

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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**National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form**

NATIONAL
REGISTER

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

1. Name of Property

historic name Graugnard Farms Plantation House

other names/site number Bon Secours Plantation

2. Location

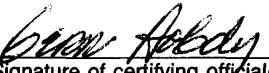
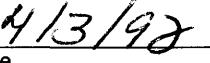
street & number 5825 LA Hwy 18 N/A not for publication

city or town St. James vicinity

state Louisiana code LA county St. James code 093 zip code 70086

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

 
Signature of certifying official>Title Gerri Hobdy, Date 4/13/92
LA SHPO, Department of Culture, Recreation and Tourism

State of Federal agency and bureau

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

Signature of certifying official>Title

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

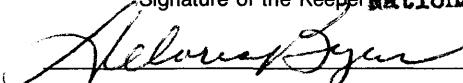
4. National Park Service Certification

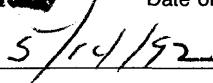
I hereby certify that the property is:

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

Entered in the National Register

Date of Action



 5/14/92

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

1

Noncontributing

2

buildings

sites

structures

objects

1

2

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**

N/A

6. Function or Use**Historic Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions)

Domestic/single dwelling**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions)

Domestic/single dwelling**7. Description****Architectural Classification**

(Enter categories from instructions)

Other: French Creole**Materials**

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation brickwalls weatherboardroof asphalt

other _____

Narrative Description

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

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

Graugnard Farms, St. James Parish, LA

Section number 7 Page 1

The Graugnard Farms Plantation House (c. 1790-1820) is a large one story frame residence in the French Creole style. The house faces the Mississippi River and stands in a rural setting on the western bank in St. James Parish near the community of St. James. Due to levee setbacks, it has been moved back, on the same piece of property, three times. It has also lost its basement story. However, the majority of its important Creole features, and hence its National Register eligibility, remain intact.

The house began life as a fully raised Creole plantation house with a frame upper floor and brick basement story. The premier etage, or main living space, consisted of four rooms with a front gallery and rear cabinet/loggia range. Sometime during the mid-nineteenth century, a second range of four rooms was created from the existing cabinet/loggia space, and another cabinet/loggia range was added beneath a newly attached rear shed roof. This unusually large plan (see Attachment A) survives with only minor changes which will be described below. Although the dates of the first and second setbacks are unknown, the third move can be dated to the 1880s. It was at this time that the owners elected not to rebuild the basement story. Instead, they placed the premier etage three feet above grade on brick piers.

In addition to the floorplan described above, Creole features present in the home today include the following:

- 1) an unusual French pavilion hipped roof with flared eaves and end surfaces more highly pitched than those in front and back. The accompanying truss support system is extremely rare (see Attachment B).
- 2) a hand hewn pegged timber frame,
- 3) bousillage walls,
- 4) chamfered columns on both the front gallery and rear loggia. Those on the gallery appear to be original, while those on the loggia were apparently salvaged from the original loggia which was enclosed during the mid-nineteenth century expansion described above.
- 5) seven sets of French doors, four found on the gallery and three opening onto the loggia.

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**United States Department of the Interior
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Graugnard Farms, St. James Parish, LA

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Other features of interest in the house include:

- 1) three light transoms over all of the French doors,
- 2) heavy exterior shutters,
- 3) five inch weatherboard siding, and
- 4) dormers.

In addition to the lowering of the primary story, as previously explained, the house has undergone the following alterations:

- 1) Sometime before the 1880s move, the salle was partitioned to create a narrow central hall. The French door opening into this new hall was replaced by a single leaf door flanked by sidelights and surmounted by a transom. As a result of this change, the former salle became the dining room and the chambre directly behind became the new salle. A set of pocket doors (still operative) was installed in the wall separating the two rooms.
- 2) Either during or shortly after the 1880s move, mantels showing the influence of the Italianate style were installed in place of the home's original mantels. The replacements do not wrap around the boxed flue in the French manner. In addition, a beaded board dado was installed on the walls of several rooms.
- 3) During the 1920s, a modern bathroom was installed in the southern cabinet. A second bath was carved from space in the front north chambre and the room directly behind this chambre was converted into a modern kitchen. A small storage room was built on the loggia next to the southern cabinet, and closets were installed beside several of the fireplaces. Most of the interior wall surfaces were covered by wallboard, and a double window was installed in one exterior wall.
- 4) The home's chimneys were, by necessity, rebuilt after each move. Much later, the chimney tops were removed as part of a 1970 roof replacement.

Although the Graugnard Farms Plantation House has experienced several changes over the years, it still clearly retains its identity as a Creole house. Indeed, its rare roof truss and flared eaves, bousillage walls, and all but one

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Graugnard Farms Plantation House, St. James Parish, LA
Section number 7 **Page** 3

French door survive intact. Its large and unusual Creole floorplan is still discernable despite the addition of the central hall and bath. While the loss of the home's basement story is certainly regrettable, this space was primarily utilitarian in nature. The more important story, the premier etage, survives. The additions of the formal central entrance door and hallway reflect the Creole response to the Anglo presence in Louisiana and are themselves historic. While the mantels no longer wrap around the fireplace, the French boxed flues are still partially visible. As a rare and old example of the Creole style within St. James Parish, the Graugnard Farms Plantation House is a prime candidate for National Register listing.

Non-Contributing Elements

Two non-contributing elements stand within the boundaries of the nominated property. The first is a modern frame garage. The second is an extremely dilapidated 1880s frame kitchen building which was once attached to the rear of the plantation house. It was moved back from the structure in 1970. The kitchen is being counted as a non-contributing element because it was not present during the period of significance for the main house and does not contribute to its significance. Nor is it individually eligible for the Register.

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:

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

Narrative Statement of Significance

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

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

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

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # LA 1202
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)

architecture

Period of Significance

c.1790-1820; c.1850

Significant Dates

c.1790-1820; c.1850

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

unknown

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:

Graugnard Farms
Name of Property

St. James Parish, LA
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property @ 2.4 acres

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	1	5	7	0	8	8	4	0	3	3	1	9	5	8	0	
Zone	Easting				Northing											
2																

3									4							
Zone	Easting				Northing											
4																

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

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

Please refer to enclosed sketch map.

Boundary Justification

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

11. Form Prepared By

name/title National Register Staff (based on draft nomination prepared by Dr. Jay Edwards,
as referenced in bibliography)

organization Division of Historic Preservation date March 1992

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

city or town Baton Rouge state LA zip code 70804

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

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

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

Photographs

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional items

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

Property Owner

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

name Graugnard Brothers, Inc.

street & number P. O. Box 186 telephone (504) 265-3677

city or town St. James state LA zip code 70086

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

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

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Graugnard Farms, St. James Parish, LA

Section number 8 **Page** 1

The Graugnard Farms Plantation House is locally significant in the area of architecture because it is among a limited number of French Creole residences in St. James Parish, which once had many more examples. Although it is unfortunate that the home's basement story has been lost, it is still among the oldest and largest of Creole homes in the parish. It also displays rare examples of French Creole building techniques.

The 1858 Persac Map of the Mississippi River shows approximately 111 St. James Parish plantations identified by the names of their owners. In addition, the map depicts a large number of unnamed agricultural tracts. Because the Creoles were the dominant group to settle and develop the area before the Civil War, it is fair to assume that many of the houses on these plantations would have been in the Creole style. Thus, one can legitimately estimate that St. James Parish had a minimum of perhaps 150 Creole style houses in 1858. However, the Historic Structures Survey of the parish indicates that only about 31 Creole houses remain. Eighteen of these date from after 1870, leaving only thirteen to represent the parish's earlier Creole tradition. Indeed, with its c. 1790-1820 construction date, Graugnard Farms is one of the three oldest Creole homes in the parish. In addition, Graugnard Farms is one of only eight Creole dwellings in the parish which use bousillage infill in their walls. Furthermore, the home's uncommonly large floorplan (see Part 7) makes it a standout in the parish's Creole collection. Finally, the home's unusually constructed roof truss and flared eaves (see Attachment B) are extremely rare. For all of these reasons, the Graugnard Farms Plantation House is a strong candidate for National Register listing.

Historical Note

The plantation now known as Graugnard Farms was formed from three smaller agricultural tracts. The first, a 300-400 acre tract known as Sidney Plantation, was purchased by Fortune Graugnard and his brother Camille some time after 1886. It was previously owned by a family named Cantrell. A few years later, they added the adjacent 800 acres known as Bon Secours ("Good Help") to their holdings. In 1926 family members purchased an additional tract of 800 acres known as Carbero. The present-day plantation is 2,300 acres in size and is known as both Graugnard Farms and Bon Secours Plantation. It is being farmed by the four sons of Fortune and Denise Graugnard, and the plantation house is lived in by family members.

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Graugnard Farms, St. James Parish, LA

Section number 9 Page 1

Marcello, Mrs. Mary Graugnard.

1973 The Life of Fortune Antoine Graugnard, Sr.

Typescript paper in the possession of Mr. F. A. Graugnard, Jr., of St. James, LA. 4 pp. (copy on file, F. B. Kniffen Cultural Resources Lab, LSU), and in National Register file, Louisiana State Historic Preservation Office.

Historic Standing Structures Survey for St. James Parish, LA.

Site visit by National Register staff.

Edwards, Jay. Draft National Register Nomination, Department of Geography and Anthropology, LSU, Baton Rouge.

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National Park Service**

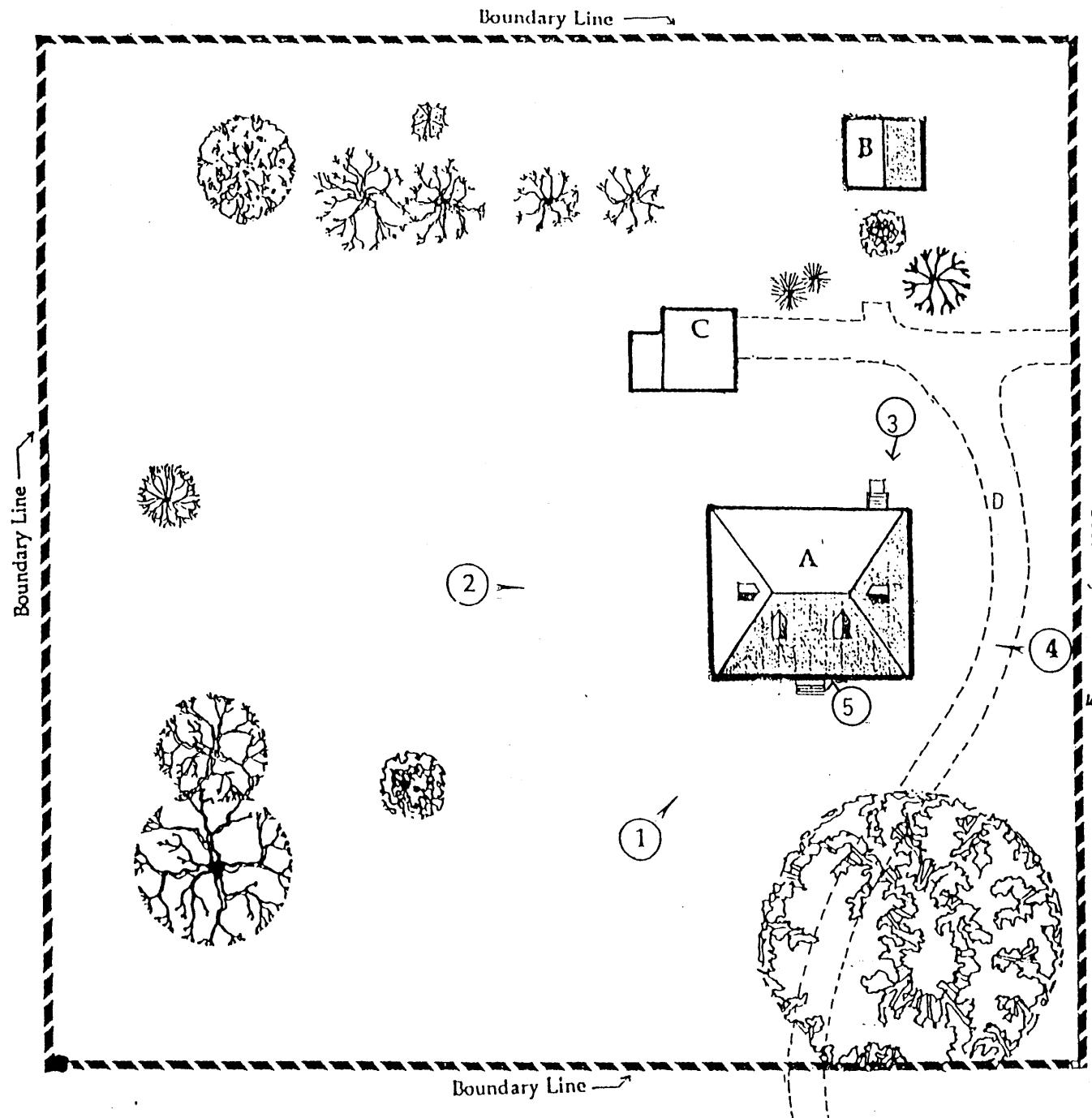
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Graugnard Farms, St. James Parish, LA

Section number 10 Page 1

Boundary Justification

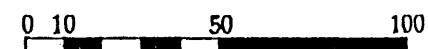
Boundaries follow the fence lines of the yard, encompassing the house and its immediate setting. They do not follow property lines because to have done so would have meant including excessive acreage unrelated to the significance of the resource.



MAP OF GRAUGNARD FARMS PLANTATION
HOUSE

Located in St. James vicinity,
St. James Parish, Louisiana

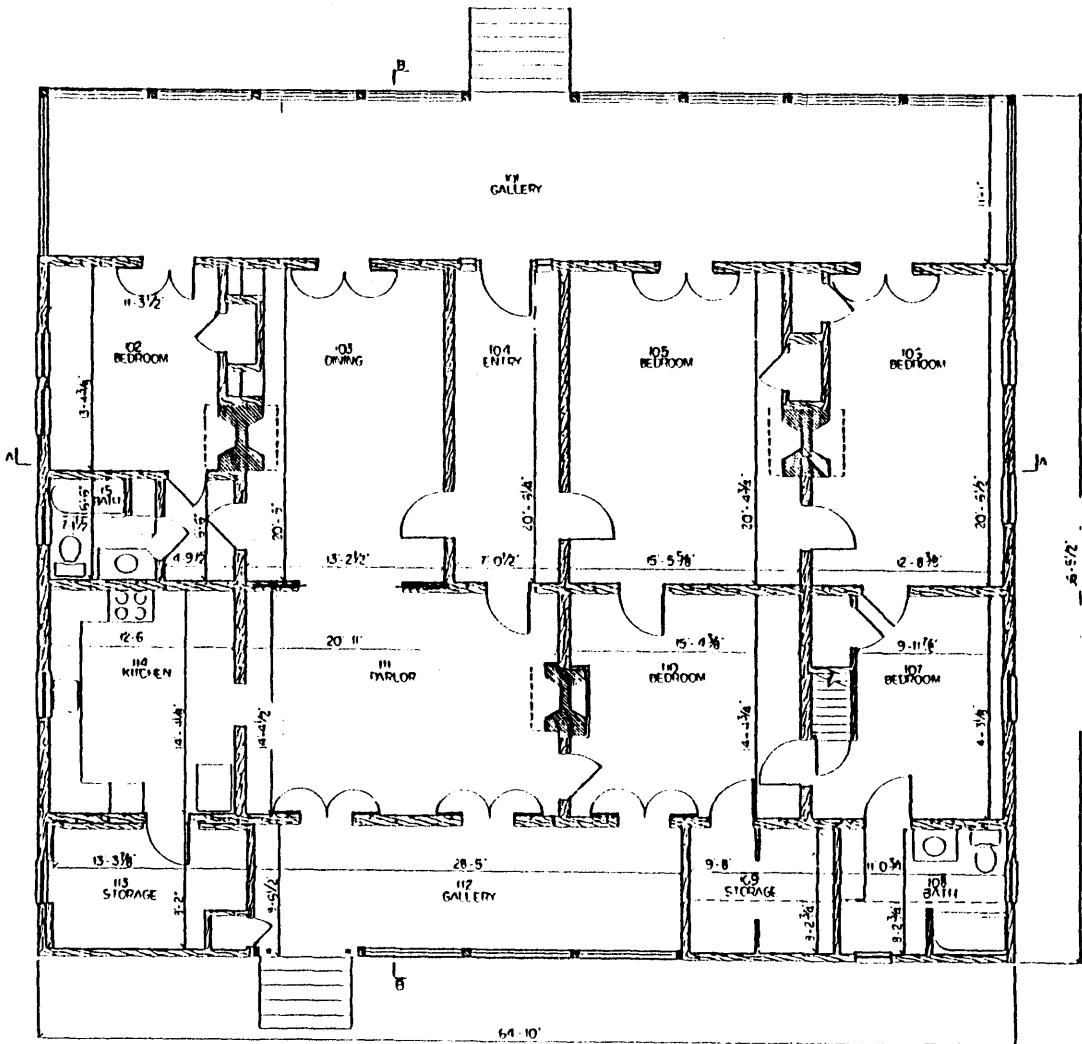
- A - House
- B - KITCHEN (NON-CONTRIBUTING)
- C - Shed/Garage (Non-contributing)
- D - Gravel Drive



Scale 1" = 50'

Graugnard Farms, St. James, St. James Parish, LA
vicinity

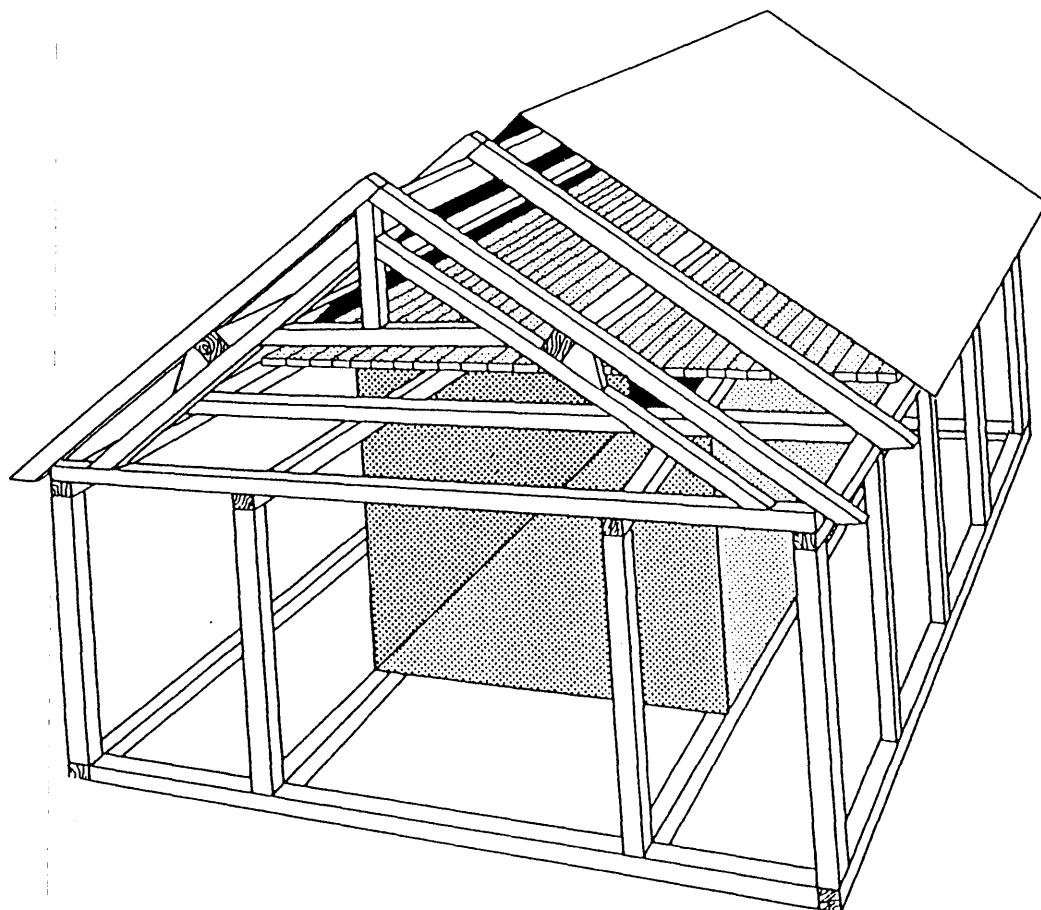
ATTACHMENT A



MAIN FLOOR PLAN

ATTACHMENT B

Graugnard Farms, St. James vicinity, St. James Parish, LA



The Norman French style roof truss. This type is very rare in Louisiana, except on professionally designed early colonial buildings. Government buildings were designed as early as 1731 by I. L. Callot, and 1734 by Bernard Deverges, for the Balise post with this form of roof. However, it failed to become popular in the vernacular and was replaced by Creole Class II and III roofs, even among the same engineers who had employed it when they first arrived from France.

The roof is characterized by the extension of the principal tie beams entirely across the building from the rear loggia/cabinet plate to the front gallery plate. The truss blades extend to the outer ends of the tie beams, and are parallel and immediately under the rafters. This carpentry derives from a tradition in which the gallery was set into an existing form, rather than being added to the outside of it. Many vernacular buildings in Normandy dating to the sixteenth century were framed in this manner. The Graugnard Farms Plantation House in St. James Parish, Louisiana is the only known surviving Creole vernacular building with this form of trussing.