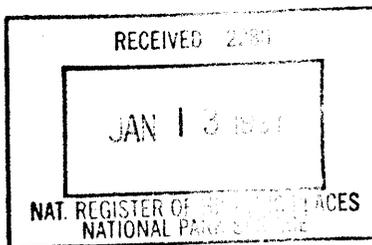


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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form



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

1. Name of Property

historic name Dubuisson, Edward Benjamin House

other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number 437 North Court Street NA not for publication

city or town Opelousas NA vicinity

state Louisiana code LA county St. Landry code 097 zip code 70571

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

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

Jonathan Fricker 1/7/97
Signature of certifying official/Title Jonathan Fricker, Date
Deputy SHPO, Dept 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 commenting 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): _____

Edson H. Beall
Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

2-14-97

Dubuisson, Edward Benjamin House

Name of Property

St. Landry Parish, LA

County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply)

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

Category of Property

(Check only one box)

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

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing

Noncontributing

2

buildings

sites

structures

objects

2

0

Total

Name of related multiple property listing

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

NA

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

Domestic/Single Dwelling (main house)

Domestic/secondary structure

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

Domestic/Single Dwelling (main house)

Domestic/secondary structure

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

Colonial Revival

no style (dependency)

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation brick

walls weatherboard

roof fiberglass

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**

Dubuisson, Edward Benjamin House, St. Landry Parish, LA

Section number 7 Page 1

The Edward Benjamin Dubuisson House (1927) is a large two story frame residence built in a distinctly southern version of the Colonial Revival style. It is the only dwelling on a large city block in the St. Landry Parish town of Opelousas and enjoys an estate-like setting which contributes to its plantation house appearance. The home has received very little alteration and clearly retains the grand architectural character associated with what is termed by some as the Southern Colonial style.

Although the house is not antebellum in age, it was built to look like a plantation house of the colossal column type popular throughout the South. This particular type features a colossal order gallery spanning the facade. The columns support a heavy entablature which outlines the gallery's front and sides. These features are found on the Dubuisson home's exterior. It has a five bay gallery distinguished by thick colossal Tuscan columns and a heavy yet simply styled entablature.

Although the Dubuisson House is reminiscent of grand antebellum plantation houses and many locals believe it to be one, there are various features that confirm its early twentieth century provenance to the trained eye. These include: 1) the small projecting wings on each side of the house, 2) the oversized pediments on the dormers, 3) the fact that the facade gallery entablature partially covers the second story windows, 4) the occasional use of coupled windows, and 5) the absence of a gallery at the second story level.

Specific features of the Colonial Revival style found on the house, other than those noted above, include:

- 1) a symmetrical facade consisting of a large two story main block flanked by smaller two story wings,
- 2) engaged columns marking the corners of the main block,
- 3) pedimented lintels above twelve-over-twelve windows,
- 4) a trabeated main entrance featuring a transom and sidelights,
- 5) dormers with pediments,

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Dubuisson, Edward Benjamin House, St. Landry Parish, LA

Section number 7 Page 2

- 6) lunette windows piercing the attic gables,
- 7) a two story side porch featuring paired one story Tuscan columns on each level,
- 8) twentieth century interpretations of Federal style mantels, and
- 9) a rear porte cochere with a heavy entablature and balustraded roof supported by paired single story Tuscan columns.

The first floor plan centers upon a large central hall containing a grand staircase. A large living room fills one side of the home, while a study, breakfast room and cross hall fill the other. The cross hall leads to a dining room, which is located within one of the wings. The home also has a rear ell which houses a kitchen and back porch. A small servant's bathroom is located just off this porch. The second floor contains seven bedrooms, a sleeping porch, and three baths. All of the bedrooms adjoin an "L" shaped hallway which winds around two sides of the main staircase. A servant's stair connects the kitchen to the rear portion of this hall.

Interior features include wooden floors, chair rails and high molded baseboards throughout. Important first floor rooms also have plaster or wooden ceiling medallions and plaster cornices. Wooden wainscot is found on the walls of the central hall, cross hall, breakfast room, stair landing, and second floor landing; and the dining room walls are entirely paneled. The original cabinets survive in the butler's pantry. In addition to this woodwork, other features of interest in the house include the presence of leaded glass in all the major interior and exterior first floor doors, the use of French doors in the openings between the home's central hall and the rooms flanking it, paneled doors throughout the second floor, the presence of a basement containing a 1920s wine cellar, shutters which can be cranked open and shut from inside each room, the use of terra cotta tiles on the floor of each gallery and porch, a Victorian style mantel with mirrored overmantel in the breakfast room, and a grand central staircase.

The house has experienced surprisingly few alterations since its construction, with only a few very minor changes having been made recently by the current owners. In addition to general repairs and painting, changes made by them include the installation of an island work space, a vent above the stove, and vinyl flooring in the kitchen. They also removed an old coal furnace from the basement and used that space to install a sauna. It was necessary to replace the wine cellar door with one made of a stronger material. These, of course, are all extremely minor alterations;

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

Dubuisson, Edward Benjamin House, St. Landry Parish, LA
Section number 7 Page 3

and the house can be said to be virtually intact. Thus, it retains the overall grand white-columned look upon which its architectural significance is based and is a strong candidate for National Register listing.

Contributing Element

Also on the property is a one story frame building which was presumably a carriage house. There is little documentation available on the building, although it is known to predate the present main house. Sanborn maps show a building of the right size and shape appearing in this location sometime between 1912 and 1921. (Circa 1915 is being used for the purposes of this nomination.) The building is being considered a contributing element as a rapidly vanishing example of a once common building type in towns such as Opelousas. In much the manner of rural properties, town residences historically had dependencies in the year yard. Also, the building should be considered a contributing element because it is an integral part of the history of the property. As noted above, it predates the present main house.

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

NA

(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.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

architecture

Period of Significance

1927 (main house)

c.1915 (dependency)

Significant Dates

1927

c.1915 (dependency)

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

NA

Cultural Affiliation

NA

Architect/Builder

Architect: Herman Duncan

Builder: Homer Ventre

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):

NA

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

Primary location of additional data:

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

Name of repository:

Dubuisson, Edward Benjamin House
Name of Property

St. Landry Parish, LA
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property @ 2 acres

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

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

3 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
Zone Easting Northing
4 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

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

Boundary Justification

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

11. Form Prepared By

name/title National Register Staff
organization Division of Historic Preservation date November 1996
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 Louisiana First Premium Acceptance Company, Inc.
Dwayne Paul Hargroder, President
street & number 109 North Main Street telephone (318) 942-4994
city or town Opelousas state LA zip code 70570

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

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

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Dubuisson, Edward Benjamin House, St. Landry Parish, LA

Section number 8 Page 1

The Edward Benjamin Dubuisson House is locally significant in the area of architecture because it is the most distinctive example of the Colonial Revival style within the community of Opelousas.

Opelousas is a very old town with roots going back to Louisiana's French Colonial era. Although the town has not been officially surveyed, a windshield survey recently completed by a member of the National Register staff provides an accurate picture of the community's architectural patrimony. This survey found that the majority of dwellings within the historic area are small, plain or low key Queen Anne cottages, folk bungalows, shotguns, and galleried cottages. A handful of important examples of the Creole style reflect the town's French heritage, and there is also a fine period example of a Greek Revival style townhouse. The survey also uncovered about a dozen landmark residences from the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. These are well styled examples, moderate to large in size, in the Queen Anne Revival, California Bungalow, and Colonial Revival styles. One suspects that the prosperity brought to Opelousas by the arrival of the Louisiana and Texas Railroad in 1882, as well as that created by year after year of successful sugar and cotton crops in surrounding St. Landry Parish, contributed to this later burst of high style construction.

The Dubuisson House is one of these notable dwellings. It is conspicuous among this group because of its grand plantation home appearance. It is Opelousas' best example of what has been noted by architectural historians as a significant trend in the Colonial Revival movement in the South--the tendency to espouse the "white columned" look of the increasingly romanticized "Old South." With its colossal columns rising from its gallery floor to its roof, the Dubuisson House strongly evokes monumental columned plantation houses found throughout the South. Indeed, many of Opelousas' residents, untrained in architectural history, believe the building to be an antebellum house.

Historical Note

The block upon which the Dubuisson House stands was purchased by Edward Dubuisson in 1893. Dubuisson was a very prominent southwest Louisiana lawyer, banker and politician. At the time he purchased the property, there was already a house on the site. Dubuisson and his wife Rosa had ten children, and after many years the husband finally decided to build a larger home for his family. Construction began in 1925 with the demolition of the older home and ended in 1927. Edward Dubuisson died in 1943; Rosa (a descendant of nineteenth century Louisiana

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United States Department of the Interior
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Continuation Sheet

Dubuisson, Edward Benjamin House, St. Landry Parish, LA

Section number 8 Page 2

governor Jacques Dupre) continued to live in the home until her death in 1973. After her death the house stood vacant until 1991, when it was purchased by the Louisiana First Premium Acceptance Company, Inc. as the home for its company president, Dwayne Paul Hargroder, and his family.

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Dubuisson, Edward Benjamin House, St. Landry Parish, LA

Section number 9 Page 1

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Andrepoint, Carola Ann. *Opelousas: The Place You'll Want to Be*. Opelousas, LA: Andrepoint Printing, Inc., 1992.

_____. "The Dubuisson Home, Opelousas, Louisiana," typescript; copy in National Register file.

Duncan, Herman. Blueprints of Dubuisson House dated October 30, 1925.

Site visit by National Register staff.

Windshield survey of historic Opelousas residential area by National Register staff.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places

Continuation Sheet

Dubuisson House, St. Landry Parish, LA
Section number 10 Page 1

BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The Dubuisson House occupies the city block bounded by Bloch Street to the north, Court Street to the east, Littell Street to the south, and Market Street to the west, bearing the municipal address of 437 Court St.

JUSTIFICATION

Boundaries follow property lines.