

DATA SHEET

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

PH0698652

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED FEB 5 1979

DATE ENTERED MAR 21 1979

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC **Magnolia Plantation**

AND/OR COMMON
Same

LOCATION *N of Derry on LA 119*

STREET & NUMBER **Cane River area**

CITY, TOWN	Derry <i>Miss.</i>	VICINITY OF	5th - Jerry Huckaby
STATE	Louisiana	CODE	COUNTY
		22	Natchitoches

—NOT FOR PUBLICATION
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT
CODE **069**

CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
			<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT
			<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL
			<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY
			<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME **Dr. and Mrs. Ambrose J. Hertzog** and **Museum Contents, Inc.**

STREET & NUMBER **General Delivery** **P. O. Box 37**

CITY, TOWN **Derry, Louisiana** VICINITY OF **Natchitoches, Louisiana**

LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. **Natchitoches Parish Courthouse**

STREET & NUMBER **Church Street**

CITY, TOWN **Natchitoches** STATE **Louisiana**

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE **Louisiana Historic Sites Survey**

DATE **1978** FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS **State Historic Preservation Office**

CITY, TOWN **Baton Rouge** STATE **Louisiana**

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Magnolia Plantation is set along the Cane River amid open flat farmland. The ten acres immediately surrounding the main house contain numerous live oaks and magnolias. The house itself is approached by means of a gravel driveway set on axis with the central front door. The aforementioned ten acres also contain the overseer's house. South and southeast of the wooded acreage is an area of open fields which contains numerous plantation outbuildings, including a double row of slave dwellings.

The Plantation House

Although the present plantation house dates from 1899, it follows the plan of an 1840 house which occupied the site. The earlier house burned, leaving the brick foundation and ground floor walls, on top of which the present frame house was built. The raised plantation house has one principal floor, under a large pitched roof garret. The five-bay plan has a central hall and double parlors with chimneys set between them. There is also a front gallery and a rear gallery which encompasses not only the house but a rear wing as well.

The house is traditional in form and plan. It is large and plain in character with square post galleries, transom panel doors, and simple Renaissance Revival mantels. The upstairs walls are entirely sheathed in narrow gauge wainscotting with plain mantels. All doors have four panels and windows are sash mounted.

The Overseer's House

The unusually large overseer's house is a hip roof raised Acadian cottage which is almost completely surrounded by square post galleries. Modifications include the tin roof and the interior, which is much reworked. But the transom doors, windows, and shutters remain.

The Slave Quarters

Of the original slave dwellings, eight remain in a double row in the southeast portion of the plantation complex. These are brick, two-room, galleried houses with central chimneys, and gable parapets - (unusually high quality construction for slave cabins). Each fireplace has an iron lintle. There has been some deterioration, including the loss of several parapets, chimney tops, windows and doors. In addition, some gallery roofs have collapsed.

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7. Description (cont'd)

The Cotton Ginning and Pressing Equipment

In the southern end of the complex is a large barn with a heavy hewn structure. The front half of the barn contains a ca. 1830 cotton press which is constructed of massive cypress timbers and is incorporated into the barn structure. Its large carved wood screw was probably turned by mule power. It propelled a rectangular piston into a box forming cotton bales of four to five hundred pounds. To the rear of the barn is a late 19th century double cotton gin and hydraulic press mechanism, (patent plate date 1889). The system consisted of a double tier conveyor belt, which fed the two gins, and ducts which brought the cleaned cotton to the press. The press has two boxes mounted on a central pivoting rod. The boxes rotated about the rod and while one was being filled with cotton, the other was being pressed by the hydraulic piston to form a bale.

The plantation complex also contains a 20th century frame barn, several small log structures, and a frame, gable fronted plantation store, and a pigeonier.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW				
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)	
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION			

SPECIFIC DATES Ca. 1840, 1899 BUILDER/ARCHITECT Builder: Ambrose Hertzog II

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Magnolia Plantation is significant primarily for its excellent complex of outbuildings and dependencies. The slave quarters show a degree of constructional quality and architectural refinement seldom seen in slave dwellings. Moreover, it is unusual for a plantation to retain any slave dwellings at all, and it is highly unusual for slave dwellings to survive in sufficient numbers to constitute a complex, as they do at Magnolia.

The ca. 1830 wooden cotton press is truly of national significance as a representative of the cotton production technology of its period. There are probably only about five or six comparable examples in the South.

Magnolia Plantation is also significant because of its plantation house, one of the largest plantation houses in the area, albeit an undistinguished one.

The land which was to become the nucleus of Magnolia Plantation was obtained by Jean Baptiste Lecomte in a French grant of 1753 and by Ambrose Lecomte in a Spanish grant of 1787. Ambrose Lecomte II was the founder of Magnolia.¹ Maps in the State Land Office made by surveyors in 1827 and 1844 designate Ambrose Lecomte as the owner of the nucleus of the plantation.² It was about 1840, according to family tradition, when Ambrose Lecomte II built the home at Magnolia.³

Census data from 1850 suggests that by that time he was prospering. In that year Ambrose Lecomte was 42 years old, and owner of 182 slaves and \$125,000 worth of real estate. His wife Desiree was 32 years old, and with them in the household were four daughters and a son.⁴ In 1852, Matthew Hertzog, twenty-four years old, married Lecomte's twenty-one year old daughter Atala. Soon afterward he assumed management of the plantation.⁵

As of 1860, Lecomte was the largest slaveholder in Natchitoches Parish and the largest producer of cotton. He owned a total of 7835 acres of land, of which 2240 were improved. His 234 slaves lived in 70 slave dwellings. The previous year his plantation had produced 1133 bales (450-pound bales) of cotton and 20,000 bushels of Indian corn. He owned \$190,915 worth of real estate and \$257,050 worth of personal property.⁶

The decade of the 1860's brought great changes at Magnolia. In 1864, after the Battles of Mansfield and Pleasant Hill, the army of Union General Banks retreated to Alexandria by way of the Cane River country. Some

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Census of 1850, Natchitoches Parish, Louisiana. Population Schedule; Slave Schedule.

Census of 1870. Natchitoches Parish, Louisiana. Population Schedule; Agriculture Census.

Map of Township 7 North Range 5 West by F. D. Newcomb; (1844); Map of Township 7 North Range 6 West by John Dinsmore (1827); both located in State Land Office, Baton Rouge.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY approx. 15 acres

UTM REFERENCES

A ⁵⁰⁵

1,5	30,5	7,0	10	3,4	9,0	5,5	0
ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING	

B

1,5	6,0	5,7	12,15	3,4	9,0	1,7	5
ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING	

C

1,5	6,0	5,5	15,10	3,4	9,0	1,7	5
ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING	

D

1,5	6,0	5,5	12,15	3,4	9,0	4,0	0
ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING	

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Begin on the east side of La. Rt. 119 at a point 5600 ft. north of the Cane River Bridge. Then proceed due northeast 950 ft. Then proceed due south 1400 ft., then proceed due west to the east side of La. Rt. 119. Then proceed northward along Rt. 119 to the beginning point.

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
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STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
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11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE Dr. and Mrs. Ambrose J. Hertzog

ORGANIZATION

DATE

October 1978

STREET & NUMBER

General Delivery

TELEPHONE

(318) 379-2221

CITY OR TOWN

Derry

STATE

Louisiana

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL

STATE

LOCAL

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

~~STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER~~ SIGNATURE

Dennard Camin

TITLE

State Historic Preservation Officer

DATE

1-9-79

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

Charles A. Herring

DATE

3-21-79

ATTEST:

Marcella Hefly

~~DIRECTOR OF THE NATIONAL HISTORIC PRESERVATION~~ KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

3-6-79

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

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8. Significance (cont'd)

of the soldiers burned the home at Magnolia, killing the caretaker, according to family tradition, under the front steps. The family was not at the plantation, having moved temporarily to Natchitoches.⁷

Apparently Ambrose Lecomte II died sometime during the decade of the 1860's, for his name does not appear in the 1870 census. The figures for Matthew Hertzog for that year suggest that the war and its aftermath had greatly reduced the family's holdings. After the war, with the "big house" gone, the family lived in the nearby overseer's house. In 1870 Hertzog owned 2400 acres of land, of which 1000 were improved. The value of his farm was \$12,000 and of his livestock \$8,190. The estimated value of his farm production of the previous year was \$17,839. The farm had yielded 163 bales of cotton (450-pound bales), 3,000 bushels of corn, 420 pounds of wool, and 25 bushels of sweet potatoes. Matthew Hertzog was 41 years old, and listed the value of his real estate at \$12,000 and of his personal estate at \$8,390. With him in the household were his wife Atala, two daughters and three black servants.⁸

In 1899, the "big house" was restored, utilizing the original brick foundation and the surviving brick walls and brick pillars. Ownership of Magnolia Plantation has remained in the same family down to the present. Today it is being farmed in cotton, soy beans, and cattle.⁹

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NOTES

1. Report compiled by Dr. Ambrose J. Hertzog, present owner of the Magnolia house, located in National Register file for Magnolia Plantation, State Historic Preservation Office, Baton Rouge, hereinafter cited as "Hertzog Report."
2. Map of Township 7 North Range 6 West by John Dinsmore (1827); Map of Township 7 North Range 5 West by F. D. Newcomb (1844); both located in State Land Office, Baton Rouge.
3. Hertzog Report.
4. Census of 1850, Natchitoches Parish, Louisiana, Population Schedule, p. 138; Slave Schedule, p. 979.
5. Hertzog Report; Census of 1850, Natchitoches Parish, Louisiana, Population Schedule, pp. 89, 138.
6. Joseph K. Menn, The Large Slaveholders of Louisiana - 1860 (New Orleans: Pelican Publishing Co., 1964), pp. 298-299.
7. Hertzog Report.
8. Hertzog Report; Census of 1870, Natchitoches Parish, Louisiana, Population Schedule, Ward 10, p. 6; Agriculture Census, Wards 10 and 11, p. 9.
9. Hertzog Report.

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CONTINUATION SHEET 4

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9. Bibliography (cont'd)

Menn, Joseph K. The Large Slaveholders of Louisiana - 1860. New Orleans:
Pelican Publishing Co., 1964.

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house, located in National Register file for Magnolia
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