

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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NATIONAL REGISTER

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National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name Excelsior
other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number LA Hwy 133 N/A not for publication
city, town Oak Ridge N/A vicinity
state Louisiana code LA county Morehouse code 067 zip code 71264

3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	Contributing	Noncontributing
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district	<u>5</u>	<u>2</u> buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	_____	_____ sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	_____	_____ structures
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	_____	_____ objects
		<u>5</u>	<u>2</u> Total

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A
Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, 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. See continuation sheet.

Leslie P. Tassin August 3, 1989
Signature of certifying official Leslie P. Tassin, LA State Historic Preservation Officer, Dept of Culture, Recreation and Tourism Date
State or Federal agency and bureau _____

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

Signature of commenting or other official _____ Date _____
State or Federal agency and bureau _____

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register. Entered in the National Register 9/7/89
 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:) _____

[Signature] Signature of the Keeper Date of Action _____

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)Italianate

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation brick

walls weatherboard

roof asphalt

other

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

Excelsior (1869-71) is a substantial frame Italianate residence located in the hamlet of Oak Ridge. It enjoys an open rural setting amid the flat delta cotton fields. Alterations consist largely of additions/modifications made over fifty years ago, none of which seriously threaten the house's Italianate character.

The original portion of the house was constructed in 1869 and consists of a five bay, pitched roof, Italianate cottage with a central hall plan two rooms deep. Each of the front gallery pillars features a decorative inset panel with a bolection molding and a rounded top. At one time each also featured a pair of side scroll brackets with an inset quatrefoil, but unfortunately these brackets have been lost. The front gallery is surmounted by a fairly heavy entablature with a denticular cornice and a pair of scroll brackets over each of the pillars. The sides of the house are sheathed in clapboard, but the front gallery wall is sheathed in vertical boards and battens. Windows are six over six and the central front door features a fairly standard transom and side light combination. The interior features flush board walls and long ceiling panels with bolection moldings. Each of the three mantels in the original portion of the house is different. One is in a fairly plain late Greek Revival aedicule style, another is a Gothicized version of this, and the third features heavy moldings with elaborate scroll brackets.

In 1870-71 a pair of gabled flankers was added to the original house. These were reached by extending the front gallery floor a few feet. The flankers feature similar interiors to the original house, including paneled ceilings. Each flanker has a graceful basically Italianate facade consisting of a low pitch gable, gable end returns and a central oculus. The only non-Italianate feature of the flanker facades is the quatrefoil inscribed in each. In 1880 this new larger building was advertised as the Excelsior Hotel.

Between 1903 and 1906 three large dormers were added to the facade of the original portion of the house. The central dormer is larger than the other two and encompasses a balcony under a low pitched gable with a decoratively sawn balustrade and two bracketed posts. These additions echoed the original style of the house and should be viewed within the context of the dying embers of the Italianate taste. Also at this time a Queen Anne Revival polygonal bay was added to one of the rear rooms and a formerly free-standing rear kitchen was joined to

See continuation sheet

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**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Excelsior, Oak Ridge, Morehouse Parish, LA

Section number 7 Page 1

the original house by the construction of a small rear wing.

In 1915 a rear gallery was added which has subsequently been enclosed for a bathroom. Also about this time small hyphen wings were added to connect the flankers to the main house. In about 1930 bungalow style windows and new narrower gauge siding were installed on the front of the flankers. More recently, the aforementioned brackets and the front gallery balustrade have been lost.

Assessment of Integrity:

These changes have been relatively minor given the overall scope of Excelsior's architecture. In addition, it still retains the character defining elements which establish it as an example of the Italianate style (see Item 8), which is the source of its significance.

Contributing/Non-contributing Elements:

There are six service buildings in the back yard at Excelsior. The following four are listed as contributing elements because they appear to be roughly contemporaneous with the main house: (1) a board and batten servants cottage, (2) a clapboarded cabin; (3) a chicken house; and (4) a two door privy.

Non-contributing elements: (1) a frame garage that probably dates from the 1920s or '30s (listed as non-contributing because it is not contemporaneous); (2) a historic cotton shed that was moved to Excelsior.

8. Statement of Significance

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

nationally statewide locally

Applicable National Register Criteria A B C D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) A B C D E F G N/A

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)
architecture

Period of Significance
1869-71

Significant Dates
1869-71

Cultural Affiliation
N/A

Significant Person
N/A

Architect/Builder
Builder: J. H. Limerick

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

Excelsior is of local significance within the context of Morehouse Parish as a very early structure and, more importantly, a very rare local example of the Italianate taste.

Although no formal survey has ever been conducted, the State Historic Preservation Office staff has traveled extensively in the parish and has inspected its principal towns and villages. Suffice it to say that the staff is familiar with the overall scope and quality of the parish's patrimony. Although Morehouse Parish was created in 1844, virtually nothing remains of its early architectural heritage. In fact, little remains even from the pre-Queen Anne Revival era. The present residential building stock consists almost entirely of simple Queen Anne Revival cottages, non-descript frame houses from the early twentieth century, bungalows, and Tudor, Mission or Colonial style houses from the 1930s.

It is against this background that the architectural significance of Excelsior emerges. It is convincingly treated in the Italianate style with features such as single and double brackets, pillars which have panels with rounded tops, and oculi set in shallow pitched gables with end returns. It also features paneled ceilings and a scroll bracket mantel on the interior. Excelsior is thought to be Morehouse Parish's only surviving residential example of the Italianate taste. It is also one of the parish's earliest buildings, a factor which enhances its local standing as a landmark.

The State Review Committee asked that the following be appended to this nomination for informational purposes:

Various locally prominent individuals have lived in the house over the years, including a minister, a principal, teachers, and a professional baseball player. The present owner is a retired school teacher who has amassed quite a collection of local history research materials at Excelsior. Her husband was a professional baseball player in the twenties and thirties, and there is also a great deal of baseball memorabilia at Excelsior.

See continuation sheet

9. Major Bibliographical References

1898 photo of Excelsior. Copy in Register file.

Interview with current owner, Mrs. W. H. Nolan, who has done a considerable amount of primary research on the house. Amazingly enough, in 1926 Mrs. Nolan met J. H. Limerick, the carpenter for the 1869-71 construction.

Previous documentation on file (NPS): N/A

- 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 # _____

See continuation sheet

Primary location of additional data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Specify repository: _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property @ 1 acre

UTM References

A

1	5
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6	1	5	0	6	0
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3	6	1	0	1	2	0
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Zone Easting Northing

C

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B

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Zone Easting Northing

D

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See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

Please refer to enclosed sketch map.

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

Boundary lines follow the property lines of the two lots on which Excelsior stands.

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title National Register staff
organization Division of Historic Preservation date May 1989
street & number P. O. Box 44247 telephone (504) 342-8160
city or town Baton Rouge state Louisiana zip code 70804

Excelsior, Morehouse Parish, LA

