



United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

062

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any 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 certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).

1. Name of Property

historic name Felicite Plantation

other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number 3351 LA Highway 18

not for publication

city or town Vacherie

vicinity

state Louisiana code LA county St. James code 093 zip code 70090

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, 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. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

___ national X statewide ___ local

Signature of certifying official Phil Boggan

Date 1-25-10

Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer
Title

Louisiana Department of Culture, Recreation and Tourism
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

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

Signature of commenting official _____

Date _____

Title _____

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

4. National Park Service Certification

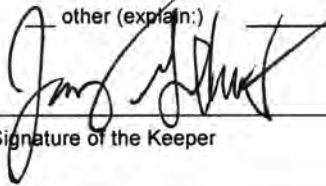
I, hereby, certify that this property is:

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 the Keeper

3/8/2010

Date of Action

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	
1	8	buildings
		district
		site
		structure
		object
1	8	Total

Name of related multiple property listing

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

Louisiana's French Creole Architecture

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

Domestic- Single dwelling

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

Work in Progress

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

Greek Revival

Other: French Creole

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation: brick

walls: Weatherboard

roof: Asphalt shingles

other:

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance of the property. Explain contributing and noncontributing resources if necessary. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, setting, size, and significant features.)

Summary Paragraph

Built in 1846, Felicite Plantation is a grand Greek Revival plantation house located on the west bank of the Mississippi River in a rural setting above Vacherie in St. James Parish. This two story house with frame exterior and *brique-entre-poteaux* (brick-between-post) walls has undergone some alteration over the years, but its integrity and National Register eligibility easily remain intact. The front facade is essentially untouched by 20th century changes. Felicite remains a rare example of the Greek Revival style with French Creole vernacular influences.

Narrative Description

This double galleried home has a rectangular plan with a central hall from front to rear on both floors. At each end of both halls, wood paneled French doors with sidelights are featured in a shoulder molded opening. Fourteen foot ceilings on both levels contribute to the stately proportions of Felicite. The plan is almost symmetrical with a rear stair set into a side alcove of the central hall. Paneled cypress pocket doors join a double parlor on the upriver side of the grand hall on the first floor. There are two bedrooms on each side of the central hall on the second floor separated by a passage with a closet for each room. This unusual layout also appears on the first floor on the downriver side of the house.

Greek Revival features found within Felicite Plantation House include:

1. Monumental two story paneled cypress boxed columns with molded capitals highlight the 11'-0" deep double galleries on both the front and rear facades. These columns stand on plastered brick plinths with the steps up to the galleries' purple slate floors set back in between, within the cover of the galleries.
2. A simple yet monumental entablature with a banded architrave and smooth frieze is crowned by a molded cornice.
3. Six gabled dormers with square topped double hung windows display pilasters with molded capitals and bases and pedimented gable roofs. The pilasters support a heavy entablature and the pediment is embellished with a raking cornice. There is one dormer each on the front and rear facades and two on each of the side elevations.
4. Four light transoms and four pane sidelights surrounding the four primary front and rear entrances have the rectangular glazing typical of the Greek Revival style.
5. the use of shoulder moldings in the door frames of these primary entrances, as well as in the frames of floor length sliphead windows accessing the upper galleries. This shoulder molding motif also outlines the paneled cypress pocket doors in the double parlor.

Although Felicite's design is undeniably Greek Revival, elements of the structure show the influence of Louisiana's native French Creole architectural tradition. The *briquelette-entre-poteaux* framing is an early form of French vernacular construction. This heavy timber framing method utilizes upright posts and diagonal braces with the spaces between filled with brick. Usually the entire brick filled exterior surface was then finished with a coat of lime plaster, interior and exterior, to protect the surface; then often covered with clapboard, as is the case with Felicite. The house also features a high-pitched, heavy timber framed, hipped umbrella roof, which is not hidden by the entablature as is typical in Greek Revival mansions. This roof type is characteristic of the French Creole style. The shoulder molding detailing of the upper galleries with simpler doorframes on the ground floor is more typical of a *premier etage*, a Creole floor plan where the formal rooms are raised above the ground floor, even though Felicite's floor plan shows the Anglo influence of a center hall and formal rooms on the first floor. The more highly decorated upper gallery reflects the Creole tradition of using this area as an outdoor room. The ground floor openings onto the gallery, aside from the formal entries, are all French doors, which also shows the Creole influence.

Although not specifically Greek Revival or French Creole, other interesting features are found at Felicite. For example, the gallery balustrade resembles a stylized wheat sheaf pattern. This same design appeared at the long-lost Uncle Sam Plantation (demolished in 1940) and is also found on earlier Creole houses, such as Labatut. There are also unusual star-shaped vents cut into the tongue and groove wood porch ceilings. This star motif is repeated on the copper leaderheads which connect the built in box gutters to the downspouts. During the course of restoration, heavy timber joinery details were uncovered that appear to be unique to the house. These include the framing of the great entablature and wood gutters carved out of solid blocks of wood and lap jointed. Where damage necessitated replacement, the craftsmen replicated these joinery details and saved examples of the original for display. Operable louvered shutters protect all the window and French door openings as well. Felicite retains all of its nine original marble mantelpieces, although some are in need of repair. The two red Italian marble mantelpieces in the double parlor are in the Italianate style. The others are black marble in a simpler post and lintel inspired design associated with the Greek Revival.

Although alterations have been made over the years and deferred maintenance and insects contributed to the structure's decline, many original decorative features remain. These include the previously mentioned mantels as well as handsome wood paneled interior doors. Restoration of the house is ongoing with care being taken to match damaged elements exactly and utilizing traditional timber framing and joinery methods. Some of the brick infill in the *briquelette-entre-poteaux* walls was removed on the first floor during a previous renovation but the timber framing remains and the brick is intact on the second floor. The rear gallery had been enclosed on the ground floor to house a kitchen but this portion of the gallery has been restored to its original configuration. A room encompassing two bays of the upper gallery on the rear façade on the downriver side of the house has been retained, as it is an historic addition associated with the house for approximately 80 years. This addition was implemented in a manner sensitive to the original structure with the walls set back to allow the monumental columns to shine through. Double hung windows are centered in the bays between the columns and are properly sized to allow function of the louvered shutters. An upstairs kitchen tucked in a small passage behind the stair has been removed. There is anecdotal evidence of an early servants' stair in this location but in absence of more concrete proof, there are no plans to restore this stair in the immediate future.

Three of the original six closets were converted into bathrooms in an earlier renovation. These bathrooms are in poor repair and plans to update both this plumbing and the electrical systems in the house are part of the ongoing restoration. A single passenger Otis elevator was installed at the end of the center hall opposite the stair in the late 1950's. The owners are considering its removal. On the first floor only the vertical rails of the elevator are visible when it is in the upstairs position. On the second floor it is boxed out resembling a small closet. The elevator is functioning and although it is obviously not an original feature of the house, the grand scale of the thirteen foot wide center hall is only minimally diminished by its presence.

The front upstairs bedroom on the upriver side of the house has an ornate pressed tin ceiling. This shall be retained and restored despite not being original to the house as it has been in place far more than fifty years. While the original tongue and groove wood forming the ceilings of the double parlor and the two downriver upstairs bedrooms remains intact and visible, most of the other ceilings in the house are not in good repair and are covered with 4'x8' fiberboard panels with battens or gypsum board ceiling tiles. These panels seem to cover lathe and plaster ceilings with significant water damage. The second floor hall ceiling is plaster and the first floor hall ceiling appears to be sheetrocked; both are in good condition. The restoration of both the ceilings and walls is part of the long-term restoration plan for the house. The floors are largely intact and where they need repair it shall be done with like materials.

Although there is significant damage to the interior surfaces of Felicite, enough original material remains to facilitate restoration of these spaces in the future. The newly repaired and restored exterior appears almost as built in 1846. As one of the most important surviving grand antebellum plantation houses gracing Louisiana's River Road, and as a fine and rare example of a Greek Revival plantation house influenced by the French Creole vernacular style, Felicite is an outstanding candidate for National Register listing.

Non-Contributing Elements

Additional buildings within the nominated acreage include the following:

1. a small rectangular wood frame building with gabled end and a corrugated metal roof. It appears to be 19th century. Oral history indicates that it was used as a kitchen until the 1930's when the rear gallery of the Felicite Plantation house was enclosed for use as a kitchen and utility rooms. It is located to the rear of the house on the upriver side. It is in poor condition and there is no hearth or chimney. As the evidence of this structure's age and usage are inconclusive, it is labeled non-contributing. If we are able to prove it is an antebellum building at a later date, we will amend the application if deemed appropriate.
2. a circa 1920's shed with attached screened porch in poor condition. It is located at the rear of the house toward the east side. (The Mississippi River runs from southwest to east at Felicite's location.) The family refers to it as the Delco building because this is where a generator charged large batteries to provide power to Felicite before the days of electrical utilities. It is said that Felicite was the first house in St. James Parish to have electric lights, which were powered by these batteries. Despite the anecdotal history we count this shed as non-contributing.
3. A wood frame garage housing equipment and vehicles for the farm. Felicite is part of a working sugar plantation and this building is located on the downriver side of the house at the edge of the sugar cane field. This building replaced an earlier garage that was destroyed by fire in the 1920's and was apparently rebuilt with the material from dismantled slave cabins. The heavy timber wall framing may support this story. The roof is framed with more contemporary materials and topped with a corrugated metal roof. It is a non-contributing structure.
4. a rectangular wood frame building with storage on one side and stalls on the other. It replaced a larger barn that was destroyed in the same 1920's fire mentioned above. It is in poor condition and is non-contributing.
5. a circa 1940's cattle shed with a dirt floor and no real foundation. It appears to be built from recycled materials and is in extremely poor condition. It is non-contributing.
6. small wood frame shed, circa 1930, used to house a water pump. It is non-contributing.
- 7&8. two mid-twentieth century wood framed poultry sheds with corrugated metal roofs in poor condition. They are non-contributing.

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)

Property is: None Apply

- 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 old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.
- N/A Criteria Considerations not applicable

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

Period of Significance

1846

Significant Dates

1846

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Unknown

Period of Significance (justification)

The period of significance is the date of construction.

Criteria Consideratons (explanation, if necessary)

N/A

Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance and applicable criteria)

Felicite Plantation is significant at the state level under Criterion C: Architecture. It is an important and rare surviving example of the grand antebellum plantation homes which once lined Louisiana's Great River Road between Baton Rouge and New Orleans. As such, it ranks as one of the state's important architectural landmarks. It is also significant at the state level as an excellent and important example of the Louisiana Greek Revival plantation home as influenced by the vernacular Creole architectural tradition.

Narrative Statement of Significance (provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance)

State Level Significance as Grand River Road Plantation Home

Architecturally, Louisiana is known for its fine collection of large and impressive antebellum plantation homes. The majority of these are located on the historic River Road between Baton Rouge and New Orleans. They represent the absolute apex of the plantation culture in Louisiana. Some date to the Colonial era and others to the thirty years prior to the Civil War when sugar cane cultivation produced immense wealth. Although found in different styles, these houses all share two characteristics. The first is their sheer size -- all are monumental two-story buildings that dominate their settings. The second shared feature is the presence of broad, pillared double galleries, which sometimes encircle the house. The columns may be monumental, in which case they rise to the roofline in one continuous shaft, or a separate series of columns may be found on each level. Felicite's monumental paneled wood columns, fine entablature, massive proportions, and other classical details clearly place it within the Greek Revival sub-group of the River Road collection.

No one will ever know the exact number of grand and monumental, high-style plantation houses which once existed on River Road; however, an 1858 map of Mississippi River land holdings and historic photographs of now lost examples suggest that many more existed than have survived. Today, only sixteen of these majestic River Road landmarks remain--six in the French Creole style, one Italianate, eight in the Greek Revival style and one (San Francisco) with a hybrid of influences. Felicite is one of only two of these rare and important examples not already listed on the National Register.

State Level Significance as Illustration of Creole Influence upon
Interpretation of American Greek Revival Style.

Louisiana

French Creoles and Acadians originally settled Louisiana's River Parishes (roughly defined as those bordering the Mississippi River from Baton Rouge south) during the colonial period. Both of these groups built houses in the Creole tradition. That tradition contains four types of buildings:

1. the Creole cottage, a galleried one-story house of small to moderate size. There are three types of Creole cottages:
 - a. those with small, hall-less floor plans only two or three rooms wide. A front gallery and a rear *cabinet/loggia* range usually parallel this group of rooms.
 - b. larger cottages with hall-less floor plans more than three rooms wide. These also feature front galleries and rear *cabinet/loggia* ranges. Such houses were sometimes created by enclosing one or more side galleries to create additional rooms.
 - c. those with central halls flanked by front and rear rooms on each side. Front galleries are present, but sometimes the *cabinet/loggia* ranges are missing. This type reflects the impact of Anglo-American architecture upon the Creole building tradition after Louisiana was transferred to the United States in 1803.
2. the larger raised Creole plantation house, a pre-Greek Revival two-story dwelling (of which the lower story is an above-ground basement) that represents the apex of Louisiana's Creole architecture. This house type has front galleries on both levels.

3. the Creole townhouse, built in more populated areas like Natchitoches and New Orleans.
4. the *pigeonnier*, a small tower-like outbuilding with upper-floor nesting boxes for birds.

Although Creole dwellings once dominated the rural landscape of central and southern Louisiana, today perhaps only 300 - 400 examples of these buildings remain standing outside New Orleans. Of these, the majority are small or moderately sized one story cottages, while only approximately thirty (30) are members of the distinct group of substantial raised plantation houses.

Architectural characteristics of the French Creole style include:

1. a spreading hipped or gabled umbrella roof, perhaps with a Norman truss roof system;
2. heavy braced timber frame walls with *briquelette-entre-poteaux* or *bousillage* infill;
3. raised above the ground on brick piers;
4. a full-length front gallery, sometimes decorated as an outdoor room;
5. chamfered gallery columns with lamb's tongue stops, French doors, exposed ceiling beams (sometimes beaded), and wraparound mantels; and
6. a hall-less Creole floor plan with a *cabinet/loggia* range and (if the house is multi-story) an exterior staircase on the gallery leading to the *premier etage* (upper-level primary living space).

The presence of Creole characteristics in Felicite will be discussed below.

Grecian architecture with its columns, lintels and notions of ideal proportions is at least the remote ancestor of all classical styles from Roman to Renaissance to Beaux Arts, right down to twentieth century Neo-Classicism. Greek architecture did not become known in the West until about 1750-1760. It began when British architect James Stuart visited Greece with Nicolas Revett in 1751. After the trip, the two began preparation of a multi-volume book, *Antiquities of Athens*, which saw publication in 1762. Stuart also began designing small buildings in the Grecian taste. According to Penguin's *Dictionary of Architecture*, by Sir Nikolaus Pevsner, John Fleming and Hugh Honor, Stuart's garden temple at Hagley (England, 1758) is the earliest of these. The style "took off" in the 1780s and culminated in England and other European countries in the 1820s and '30s. In the United States, the heyday of the Greek Revival is generally recognized to be the period 1825 - 1855.

The Greek Revival has been hailed as America's first truly national style of architecture. For while its forms and elements were virtually all derived from Europe, the style was embraced here as nowhere else in the world. And it was enthusiastically accepted by the broad sweep of classes because it had pointed associations with democratic civilization, scholastic erudition, and the agrarian life. Moreover, of all the styles that gained favor prior to the Civil War, the Grecian is by far the most prolific, both in terms of numbers and geographical spread. Indeed, west of the Appalachians, Greek Revival buildings represent a great many communities' earliest architectural heritage.

The Greek Revival Style was spread primarily through architectural instructional pattern books with plates showing elevations, details and plans - in short, everything the local architect, builder, artisan or carpenter needed. Some of the most well-known were Asher Benjamin's *The American Builder's Companion*, John Haviland's *The Builder's Assistant*, and Minard Lafever's *Beauties of Modern Architecture*. The Grecian look was also spread through apprentice training, which at the time was the primary means of training young would-be architects.

As a style, the Grecian tends to be stockier in its parts and less adorned than most of its descendents. It depends primarily upon the column and the lintel, or the entablature over a straight (not curved) range of columns. Columns themselves are true to the three ancient Greek orders: Doric, Ionic and Corinthian. The style depends secondarily upon a discreet number of openings in a relatively massive wall.

If the American Greek Revival could be said to have an emblem, it would be the Greek temple form with its strong columns and gently pitched pedimented roof. It was universal, applied to everything from churches, to courthouses, to office buildings, to residences, to privies, even to bird boxes. Greek Revival residences tended to follow traditional plans

inherited from the Colonial Period. There was the British central hall, double parlor plan and its more urban (tightly packed lot) cousin, the side hall plan; but all took the temple form. Larger buildings, even three story collegiate buildings, were "shoe-horned" into Greek temples. Unlike in Europe, the great majority of these were not made of some fine stone, but of wood or brick.

In Louisiana and much of the South, the periods of plantation wealth and the zenith of the Greek Revival style coincided. Realistic dates for the style's popularity would be 1830 – 1861 (when the Civil War commenced and construction virtually ceased). But Greek Revival-looking buildings continued to be constructed in rural Louisiana for a couple of decades after the War's end. These, no doubt, were merely following established builder tradition and were probably no longer conceived of as Grecian. There were also periods of transition. In the early days there were Grecian looking buildings that had some hangover Federal Style features – most notably a Federal elliptically arched fanlight over the front doorway. Towards the end, with the rising tide of the Italianate taste, there were Grecian buildings with some Italianate features – most notably scroll brackets at the entablature level. In this transition phase, just when a building stops being mainly Grecian and starts being mainly Italianate, can be difficult to parse.

The Greek Revival probably came to Louisiana through Benjamin Henry Labrobe, America's first professional architect, one-time architect of the U. S Capitol, the designer of the country's first Greek Revival buildings, and a short-term resident of New Orleans. His design for that city's Waterworks (1811) included a strongly proportioned pedimented portico and an octagonal tower reminiscent of the Tower of the Winds in Athens. No longer extant, this may well be Louisiana's first building seriously incorporating elements of the Greek Revival. Aside from Latrobe, Louisiana was not a leader in the national Greek Revival movement. However, the state added considerable richness to the genre by becoming home to some interesting regional variations on the style, including the white columned mansion that became a symbol of the Antebellum South.

The majority of Grecian buildings here took their cue from the state's well established Creole tradition of galleried houses and cottages. Louisiana architectural historian Dr. Joan Caldwell notes, "Greek Revival tendencies found a ready reception in the South on two accounts: the style was revered for its Classical antecedent, and it lent itself to the Region's climate. Columns, porticoes and porches were practical features that met the need for shade and were provisions that let leisure be taken and conversation enjoyed as a natural part of living. In Louisiana, where galleried houses were an entrenched tradition, the Greek colonnade became an easy graft."

So it was that the French Creole cottage was fitted up with strongly proportioned columns (sometimes just posts with molded capitals), a deep entablature, and perhaps Grecian door and window surrounds. These classical features were often striking, robust and boldly formed, lending an air of consequence to even the smallest "Grecian" cottages. Excluding New Orleans and some houses along the Great River Road between Baton Rouge and New Orleans, easily the majority of Greek Revival buildings in Louisiana take the galleried cottage form. "Cottage" is something of a misnomer, for they are certainly not always small. Roofs are more often gable-end than hip. Usually the larger or grander examples feature a broad hip roof. The majority of Louisiana's Greek Revival buildings were constructed of wood.

In New Orleans the galleried tradition produced the now iconic double gallery house. Scattered across parts of the city by the hundreds (Garden District, Lower Garden District, etc), these two story wood frame houses feature a Grecian gallery on each level. Sometimes the columns are simple wooden pillars with molded capitals on both levels. On the finer examples, the columns are fluted, with the Ionic order on one level and Corinthian on the other. As the Italianate style began to be popular, double brackets might be added above the columns of an otherwise purely Greek Revival house.

Probably the most impressive Louisiana variation is what Henry Russell Hitchcock labeled the "peripteral mode." This is a Grecian two-story building, most often a plantation house, without pediments, surrounded by colossal order columns. Peripteral houses are related to the grand two-story Creole plantation houses of previous generations, with their encircling galleries. (The only extant non-plantation houses in the peripteral mode are the East Feliciana and Claiborne parish courthouses.)

While the temple form (a pedimented portico spanning the entire façade) was used in Louisiana, it was not common. Most temple style Greek Revival buildings here feature a pedimented portico attached at the center of a wider façade.

The majority of window and door openings (exterior and interior) on Greek Revival buildings in Louisiana are unadorned square head, or feature shoulder, or ear, molds. Shoulder molded openings on the interior sometimes feature side members that splay toward the bottom. Occasionally one sees openings where the top member has a slightly pointed

top, in the manner of a pediment. Only in the most notable, generally architect-designed buildings, are openings ornamented with acanthus leaves, patera, or anthemions.

On the most basic of Louisiana Greek Revival houses the mantels might be the only interior features that could be categorized specifically as Greek Revival. The simplest, and most common, Greek Revival mantel is in the aedicula style (an entablature resting on two columns, seen as a unit). In the vast majority of houses, the "columns" are simple molded pilasters. On some finer homes the wooden mantels and door frames might be false-grained to resemble a different wood (*faux bois*) or marble (*faux marbre*). Only rarely does one see ornamentation such as Grecian fretwork. The most "high style" Greek Revival buildings in the state have plaster ceiling medallions formed of Grecian favorites such as anthemions or acanthus leaves. On the larger houses, pocket doors (in a Grecian frame) separate double parlors. Some otherwise Grecian residences in Louisiana featured the traditional Creole hall-less plan. But as the American taste finally triumphed in the 1830s and '40s, houses incorporated the American central hall or side hall plan.

Property types associated with the Greek Revival style in Louisiana include:

- Greek Revival historic districts
- Historic districts with a significant complement of Greek Revival buildings – most notably in New Orleans.
- Temple-form (temple spanning entire façade) commercial, public and residential buildings (unusual in Louisiana).
- Large two story buildings with a temple-style pedimented portico (i.e., a pedimented portico attached to a larger façade).
- Peripteral mode (plantation houses and 2 courthouses)
- Galleried public buildings
- One or one-and-a-half story houses (gable end and hipped roof) with a gallery spanning the façade.
- Double gallery houses (New Orleans) – a two story house with a gallery on each floor spanning the façade.
- Two story houses with colossal columns spanning the façade (with no pediment or portico). These are similar to the peripteral mode, but have colossal columns only on the façade.
- Churches. But with one exception (St. John's in Thibodaux), these are simple country churches with a temple shape.
- Occasionally in Northwest Louisiana, one finds the marriage of the Upland South dogtrot with the country Greek Revival style (a milled lumber dogtrot with a Greek Revival gallery and other details).
- Party wall commercial buildings (almost entirely in New Orleans). In general, these are similar to prototypes in other parts of the country – Greek Revival piers (granite or cast-iron) forming the shopfront with a three to five bay façade crowned with a heavy entablature (sometimes with a denticular cornice). Generally, these buildings do not have galleries.
- In New Orleans, free-standing, masonry, generally red brick, three-story houses with an entablature and a Greek Revival doorway.
- In New Orleans' Vieux Carre (mainly), party wall masonry buildings with Greek Revival details and cast-iron galleries across their street frontage. Sometimes these galleries are original; sometimes they were added later in the more florid Italianate taste.
- In South Louisiana (mainly New Orleans), above-ground tombs with either a temple shape (i.e., with a pediment) and Greek Revival details or a squarish mass with Greek Revival details. These tombs sometimes bear Grecian funerary details (for example, inverted torches).

All of the eight Greek Revival style grand plantation houses surviving on the Great River Road show the influence of French vernacular architecture to a certain extent, and all are equally important. In addition to Felicite, these include Houmas House, Ashland-Belle Helene, Bocage, Mulberry Grove, Evergreen, Oak Alley, and Hermitage.

Although one immediately thinks "Greek Revival" when viewing Felicite for the first time (the same is true of the other River Road Greek Revival mansions), the house also has roughly half of the French Creole characteristics discussed above. These include decorated outdoor rooms on the second floor galleries and an abundance of French doors in the first floor exterior openings. Felicite's hipped umbrella roof and the heavy framed *briquelette-entre-poteaux* construction with cypress weatherboard siding also shows the influence of early, Creole vernacular design.

In comparing and contrasting the Creole and Greek Revival features of the River Road plantation houses, the following comments can be made:

- In the cases of Evergreen and Bocage, an earlier Creole house was remodeled to reflect the latest architectural trends in Greek Revival style.
- With their low pitched roofs hidden behind full entablatures and stuccoed walls suggestive of stone temple architecture, Bocage and Ashland-Belle Helene each express a more pure interpretation of Greek Revival elements than many houses along the River Road.
- The facades (behind the upper galleries) of Felicite and Mulberry Grove display more decorative elements than those below in the Creole tradition.
- Bocage has a more traditional Creole floor plan, known as *premier etage*, with the main living spaces on the second level, a rear loggia with two *cabinets*, French doors and an exterior stair. Like Evergreen, Bocage has no central hall.
- Felicite, Ashland-Belle Helene, Mulberry Grove, and Oak Alley feature more American floor plans with the formal spaces located on the first floor and grand center halls. Hermitage also contains a central hall, but its narrowness gives it a confined rather than a grand and spacious feel like that experienced in the other center hall mansions.
- Felicite's high-pitched roof and deep galleries with floor length fenestration are in response to local climate. Similar roofs and deep galleries are found at Houmas House, Oak Alley, Evergreen, and Hermitage. The concessions to shade and air flow add to the graceful lines of these houses, and the dormered rooflines of all but Mulberry Grove are in harmonious proportion to their monumental columns. Dormers are evenly spaced and admit light and air into the large attics, which originally were not used as living spaces. Mulberry Grove also features a high-pitched roof and deep galleries. However, its front gallery has a separate series of columns on each level and its roof lacks the dormers found in the other mentioned examples.

As can be seen from the above comparisons, all of the Great River Road's monumental Greek Revival plantation houses contain aspects of the Creole building tradition, and all illustrate how that tradition impacted and influenced the development of the Greek Revival style in Louisiana. As a representative but grand illustration of this influence, Felicite is easily but emphatically as important as the other examples already listed on the National Register at the state level of significance.

NOTE: The cartographer mislabeled Felicite Plantation as St. Joseph Plantation on the USGS map. St. Joseph Plantation is closer to Oak Alley Plantation. Satellite photographs confirm the error.

Developmental history/additional historic context information (if appropriate)

Regional History:

The River Road region consists of the parishes of Orleans, St. Charles, St. John, St. James, Ascension, Iberville and East and West Baton Rouge. The region is anchored by the cities of Baton Rouge on the north and New Orleans on the south. The mighty Mississippi that divides these parishes was instrumental in the rapid growth of agriculture in this area in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and of industry in the twentieth.

St. James Parish, the site of Felicite, is located midway between New Orleans and Baton Rouge and is divided in two by the river. It is one of the original 19 parishes created on March 31, 1807, by an act of the Orleans Territorial Legislature. Prior to its creation as a civil parish, this area formed part of the *Comte d'Acadie* or Country of Acadia, which was composed of the old ecclesiastical parishes of the [sic.] St. James and the [sic.] Ascension, commonly referred to then as the First and Second Acadian Coasts.

The first Acadian exiles to settle in the region arrived about 1762. The land of St. James Parish is chiefly alluvial with some wooded lowlands and coastal marshes. The settlers found abundant fish and game and carved rich farmland out of the wilderness. Early crops included Perique tobacco, indigo and (later) sugar cane. (St. James Parish is still the only place in the world where Perique tobacco is grown.) The Acadians were industrious and a kindly and thrifty people. After arriving in Louisiana they worked hard and it wasn't long before they had gotten back the wealth they had lost by their

forced migration. They did so well along the Mississippi River that the Acadian Coast was also known as the Gold Coast in the early part of the nineteenth century.

Downriver, the adjacent parishes of St. John the Baptist and St. Charles were settled by German pioneers brought to Louisiana by John Law and the Company of the Indies in 1721. This area was known as the German Coast. Gradually, the German immigrants intermarried with the Acadians and their descendants and began speaking French. The influences of all these settlers helped create the Cajun culture. These four parishes are known together as the River Parishes and are officially part of the Acadiana region.

Industrial lumbering became an important industry in the late 19th century. By the twentieth century, industry was dominated by agriculture and chemical plants linked to the rest of the nation by the river and railroads. Even with all the industrial growth, agriculture remains an important industry in the primarily rural St. James Parish today. Besides tobacco and sugarcane, crops include soybeans, corn, hay, oats and vegetable farming; fruit orchards; beef cattle and crawfish farming. Felicite remains part of a family owned sugarcane farm to this day.

Historical Note:

Felicite was built by the well known Louisiana Creole planter Valcour Aime whose famous plantation, Le Petit Versailles, stood a short distance downriver in the heart of the Acadian Coast. The house was a wedding gift to his third daughter, Felicite Emma Aime, when she married Alexandre Septime Fortier. Septime, who was educated in France, became a planter, handling his own plantation and with his brother, Florent, operating the family plantation, Richbend. The Fortiers had 14 children at Felicite and continued to live in St. James Parish as indicated in the 1860 census. However, by 1870 they had moved to New Orleans where Septime was in the wholesale grocery business. He died in 1898 and Felicite lived with her daughter at 2642 Dumaine Street in New Orleans until her death in 1905.

The Bank of the Americas acquired part of Felicite Plantation in 1873, and the property changed hands three times before being sold in 1899 to Saturin Waguespack, a descendant of one of the original settlers of the German Coast. In 1901, Waguespack merged Felicite with nearby St. Joseph Plantation to form the St. Joseph Planting and Manufacturing Corporation. His descendants still own this family corporation today and are in the process of returning Felicite to her former splendor.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form)

Calhoun, James. *Louisiana Almanac 1984-85*. Gretna, LA: Pelican Publishing, 1984.

Christovich, Mary Louise, et al. *New Orleans Architecture: The American Sector*. Gretna, LA: Pelican Publishing Co., 1998.

Cochran, Estelle M. Fortier. *The Fortier Family and Allied Families*. n.p., 1963.

Edwards, Jay Dearborn and Kariouk Pecquet Du Bellay De Verdon, Nicolas. *A Creole Lexicon*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2004

Fricke, Jonathan; Fricke, Donna; and Duncan, Patricia L. *Louisiana Architecture: A Handbook on Styles*. Lafayette, LA: Center for Louisiana Studies, University of Southwestern Louisiana, 1998.

Hamlin, Talbot. *Greek Revival in America*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1944.

Kennedy, Roger G. *Greek Revival America*. New York: Stewart, Tabori & Chang, 1989.

Kingsley, Karen. *Buildings of Louisiana*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2003.

Lane, Mills. *Architecture of the Old South: Louisiana*. New York: Abbeville Press, 1993.

Persac, Adrian, *Norman's Chart of the Mississippi River from Natchez to New Orleans*, 1858.

Poesch, Jessie and Bacot, Barbara SoRelle. *Louisiana Buildings 1720-1940: The Historic American Buildings Survey*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1997.

Smith, J. Frazer, A.I.A. *White Pillars: The Architecture of the South*. New York: Bramhall House, 1941.

www.nationmaster.com/encyclopedia/Felicity-Plantation

www.stjamesla.com/James/index.asp

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 # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____
- Not applicable – no previous documentation on file

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
 - Other State agency
 - Federal agency
 - Local government
 - University
 - Other
- Name of repository: _____

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): NA

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 11.4 acres
(Do not include previously listed resource acreage)

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

1	<u>15</u>	<u>715550</u>	<u>3321300</u>	3	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
2	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	4	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing

Verbal Boundary Description (describe the boundaries of the property)

Please refer to attached sketch map.

Boundary Justification (explain why the boundaries were selected)

Boundaries are drawn to exclude substantial rural acreage owned by the applicant yet convey the home's historic setting and relationship to the Mississippi River. On the north, the boundary follows Felicite's current (and also historic) property line; on the west, it follows the historic property line between Felicite and St. Joseph Plantation; on the south, it is drawn behind the non-contributing outbuildings located within the rear yard close to the house; and on the west, it follows the existing boundary of a sugar cane field located next to Felicite's front and rear yards.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Heather McVicar Ruoss, M.Arch.
organization Architectural Consultant date 21 September, 2009
street & number 1001 Mazant Street telephone 504 914-7558
city or town New Orleans state Louisiana zip code 70117
e-mail hmhmruoss@hotmail.com

Form Edited By

name/title Patricia Duncan, National Register Coordinator
organization Louisiana Division of Historic Preservation date summer
street & number P. O. Box 44247 telephone (225) 219-4595
city or town Baton Rouge state LA zip code 70804
e-mail pduncan@crt.state.la.us

Property Ownership (Required by Louisiana National Register Review Committee)

name/title Joan Boudreaux, General Manager representing the Board of Directors
organization St. Joseph Planting and Manufacturing Corporation
street & number 3421 Highway 18 telephone 225 265-4078
city or town Vacherie state Louisiana zip code 70090
e-mail stjoe@charterinternet.com

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **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. Key all photographs to this map.

- **Continuation Sheets**
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Photographs:

Submit clear and descriptive black and white photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map.

Name of Property: Felicite Plantation

City or Vicinity: Vacherie

County: St. James

State: Louisiana

Sdfsdf

Photographer: David Grunfeld

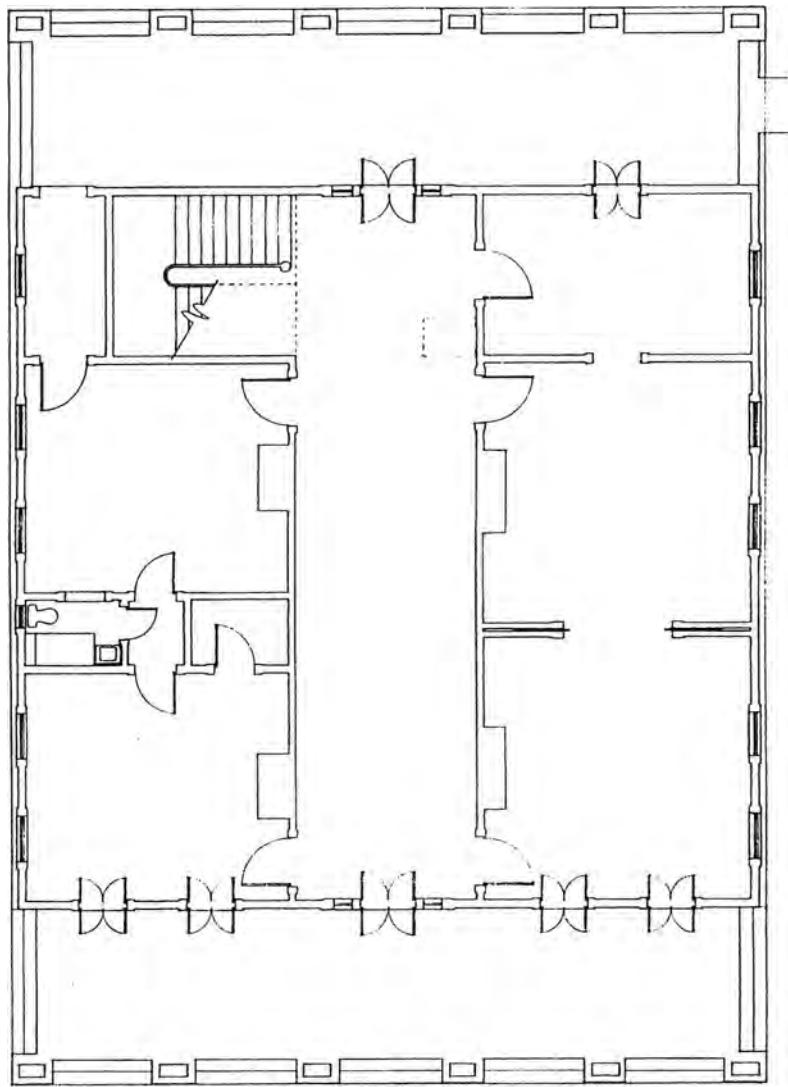
Date Photographed: January 20, 2010

Description of Photograph(s) and number:

<u>Photo No.</u>	<u>Photographic Information</u>
0001	Detail photograph of dormer and gallery, front façade, view facing <u>south southwest</u> .
0002	Photograph of the front and side facades of Felicite Plantation's main house. View is to the <u>south southwest</u> .
0003	Railing detail, view facing <u>southwest</u> .
0004	Porch ceiling with star shaped vents and main entrance with Greek detailing looking down the central hall, view facing <u>south southwest</u> .
0005	Capital and entablature details, view facing <u>south southwest</u> .
0006	Operable shutters cover full height slip-head windows on the second floor front gallery. View is to the <u>west</u> .
0007	View of poultry sheds from rear gallery, both structures are non-contributing. View is to the <u>west southwest</u> .
0008	Photograph of kitchen building with poultry sheds beyond. View is to the <u>west southwest</u> .
0009	Photograph of upriver side of house. The view to to the <u>northeast</u> .
0010	Photograph of rear façade. View is to the <u>north northeast</u> .
0011	Photograph of Delco building with the barn behind, both non-contributing structures. The view is to the <u>south</u> .
0012	Photograph of wood frame garage building, a non-contributing structure. View is to the <u>northeast</u> .
0013	Photograph of water pump shed, barn and cattle shed, all are non-contributing structures. View is to the <u>northeast</u> .
0014	Unusual joinery detail from the framing of the entablature. Photo taken in the Interior.
0015	View from double parlor toward front of house. Notable features include panelled cypress pocket doors with shoulder molding trim details, beaded tongue and groove wood ceilings with crown molding, chair rail and beaded board wainscot. Two original red Italian marble mantelpiece are the most ornate examples of the nine marble mantelpieces remaining in the house. Interior.
0016	View of stairway from first floor hallway. Interior.

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. 460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18 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 Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.



1ST FLOOR PLAN

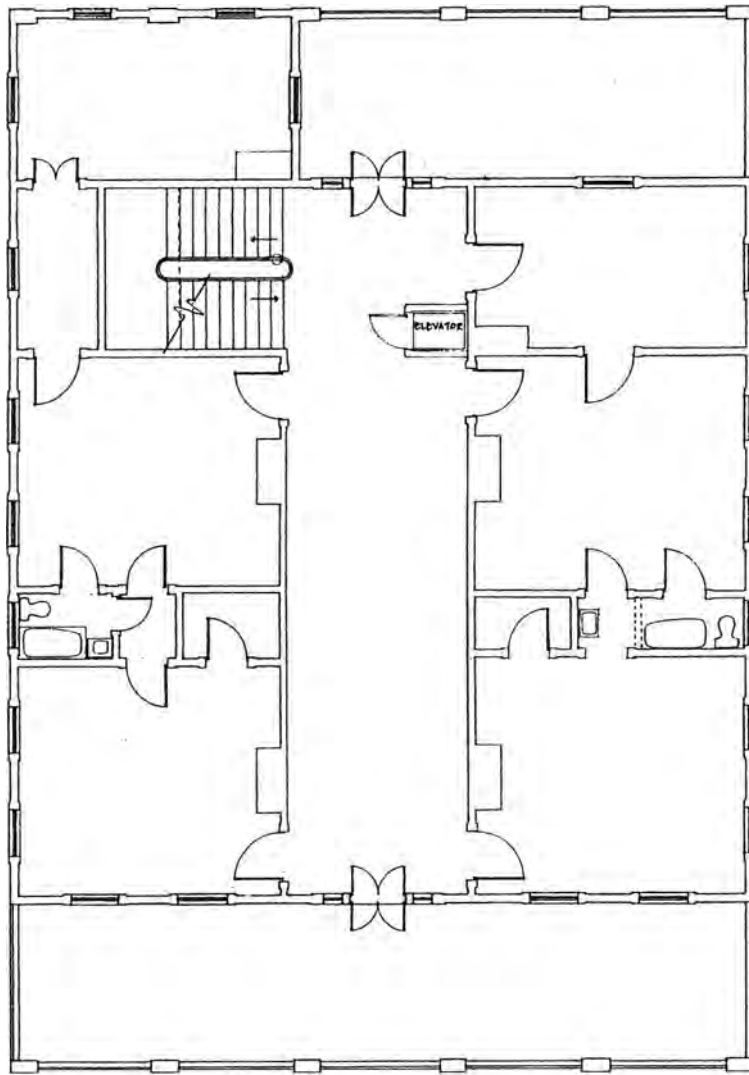
1/4" = 1'-0"

FÉLICITÉ PLANTATION

3351 HIGHWAY 18
VACHERIE, LOUISIANA

HEATHER HEVICAR RUSS, M.Arch.
1001 MAGANT STREET
NEW ORLEANS, LA 70117
(504) 944-2550

3/2/2007 dkm



2ND FLOOR PLAN
14'-1"-0"

FÉLICITÉ PLANTATION

3351 HIGHWAY 18
VACHERIE, LOUISIANA

Architect: M. Andrus
 1001 Magazine Street
 New Orleans, LA 70130
 (504) 581-1111

4/1/2004

□ Non-Contributing Element

■ Contributing Element

- - - Boundary line

Sugar Cane Fields

Photo 11
Photos 7+8

FÉLICITÉ PLANTATION
3351 Hwy. 18
Vacherie, LA
St. James Parish

- A. Kitchen building
- B. Delco building
- C. Garage
- b. Barn
- E. Cattle Shed
- F. Water pump shed
- G. Poultry Coop
- H. Poultry Coop

driveway

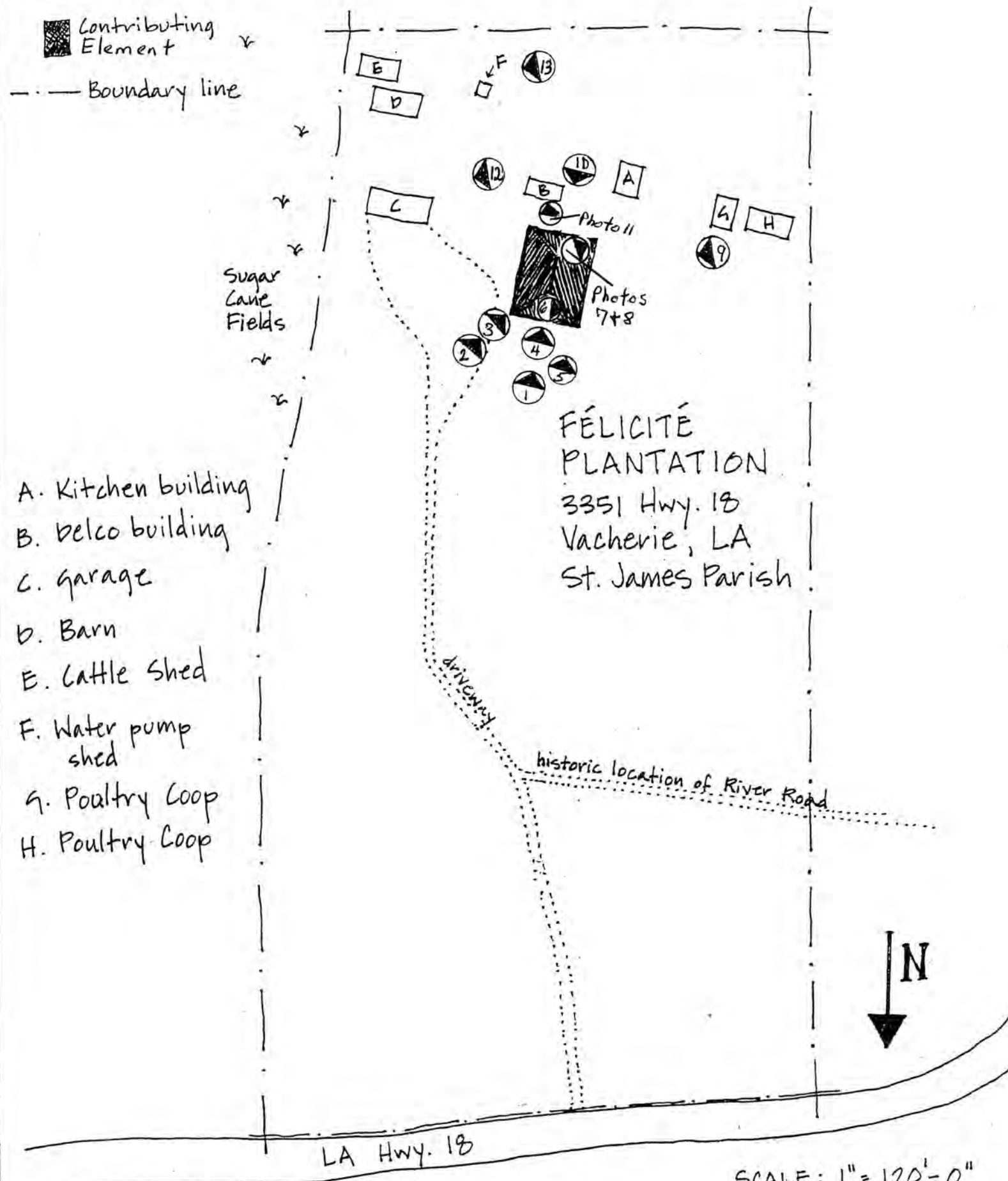
historic location of River Road



LA Hwy. 18

Mississippi River

SCALE: 1" = 120'-0"



United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Name of Property

County and State

Name of multiple property listing (if applicable)

Section number _____ Page _____

SUPPLEMENTARY LISTING RECORD

NRIS Reference Number: 10000062

Date Listed: 3/08/10

Property Name: Felicite Plantation (Louisiana' French Creole Architecture MPS)

County: St. James

State: LA

This property is listed in the National Register of Historic Places in accordance with the attached nomination documentation subject to the following exceptions, exclusions, or amendments, notwithstanding the National Park Service certification included in the nomination documentation.



Signature of the Keeper

3/08/2010
Date of Action

Amended Items in Nomination: The property totals over 10 acres. Only a single UTM coordinate was supplied. The following constitutes the correct locational information for the property.

Section 10: UTM's

UTM Coordinates for the property are as follows:

A: 715610E / 3321540N B: 715610E / 3321160N
C: 715510E / 3321160N D: 715520E / 3321540N

Zone 15

The Louisiana State Historic Preservation Office was notified of this amendment.

DISTRIBUTION:

National Registry property file
Nominating Authority (without nomination attachment)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY NAME: Felicite Plantation

MULTIPLE NAME: Louisiana's French Creole Architecture MPS

STATE & COUNTY: LOUISIANA, St. James

DATE RECEIVED: 1/29/10 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 2/19/10
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 3/06/10 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 3/15/10
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 10000062

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N
OTHER: N PDIL: N PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N
REQUEST: N SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: Y NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

ACCEPT RETURN REJECT 3/8/2010 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

The Plantation House meets the requirements of the MPS. The non-contributing outbuildings, while dating from the late 19th & early 20th Century, they do not reflect the period of development of the house or its architectural context.

RECOM./CRITERIA Accept C

REVIEWER J. Gabbert DISCIPLINE _____

TELEPHONE _____ DATE _____

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/~~N~~ see attached SLR ~~Y~~/N

If a nomination is returned to the nominating authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the NPS.



Félicité Plantation
St. James^{Parish}, Louisiana
David Grunfeld
1/20/2010

LASHPO Digital Archive
South Southwest

LA - St James Parish - Félicité Plantation - 0001 . TIFF



Félicité Plantation
St. James Parish, Louisiana

David Gruinfeld

1/20/2010

LASHPO Digital Archive

Southwest

LA - StJamesParish - FelicitePlantation - 0002.TIFF



Félicité Plantation
St. James^{Parish}, Louisiana

David Gruinfeld

1/20/2010

LASHPO Digital Archive
Southwest

LA - StJamesParish - FelicitePlantation - 0003.TIFF



Félicité Plantation
St. James, Louisiana

David Grunfeld

1/20/2010

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South Southwest

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Felicité Plantation
St. James, Louisiana

David Grunfeld

1/20/2010

LASHPO Digital Archive

South Southwest

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Felicité Plantation
St. James, ^{Parish} Louisiana
David Grunfeld

1/20/2010

LASHPO Digital Archive
West

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Félicité Plantation
St. James, ^{Parish} Louisiana

David Groutfeld

11/20/2010

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West Southwest

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Félicité Plantation
St. James, Louisiana

David Grunfeld

1/20/2010

LASHPO Digital Archive

West Southwest

LA - St James Parish - Felicite Plantation - 0008 - TIFF



Félicité Plantation
St. James, ^{Parish} Louisiana

David Groutfeld

1/20/2010

LASHPO Digital Archive

East, Northeast

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Félicité Plantation
St. James, ^{Parish} Louisiana

David Grunfeld

11/20/2010

LASHPO Digital Archive
North Northeast

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Félicité Plantation
St. James, Louisiana

David Grunfeld

1/20/2010

LASHPO Digital Archive

South east

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Félicité Plantation
St. James, Louisiana
David Grunfeld

1/20/2010

LASHPO Digital Archive

East, Northeast

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Félicité Plantation
St. James, ^{Parish} Louisiana

David Grunfeld

1/20/2010

LASHPO Digital Archive

East, Northeast

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Felicité Plantation
St. James, ^{Parish} Louisiana

David Gruinfeld

1/20/2010

LASHPO Digital Archive

Interior

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Félicité Plantation
St. James^{Parish}, Louisiana
David Grunfeld

1/20/2010

LASHPO Digital Archive

Interior

LA - St James Parish - Felicite Plantation - 0015. TIFF



Félicité Plantation
St. James^{Parish}, Louisiana

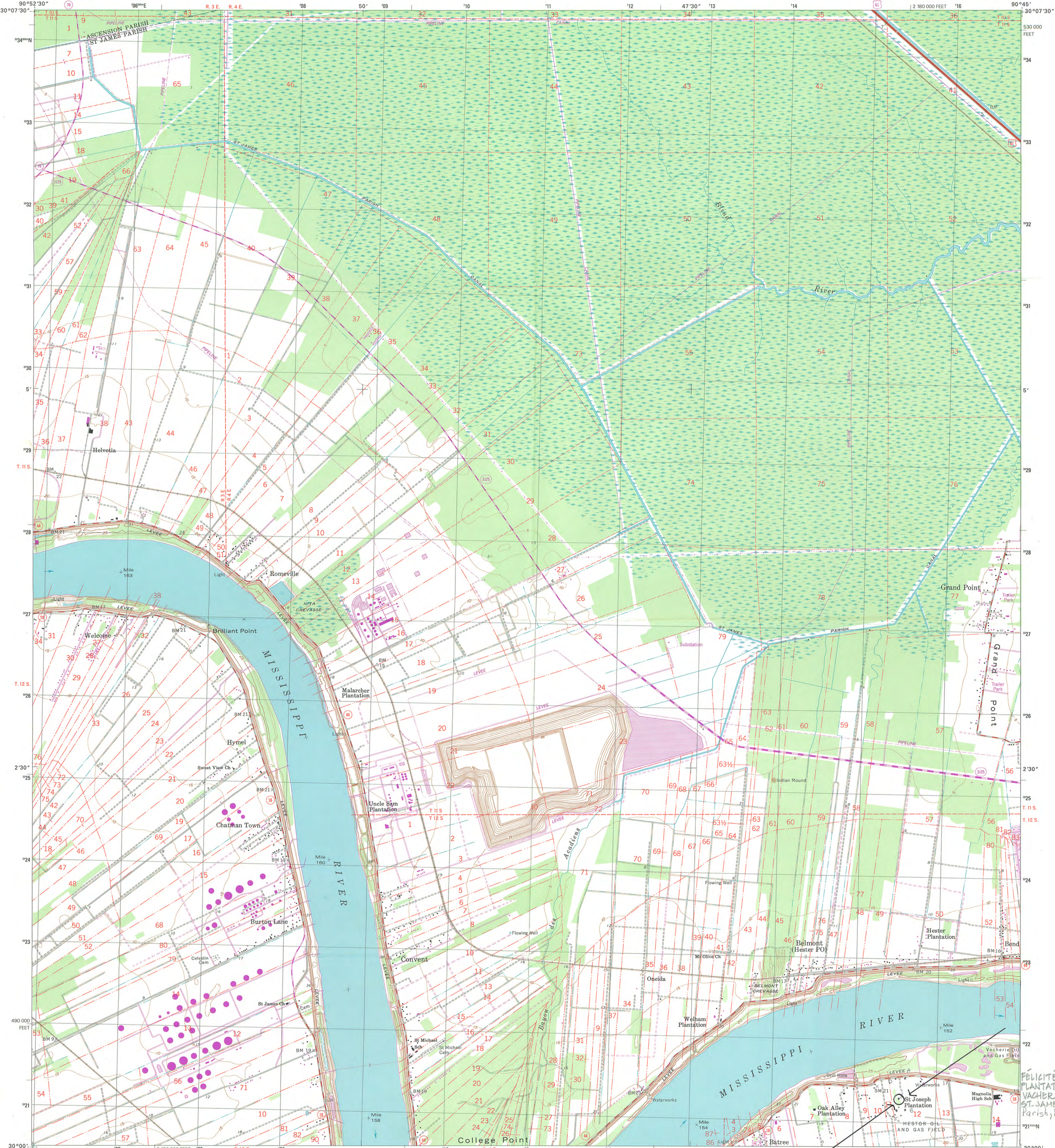
David Grunfeld

1/20/2010

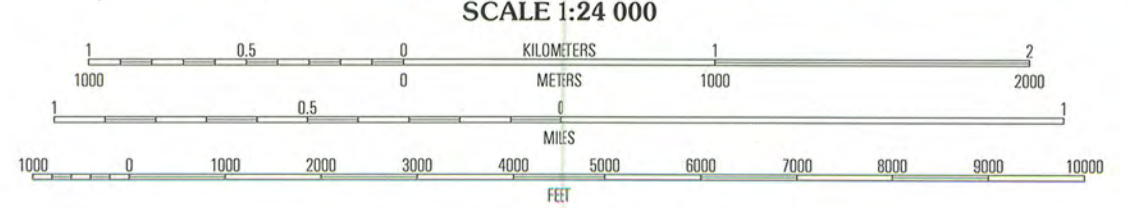
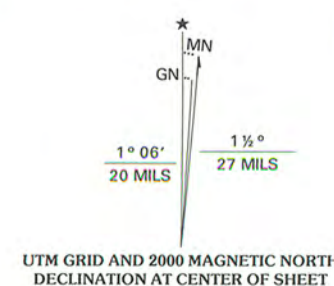
LASHPO Digital Archive

Interior

LA - StJames Parish - Felicite Plantation - 0016.TIFF



Produced by the United States Geological Survey
Topography compiled 1961. Planimetry derived from imagery taken 1990 and other sources. Photoinspected using imagery dated 1999; no major culture or drainage changes observed. PLSS and survey control current as of 1962. Boundaries verified 2000
North American Datum of 1927 (NAD 27). Projection and 10 000-foot ticks: Louisiana coordinate system, south zone (Lambert conformal conic)
1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid, zone 15
North American Datum of 1983 (NAD 83) is shown by dashed corner ticks. The values of the shift between NAD 27 and NAD 83 for 7.5-minute intersections are obtainable from National Geodetic Survey NADCON software
All or part of this quadrangle lies within a subsidence area. Information shown in purple may not meet USGS content standards and may conflict with previously mapped contours



CONTOUR INTERVAL 5 FEET
NATIONAL GEODETIC VERTICAL DATUM OF 1929
TO CONVERT FROM FEET TO METERS, MULTIPLY BY 0.3048

THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS
FOR SALE BY U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, P.O. BOX 25286, DENVER, COLORADO 80225
AND LOUISIANA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION AND DEVELOPMENT, BATON ROUGE, LOUISIANA 70804
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST

See note concerning cartographer's error in part 8

ROAD CLASSIFICATION

- Primary highway hard surface
- Secondary highway hard surface
- Light-duty road, hard or improved surface
- Unimproved road
- Interstate Route
- U.S. Route
- State Route

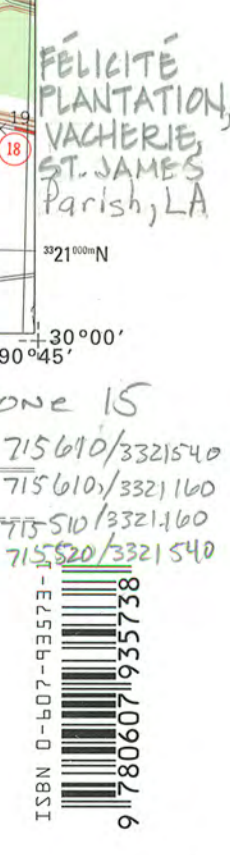
QUADRANGLE LOCATION

Zone 15
A: 715610/3321540
B: 715610/3321100
C: 715510/3321100
D: 715500/3321540

1	2	3
4	5	6
7	8	

- 1 Gonzales
- 2 Sorrento
- 3 Mount Airy NW
- 4 Donaldsonville
- 5 Latcher
- 6 Madewood
- 7 Lagan
- 8 Lower Vacherie

CONVENT, LA
1999
NIMA 7844 III SE-SERIES V885





MITCHELL J. LANDRIEU
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

State of Louisiana
OFFICE OF THE LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR
DEPARTMENT OF CULTURE, RECREATION & TOURISM
OFFICE OF CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT
DIVISION OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION

PAM BREAUX
SECRETARY

SCOTT HUTCHESON
ASSISTANT SECRETARY

January 26, 2010

National Park Service 2280, 8th Floor
National Register of Historic Places
1201 "I" Street, NW
Washington, DC 20005



RE: Felicite Plantation, St. James Parish, LA

To Whom It May Concern:

Enclosed please find a nomination form with supporting materials for the above referenced property. Should you have any questions, please contact me at 225-219-4595.

Sincerely,

Patricia Duncan
Architectural Historian
National Register Coordinator

PD/pld
Enclosures