this latter phase that the building was destroyed: on the night of Sunday, December 27, 1862, one of the cooking fires got out of control, but quick action by the Union troops and Baton Rouge firefighters extinguished it--or so they thought. Very early the next morning fire broke out again, and this time swept the building. The entire structure, except for the shell, was destroyed. What had not been taken by General Benjamin "Beast" Butler's men--which supposedly included furniture, much of the State Library, paintings, silver, brass doorknobs, and a statue of George Washington carved for the State in 1852 by Hiram Powers--was destroyed.

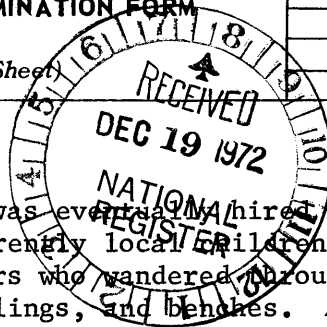
The building was deserted and left as it was. The State Legislature meeting in New Orleans provided in 1865 that a state gardener be hired for \$720 per year. His job was to care for the grounds and to be in general charge of the premises. Yet the building resembled very much the ruins of a Norman castle because vines and creepers had quickly covered the shell. The "added touch" was undoubtedly the buzzards that lived there and became

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8. Significance (cont'd 4)

such a nuisance that a watchman was ever hired to stand guard with a shotgun to eliminate them. Apparently local children even used the grounds for their pirate games, and others who wandered through the open gates had removed or destroyed plants, railings, and benches. All the work of gardener Thomas Afflech and others such as Governor Henry Watkins Allen and the wives of Legislators was ruined.

The Constitutional Convention of 1876 state in Article 150, that no later than March 1, 1882, Baton Rouge was again to be the capital. Accordingly, on April 6, 1880, an appropriation of \$141,000 was voted toward the restoration of the Old State Capitol building, and on April 10, the Legislature called for the formation of a Commission for that purpose, to consist of the Governor as Chairman, the Lieutenant Governor, two members of the Senate, and three members of the House (Act 86 of the General Assembly). Those appointed to the Commission were Governor Louis Alfred Wiltz; Lt. Governor Samuel Douglas McEnery (who became Governor when Wiltz died on October 16, 1881); Thomas J. Buffington and James Hagan of the Senate; and from the House of Representatives, George W. Munday, Frank L. Richardson, and Samuel M. Robertson.

Half of the \$141,000 was to be paid in 1880, and the other half in 1881. But on December 19, 1881, there was an additional appropriation of \$126,302.17 for reconstruction work plus \$4,000 to move the State Archives back to Baton Rouge and \$1,275 to insure the building (Act 4 of 1881). A final appropriation of \$36,700 was made on June 30, 1882, for a total cost of over \$300,000. No provision was made for moving the State Library back into the building, even though only about 4,000 volumes had been recovered.

The architect chosen for the reconstruction work was William A. Freret of New Orleans. Freret apparently tried to keep his work in the spirit of the original, as reports are given that the work was done along the lines of the original and that the "new" building was very much like the old. This is reinforced by Dakin's comments that he had ordered (from Knap and Totten of Pittsburg, the suppliers of the cast iron) several cast iron pillars for the interior and had ordered some 8047 window panes, which would indicate some sort of (stained glass) dome. Freret did add a fourth story, and to "balance" the structure, added eight cast iron turrets. These turrets were extremely unpopular and were eventually removed in the 1937-38 renovation. One story claims that the turrets were originally made for a building for the New Orleans Centennial Cotton Exposition in 1884 but were sold to the State when plans for that structure fell through. It is not known if the stone lions guarding the west or river entrance were also added at this time or if they date from the construction of the building.

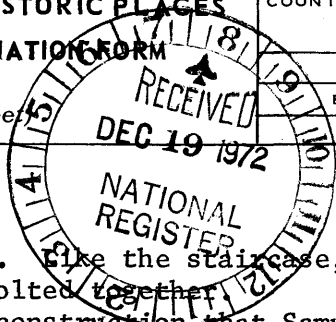
Mr. Freret was also an engineer, and the spiral staircase and stained glass dome he presumably installed are the focal point of the interior. Family legend says the iron staircase was cast by Octave Altazan or Altizan, but for another building. The dome is supported by a single cast iron column that reaches to the basement floor. The entire rotunda is filled with Gothic traceries. The balusters convey the same feeling as the fence surrounding the property, and while we do not know exactly how much of the present interior was Dakin's plan, there is still a sense of completeness of the site

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8. Significance (cont'd 5)

which includes the cast iron fence. ~~like the staircase,~~ most of the tracery is made of cast iron and bolted together.

It was during Mr. Freret's reconstruction that Samuel Clemens traveled down the Mississippi, and in Mark Twain's Life on the Mississippi, made these comments about the old State House:

Baton Rouge was clothed in flowers, like a bride--no, much more so; like a greenhouse. For we were in the absolute South now--no modifications, no compromises, no half-way measures. The magnolia trees in the Capitol grounds were lovely and fragrant, with their dense rich foliage and huge snowball blossoms....

Sir Walter Scott is probably responsible for the Capitol building; for it is not conceivable that this little sham castle would ever have been built if he had not run the people mad, a couple of generations ago, with his medieval romances. The South has not yet recovered from the debilitating influence of his books. Admiration of his fantastic heroes and their grotesque "chivalry" doings and romantic juvenilities still survives here, in an atmosphere in which is already perceptible the wholesome and practical nineteenth-century smell of cotton factories and locomotives; and traces of its inflated language and other windy humbuggeries survive along with it. It is pathetic enough that a whitewashed castle, with turrets and things--materials all ungenthine within and without, pretending to be what they are not--should ever have been built in this otherwise honorable place; but it is much more pathetic to see this architectural falsehood undergoing restoration and perpetuation in our day, when it would have been so easy to let dynamite finish what a charitable fire began, and then devote this restoration money to the building of something genuine.

The executive suites of the restored building were furnished with pieces intended for the use of Emperor Maximilian of Mexico. Unfortunately for the Emperor, he was executed before the furniture arrived from Europe, and it was sold to the State of Louisiana. Several of the pieces can be found today in the Cabildo (a part of the Louisiana State Museum in New Orleans), sent there by Governor Huey P. Long. Some even claim that the spectacular spiral staircase was intended for the ill-fated emperor.

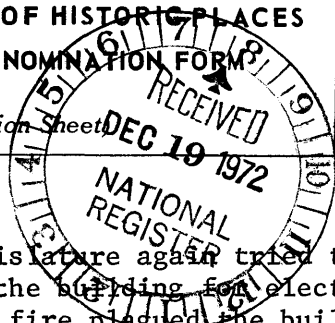
The State Administrative offices moved into the renovated structure on March 1, 1882, and the General Assembly convened there on May 8 of that same year.

Saturday, July 4, 1885, was a day of mixed feelings for many Louisianians. The body of Governor Henry Watkins Allen was moved to its final resting place on the Old Capitol grounds. Allen, the last antebellum governor of Louisiana and a Brigadier General in the Confederate Army, died in exile in Mexico City on April 22, 1866, at the age of 46. After the Civil War, Allen's body had been moved to New Orleans, and through the efforts of several Legislators and prominent area citizens, it was later moved to Baton Rouge. A pink marble monument was erected over the grave, which is on the north side of the building.

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8. Significance (cont'd 6)

On July 6, 1894, the Legislature again tried to modernize the structure when it voted \$1,086 to wire the building for electricity.

In June of 1906 another fire plagued the building. This one occurred in the Senate Chamber, and necessitated immediate repairs so the Legislative Session could continue.

By July, 1908, there must have been some consternation about the condition of the Capitol grounds, because they were placed under the supervision of the State Horticulturist and Director of the State Agricultural Experiment Stations along with the grounds of the Governor's Mansion. Stories are told that government officials allowed their cattle to graze on the Capitol grounds, and Governor Newton Blanchard (1904-1908) had a pet deer on the premises. The 1908 Legislature appropriated \$1,500 per year for two years to pay for the work and an additional \$2,380.21 to pay for paving the streets around the Capitol grounds.

Under the administration of Governor Henry L. Fuqua (1924-1926), additional work was done on the grounds. Inmates of the Louisiana State Penitentiary repaired and painted the fence, and apparently moved the North Boulevard gate to its present location, although no record has been found of its original location. A sidewalk was laid around the building, and the Louisiana State University Forestry Department treated the trees on the grounds. A small house on the property was also torn down, and there is some speculation as to the possibility of this being the "Judge Morgans House" referred to in the James Dakin diary: Dakin stated the actual site chosen for the State House placed it 75' from North Boulevard and 25' from St. Philip Street which would "clear Judge Morgans house about 3 feet."

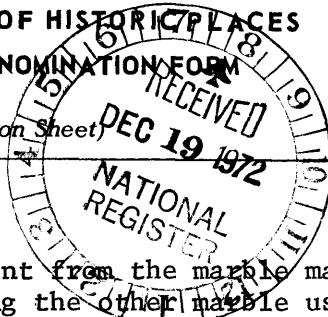
It was also about this time that there were several concrete figures made to grace the Capitol lawn, and one of them, described as a grotto, contained the figurehead of the battleship Louisiana. The medallion was donated to the State in 1910 after it was removed from the ship for being too prominent a target. Today this Spanish-American War Memorial, embedded in a concrete representation of a ship's prow, is in the Baton Rouge City Park, probably moved there in 1938.

Governor Huey P. Long had some difficulty convincing the Legislature that a new capitol was needed in 1928. One story tells it this way: During the fight for the appropriation for the new capitol building, a veteran member of the legislative body could not be convinced that a new building with adequate facilities was necessary, so one day while the rain poured down Governor Long escorted him to a seat under one of the many leaks to make him feel the need for a better building. Governor Long finally won, and under Act 10 of 1930 bids were opened for the construction of a new Capitol in December of that year.

When the Old State Capitol was abandoned for the New in 1932, the building was used as the headquarters for the Works Progress Administration. In 1937 WPA Project number 465-64-28, financed by both the State of Louisiana (through the State Planning Commission) and the WPA, began repair and renovation work on the structure. Almost \$50,000 was spent patching interior and exterior walls, repairing the cast iron work on the building and the fence, reworking the plumbing and heating systems, renewing the roof with

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8. Significance (cont'd 7)

copper, removing the black paint from the marble mantels, sandblasting and otherwise cleaning and renewing the other marble used in the building, working on the electrical system, and replacing the broken stained glass. The exterior of the building was repainted stone gray with aluminum silver window trimmings and black ledges.

While the renovation was in progress, a small fire in the southwest wing of the building caused about \$700 damage. Building officials blamed a gas heater for the blaze.

The grounds also received attention in this project between April and August of 1938. They were landscaped and about 8,000 plants from the gardens at Avery Island near New Iberia were planted. An irrigation system was installed and a circular driveway and parking lot were added. At the same time, an errant oak tree was removed from the northwest turret and moved to the City Park. Over five feet tall, the tree had apparently been growing for 20 years in the dust that had collected on the roof.

Act 400 of 1938 created the Louisiana Art Commission to be domiciled in the "Old State House" in Baton Rouge. The first state agency of its kind, the Art Commission has as its purpose to sustain and promote all forms of artistic activity in and of the State of Louisiana. The Commission galleries were located on the second floor of the building, primarily on the old House and Senate Chambers.

Plans for the building at this time also included adding a museum to the offices (and art galleries) already located there.

In 1946 the State Legislature passed Act 250, forming the Old State Capitol Memorial Commission to be in charge of the building, and by Act 417 of the same year, designated the building as a Memorial to the veterans killed in World War II. Legislators appropriated \$20,000 to "rehabilitate" the structure, with emphasis to be on interior work. The wiring was completely redone, a water stack was installed for increased fire safety, and there was general repair work done to mend what had been neglected during the war years. The building was filled with veterans' groups and a few assorted state agencies that, in spite of plans to move them elsewhere, never quite relocated, and by 1950 there was also a Military Museum in the building. Established by the Old State Capitol Memorial Commission, the museum was involved in a later controversy that resulted in the potentially dangerous "live" munitions being removed from the exhibits and the building.

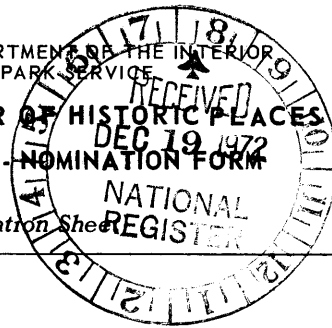
June 12, 1949, marked the dedication by Drew Pearson of the Louisiana box car of "The Merci Train," presented to the State by the government of France. One of the famous "40 and 8" variety--holding 40 men and 8 horses--the car was used by the AEF in the First World War, and its presence here symbolizes the appreciation of the generosity of the American people by the French.

High winds in March, 1950, damaged part of the old cast iron fence, and arrangements were made to recast those sections that had been damaged. About the same time work was done on the old--condemned--elevator. Installed in 1917, the elevator had been inoperable for about 15 years, and it took six months labor and \$18,000 to replace it.

By June 1953, the condition of the building was such that the fire

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marshal threatened to close the building. The most urgent need cited was an adequate fire standpipe and the pumping equipment to maintain sufficient water pressure on all floors. The safety inspectors also commented upon the lack of fire doors which were a special problem because of the rotunda: the vertical opening there stretches for four floors and without proper fire doors, would create ideal draft conditions for a fire. Inadequate fire escape routes and insufficient wiring were also commented upon. The Board of Liquidation of the State Debt was applied to for emergency funds, and such repairs as were needed to keep the building open were made.

Then in 1956 more extensive work was done. Under the leadership of Governor Earl K. Long, brother of the late Huey P. Long, \$350,000 was given to refurbish the structure. Fifty thousand dollars of the appropriation went for a new wiring system, and another \$150,000 went to install an automatic sprinkler system. Fire doors were added, some stairs were widened, floors were sanded and refinished, and the free-standing basement furnace was enclosed by a brick wall. The building was painted inside and out, the former a peach with light blue trim, and the latter a beige-gray with light gray and green trim. The art galleries on the second floor had their lighting improved and some of the ceilings lowered. A new "pigeon-proof" roof was added, much of the broken stained glass was replaced, and fluorescent lighting was installed.

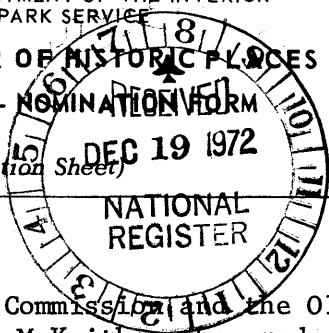
During the 1956 work, the basement was also readied for use as a museum. The floors were tiled and the walls painted, and air conditioning was to be added. Although the public apparently enjoyed the displays of flags, souvenirs, and trophies, the exhibits were plagued with vandalism, and after the 1967-68 work, they have not been reopened.

Also in 1957 the Louisiana chapters of the National Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution tried, unsuccessfully, to place a Louisiana Hall of Fame in the Old State Capitol. The first bust contributed, that of Governor Robert Charles Wickliffe (1856-1860) is still in the building, but the others that were to be added never materialized.

By 1965 more work needed to be done on the Old State Capitol. Hurricane Betsy, in the fall of that year, had damaged the structure, and other renovation work was needed as well. Plans to move the State Tourist Development Commission into the Old Governor's Office after the work was completed were aired, but other historic quarters were found for the Commission. Plans were drawn for the repair and renovation, but instead of the expected \$250,000 cost, the low bid was \$672,000. Work began around the first of January, 1968 and was largely completed by the end of that year. Several of the old light fixtures removed during the 1956 work have still to be restored and returned to their places. According to the restoration architect, no indication of the original colors of the building can be found, so the exterior was painted "tannish beige" with light and dark brown trim and the interior was done in shades of avocado, tan and gold leaf. Partitions dating from earlier "restoration" work were removed and ceilings were lowered in many of the rooms. The art galleries were further modernized. The heating and cooling systems were reworked, much of the colored glass was replaced, and work was also done on the lighting. The project was under the joint direction of the Capitol

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Construction and Improvement Commission and the Old State Capitol Memorial Commission. Governor John J. McKeithan then rededicated the building to all veterans who had died in our nation's wars.

Before the 1968 renovation of the building was even complete, the fence surrounding the structure was in need of repair. An automobile crashed into the fence breaking two sections; later a piece of the fence fell on a child. In 1972, after much effort by the local citizens to have the fence repaired, the Louisiana Board of Liquidation of the State Debt made an emergency appropriation of \$10,000 for the repairs, and the East Baton Rouge City-Parish Council appropriated the additional funds needed. Several sections or portions of sections of the fence had to be recast and the entire fence repainted.

Also in 1972, the State Legislature passed Act 425, which combined the Old State Capitol Memorial Commission with the Louisiana Art Commission and twelve other state agencies into a new State Department of Art, Historical and Cultural Preservation. Provisions in the act reaffirmed the Louisiana government's desire to house federally chartered veterans' organizations and to maintain a museum in the building.

7. Description (cont'd)

The windows are regularly placed one over the other, giving a vertical emphasis to the structure. The size of the windows decreases with each additional story especially in the four "nave" towers. The use of a cast iron water table and string courses marking the two lower stories helps balance the vertical tendencies.

The windows are of three basic shapes: round, rectangular, and arched. The round windows are trefoils composed of three quatrefoils within a circle. The double hung windows of various widths and heights have exterior tracery applied to them so that inside the rectangle they appear to be pointed cinquefoil or trefoil arches. Arched windows are either lancet arches with tracery for cinquefoil arches or inflected arches decorated to be trefoil arches. All windows are highlighted with cast iron label molding above them following their general outlines. The placement of the windows is original except for the windows on the fourth floor "transepts" which were added by restoration architect William A. Freret in the postbellum period. Freret also added the present window tracteries to replace those destroyed in the fire.

The three major entrances to the building are on the north, east, and west sides. In all three cases, granite steps lead to a landing and then to the first floor level, and entrance into the foyers is through tall wooden double doors that slide on metal tracks into the space behind the facades. Basement level doors are found on the north, south, and eastern sides of the structure, and open into basement rooms. Each of these single basement doors occupies the space that would otherwise be filled by a window.

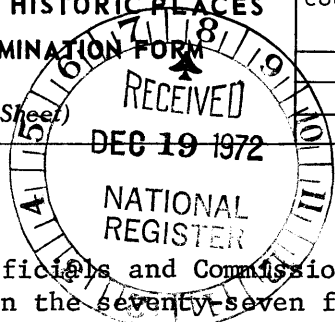
The original entrance was the one on the west end, facing the river. Here two couchant lions guard the marble entrance facade which is

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carved with the names of the Officials and Commissioners responsible for its construction. Placed within the seventy-seven foot high marble facade is the compound-arch doorway and the House Chamber stained glass window. This window is a large drop arch composed of two tall lancet arches, each of which is composed of two cinquefoil arches over two pointed trefoil arches. Between the lancet arches is a pointed cinquefoil arch topped by a quatrefoil within a circle. Each of these elements is composed of several panes of glass, most of which are diamond shaped, and most of which are colored. Surrounding the stained glass window are trefoil arches and stylized quatrefoils carved into the marble. The top of this marble section is dentillated just above the third floor level, that is, even with the fourth floor windows. There is also some dentillation below the stained glass window even with the cast iron string course on the octagonal towers at the second floor level.

The eastern end of the building resembles the western end very much: here is also a doorway that is a compound arch. Even though it is more narrow than the House Chamber, the Senate Chamber has the same magnificent stained glass window, except that it has been blocked off on the inside above the level of the trefoil arches. Because the window is not lighted from the inside, this blockage is not noticeable from the street. St. Philip Street is some 175 feet closer to the building than is Front Street, so even if there were not several tall buildings near the Old State Capitol to the east, the view of the structure would not be so spectacular from that side. The most striking difference between the two sides, though, is found in the towers: the eastern ones are square (and the same size as the ones on the "transepts") while the western pair is octagonal and semi-detached.

The "transepts" have a greater exterior dissimilarity. The northern entrance is now considered to be the main entrance, as evidenced by the great amount of carving which dates from 1882 on the facade and by the imposing entrance foyer. This entrance is also opposite what was designated the Governor's Office. The southern facade therefore has the windows of that office, and in the basement, another modern-day office. The top three floors look identical from the north and south.

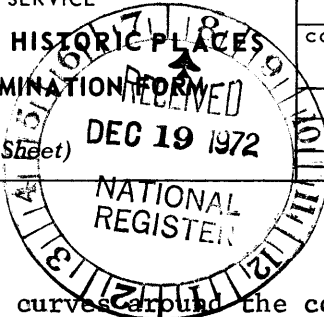
The Old Louisiana State Capitol is used today for offices and art galleries, and the interior of the structure reflects these uses. Each group of offices is served by connecting doors so that all rooms along an east-west axis are connected.

The basement includes several offices--three with outside doors--and two meeting rooms as well as a kitchen. Two rooms there have also been set aside for a museum, but as of this writing, they are not open to the public. There is little natural light in the basement rooms, as they are lighted by small windows--quatrefoils within a circle protected by cross-hatch grilles.

The first floor is mainly offices plus the bottom of the magnificent stained glass rotunda. It is here that the shades of avocado and gold leaf color scheme can best be seen. The spiral cast iron stair-

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case with its mahogany railings curves around the column which starts in the basement and travels up to support the rotunda. These stairs only connect the first and second floors, but the vertical space for the rotunda extends above the fourth floor level. The rotunda is a fantasy of cast iron Gothic traceries: Ball flowers, Corinthian columns and pilasters, trefoils, quatrefoils, trefoil and cinquefoil arches, lancet and equilateral arches, trefoils in spandrels, paterae, pellet molding, pendants, and open spaces are all bathed in the colored light from the fan vaulted stained glass.

The floors in the halls of the first floor are of 12" black and white marble squares laid in a poyntell design. One of the features most often commented upon by tourists in the building is that the offices used by the major governmental officials are still marked by the carved marble sills in front of the rooms--Governor's Office, Treasurer, etc.

The second floor contains what used to be offices as well as the imposing Senate and House of Representatives' Chambers. Today most of the offices are used as galleries, as is the House Chamber. The Senate Chamber occasionally serves as a gallery and is also used as a meeting room. The Chamber ceilings are over twenty feet high, and the tall "clerestory" windows fill the rooms with light. (These windows are of clear glass and consist of a tall lancet arch topped by a small, separate circular window.) The towers opening off these rooms--square to the east and octagonal to the west--have third and fourth floors which, previous to the 1968-1969 restoration, were accessible by stairs within them. Today ladders provide the only access to the old page boy tower rooms where names and initials can still be seen carved in the walls.

The third and fourth floors of the "transepts" house several offices each. From the fourth floor room in the northeast corner there is a ladder leading to the walkway around the rotunda glass. Names are scrawled here, too, but today this area is no longer open to the general public. Surrounding the top of the rotunda is a white cast iron grille which can be seen from all floors in the rotunda area if one only wants to look.

The presence of the fourth floor offices is emphasized by a gallery around one side of the rotunda area. This gallery permits access to the elevator from all of the fourth floor offices.

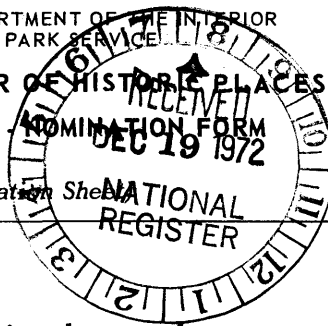
Above the level of the fourth floor is the square monitor roof. Its walls are almost entirely composed of lancet arches with tracery, and there is also clear glass in the skylight. To this has been added fluorescent lighting around the walls of the monitor roof from the fourth floor level upwards.

The roofs of the building have been considerably altered through the years. The original architect planned a flat-roofed structure, but there have now evolved three different roof types. The roof over the House Chamber is hipped, while that over the Senate Chamber is of the gambrel variety, and the "transepts" are covered by a gable roof. Originally composed of slate, the roof is now asbestos shingles.

The grounds have been elaborately landscaped several times over

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the years. The lower land in the southwest corner of the plot has been accentuated by 45° terraces between the two levels of ground. Flowering shrubs and trees have been planted throughout the grounds as well as alongside the cement walk stretching from the Front Street gate to the western entrance. At one time the lawn was also decorated with concrete figures, but these were removed about 1937.

Near the northwestern corner of the building is the pink Vermont marble monument marking the grave of Brigadier General Henry Watkins Allen. The last antebellum governor of the state, Governor Allen died in exile in Mexico City and his body in his Confederate uniform was moved to New Orleans shortly after the Civil War. In 1885 it was moved to the State House in Baton Rouge. The monument is a column with a square capitol topped by a finial resting on a stepped marble base.

At the northeast corner of the building is the Louisiana "Merci Car," presented to the State by the French Government in 1949. A symbol of the gratitude of the French people, the World War II boxcar has been placed under a rectangular pavillion which consists of a low hipped roof supported by sixteen fluted cast iron columns. Elaborate white grillwork, which does not match the cast iron fence, connects the pillars, leaving two entrance openings on the southern side. These opening provide access to the concrete steps which have been placed so that one may view the interior of the car when it is unlocked. Flagpoles have been placed between the pavillion and the building, and on occasion the French flag joins the American flag there.

The original 1849 cast iron fence surrounds the Capitol grounds. The seven foot two inch fence was constructed so that it "jigsaws" together, the weight of the pieces being sufficient to hold the fence together. The only bolts used are those attaching the fence to its concrete base. The main elements included in the green-painted fence are the pineapples on fence posts, Roman eagles and fasces on the gates, the fleur de lis along the top of the fence and quatrefoils along the bottom.

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