

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

OCT 13 1992

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 Whitney Plantation Historic District

other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number LA Hwy 18 N/A not for publication

city or town Wallace vicinity

state Louisiana code LA county St. John the Baptist Parish code 095 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 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.)

Jon. Fricker October 6, 1992
Signature of certifying official/Title Jonathan C. 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 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:)

Signature of the Keeper Patrick W. Anders Date of Action 11/24/92

Whitney Plantation Historic District
Name of Property

St. John the Baptist 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	
13	14	buildings
3		sites
		structures
		objects
16	14	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/secondary structure

AGRICULTURE/agricultural outbuilding

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

VACANT/not in use

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

Other: French Creole

Federal

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation brick

walls weatherboard, brick

roof metal, asphalt

other

Narrative Description

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

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 N/A
(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 # 1194, 1194A
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

- art
- architecture
- agriculture
- archaeology/historic: non-aboriginal

Period of Significance

- c.1803, 1836-39 (architecture), 1836-39 (art),
- c.1803-1942 (agriculture)
- c.1750-(archaeology)
1942

Significant Dates

- c.1803, 1836-39

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

- N/A

Cultural Affiliation

- Euro-American

Architect/Builder

- Unknown

Primary location of additional data:

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

Name of repository:

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property @ 40 acres

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	1 5	7 2 6 3 9 0	3 3 2 5 9 2 0
	Zone	Easting	Northing
2	1 5	7 2 6 9 6 0	3 3 2 4 9 2 0

3	1 5	7 2 6 3 0 0	3 3 2 5 0 2 0
	Zone	Easting	Northing
4			

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

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

See enclosed sketch map.

Boundary Justification

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

11. Form Prepared By

Archaeological component by:

name/title National Register Staff

Dr. Paul Farnsworth, Louisiana State University, Dept. of Anthropology & Geography

organization Division of Historic Preservation

date June 1992

street & number P. O. Box 44247

telephone (504) 342-8160

city or town Baton Rouge

state Louisiana 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 Formosa Plastics Corporation, USA

street & number P. O. Box 271

telephone (504) 356-3341

city or town Baton Rouge

state Louisiana zip code 70821

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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Continuation Sheet**

Whitney Plantation Historic District, Wallace vicinity, St. John the Baptist Parish, LA

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The Whitney Plantation Historic District is located in St. John the Baptist Parish on the west bank of the Mississippi River on what is believed to be the River's longest remaining agrarian stretch between Baton Rouge and New Orleans. Sugarcane and rice were the principal crops during the historic period, and Whitney's fields are still planted in cane. The district includes three archaeological sites, a large raised Creole plantation house which features elaborate Federal woodwork and superior decorative wall and ceiling murals, and a series of domestic and agricultural dependencies. Among these structures are a rare pigeonnier and plantation store and the last French Creole barn known to survive in Louisiana. Contributing elements range in date from c.1750 to the fifty year cutoff. Fourteen of the district's twenty-seven buildings are non-contributing. Although some of the plantation's historic dependencies have been destroyed and the non-contributing rate is high, the district easily retains its National Register eligibility. Although numerous, the non-contributing elements have minimal visual impact.

All of the district's components are located along and adjacent to a roughly 3,000 foot stretch of the River Road. The Creole mansion and dependencies are grouped in a cluster which forms the focal point of the district. A second and smaller grouping of buildings stands on the former Mialaret land at the farthest upriver point of the district. In 1919 the Whitney Plantation holding expanded to acquire the Mialaret property. Because this acquisition took place during the historic period, buildings at Mialaret are included as part of the Whitney nomination. The district's three archaeological sites are shown on the attached map. Details concerning the standing structures and archaeological components of the district will be provided in separate sections of this nomination form.

The standing structures at Whitney depict the evolution of a Louisiana plantation over a period of 140 years. As a result of the different construction dates, the needs of the labor system which worked the plantation after 1865, and the relatively late acquisition of the Mialaret tract, the locations of the buildings appear somewhat haphazard. The main plantation house faces the river and stands within a small fenced area at the far edge of a large tree-filled space which once served as the front yard. This yard originally held two identical pigeonniers which were placed symmetrically to flank the home. The downriver pigeonnier remains intact, but only the foundation of its upriver twin survives. With one exception, the other outbuildings stand beside and behind the house. The exception is the plantation store, which stands in front of the surviving pigeonnier at the point where the district's principal drive meets the River Road. As previously mentioned, the buildings on the former Mialaret tract stand some distance from the historic Whitney complex at the upriver end of the historic district. Please refer to the attached map for the exact location of each building.

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Section number 7 Page 2Contributing ElementsMain House (Building #1)

The main house at Whitney Plantation was created c. 1803 when a smaller c. 1790 dwelling was significantly expanded. Between 1836 and 1839, the house underwent a remodeling which added several important features, including a series of decoratively painted wall, door, and ceiling murals which contribute greatly to its significance. The expansion was so extensive, and the decorative paintings so important, that the present house should be dated primarily to c. 1803 and 1836-1839.

Surviving architectural evidence shows that the original late eighteenth century house was a symmetrical structure consisting of a large central salle flanked by two smaller chambres of equal size. The wall plates of these three rooms show evidence that rafters were once framed into them, and the floor joists extend to the edges of the gallery and loggia. This framing indicates that the original rooms were surrounded by a gallery and surmounted by a double pitched roof. Doors opening to the gallery were surmounted by four light, segmentally arched transoms. It is not possible to discover if the rooms and gallery were raised on a brick lower story. The three rooms were incorporated into a much larger structure, which included a new and expanded hip roof, during the c. 1803 expansion.

The c. 1803 Whitney home is 70 feet wide and 42 feet deep. It is a fully raised Creole plantation house with a plastered brick lower story. Its brique-entre-poteaux upper floor still has its original interior plaster walls and its early exterior one foot wide, beaded siding. The upper floor serves as the premier etage, or primary living space, and reflects Creole geometry in its floorplan. It is five rooms wide and one room deep with a full length gallery across the front and a cabinet/loggia range on the rear. The cabinets are somewhat deeper than the accompanying loggia, extending slightly into the space which normally would have been allocated to the rooms directly in front of them (see attached plan). The plan of the lower story basically repeats this layout. However, one of the central spaces is subdivided into two rooms. As happened occasionally in large Creole houses, the dining room is located within the lower story beneath the salle. The absence of hallways and use of external stairways are characteristic traits of the Creole building tradition.

Other Creole features surviving from this period include the following:

- 1) five round Tuscan columns located on the rear lower story loggia. These columns are constructed of wedge shaped bricks.

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- 2) exposed beaded ceiling beams on the lower loggia and in all but one lower story room. The lower gallery's ceiling also displays exposed beams. However, they are installed in a boxed pattern, are unbeaded, and may be replacements.
- 3) a Class III, hipped umbrella roof (see attachment) with supporting Norman truss and central chimneys, and
- 4) wraparound mantels, some with decorative overmantels. Four of the mantels wrap around the fireplace flue in the traditional French manner. These are located in the basement dining room, the salle, and the two original upper story chambres. The decorative overmantels are found in the latter three rooms. Two other mantels, located within the upper story cabinets, wrap on one side only. The styling of the mantels in the upper story cabinets suggests that they may have been salvaged from the original c. 1790 house.

The elaborate woodwork found in the salle and two flanking chambres is one of the home's most distinctive features from the c. 1803 period. Each of the mantels and overmantels in these three rooms is decorated in the Federal style. The woodwork surrounding the salle's fireplace is the most ornate. This mantel and overmantel feature reeded pilasters on molded bases and extensive use of the French lozenge motif. In addition, the overmantel has a denticulated and molded cornice which extends to encircle the room. Although less ornate than the salle's mantel decoration, the mantels and overmantels within the two chambres are outstanding examples of Federal styling in their own right. They feature reeded entablatures and pilasters on molded bases. In one of the two rooms the pilasters are reeded. In the other they are fluted with reeding on the lower section. Overmantels in both rooms are surmounted by cornices identical to that found in the salle. Chair rails and baseboards are also present in each of these three rooms.

The 1836-1839 remodeling made several alterations in Whitney's appearance. First, the home's original upper story French doors were replaced with newer versions containing three lights and one large wooden panel per leaf. The French doors opening from the front gallery into the lower story dining room may also have been installed or replaced at this time. The French doors opening from this room onto the rear loggia do not match those on the opposite side of the room, being lower and smaller in scale. Their origin is unknown. It is believed that the original windows were replaced with six-over-six sash windows at this time. Another 1836-1839 change was the replacement of the upper gallery's colonnettes with elongated rectangular pillars with molded capitals. Roof dormers and the upper loggia's distinctive louvered jalousies were also added at this time.

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The most important addition to the home associated with this period was the ornamental painting done on the interior of the salle and the walls of the loggia. Strong circumstantial evidence attributes the paintings to Italian artist Domenico Canova, who practiced his craft in South Louisiana from the mid-1830s until his death in 1868. The salle's decoration includes the following: 1) the painting of a faux marbre finish (now faded) on the room's mantel and baseboard. The mantels in the two adjoining rooms were also painted in the faux marbre manner, but the design is so faded that little remains visible. 2) the application of gold leaf to the overmantel, cornice, and door surrounds, and 3) the painting of floral and other motifs on the wooden ceiling and doors.

An early example of the Renaissance Revival style in the decorative arts, the designs have been traced to a pattern book, Manuel de Peintures, published in Paris (no date). The ceiling decoration culminates in a central medallion composed of anthemions. This is surrounded by a wide circular band of multi-colored flowers and foliage. The flower band, in turn, is encircled by a wide painted gold frame anchored by four strapwork cartouches terminating in decorative clusters of acanthus foliage and ivy sprigs. In addition, the gold frame is encircled by a band of ivy leaves. The ceiling also features a set of four large blue crests emblazoned with the initials "M. H.," presumably standing for then owner Marcellin Haydel. Located in the center on each of the room's four sides, they are connected by a series of panels with inset flowers. The crests are also linked by an almost continuous string of ivy. Many of the cartouches and crests are ornamented with painted jewels rendered to suggest the effect of reflected light. The salle's four sets of French doors exhibit arabesques of flowers framed by slender vines on the panels beneath the glass. All of the French doors survive intact. However, two interior doors painted in a similar manner have been lost. Also lost was a large still life painting depicting fruit. Destroyed in a failed restoration attempt, it was located above the dining room mantel.

The loggia's painted wooden walls probably reflect the Creole tradition of using exterior spaces as rooms and decorating them accordingly. The loggia wall painting consists largely of bolection panels in various Renaissance Revival shapes. The culmination of this decoration is a central trompe l'oeil semi-circular molded niche containing a five foot tall urn mounted on a two foot pedestal. A chubby, naked infant known as a putti sits atop the urn's lid. He holds a broom and is surrounded by fabric. The urn's spiral handles feature the profile of a bearded face looking outward. Surviving photographs show that the entire front wall of the upper gallery was also once decorated with marbled panels similar to those on the loggia. Unfortunately, these were covered over some time after 1936. However, the designs survive beneath the now peeling white paint.

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Despite the passage of many years, the Whitney Plantation House has remained surprisingly intact. Other than the loss of the decorative painted elements described above, only four noteworthy alterations have occurred since the 1836-1839 remodeling:

- 1) In the late nineteenth century the seven inch square Spanish pavers which served as flooring for the lower story were replaced by rectangular bricks in all but two rooms.
- 2) The dormers were changed to feature segmentally arched tops which rise above the dormer roofs in the manner of a false front. This work also dates to the late nineteenth century.
- 3) Sometime before 1928 the front gallery underwent extensive repairs. The original round Tuscan columns on the lower level were razed and replaced by square, vaguely classical piers. The gallery plate above the piers was removed and a concrete beam installed in its place. Finally, the gallery's exterior staircase was rebuilt in a reversed position. Around this time the loggia's exterior stairway was also rebuilt.
- 4) Bathrooms were added to the home. One was installed within the upriver ground floor cabinet and another in the downriver upper end room. A third was carved from one side of the upper loggia.

Building of Unknown Use (Building #6)

This one-story frame building appears to have been constructed after 1880. Although archaeological research has proven conclusively that the site upon which it stands was that of the plantation's detached kitchen, no direct evidence survives to prove that the current structure actually served in that capacity. It is known that the building was used as a workshop in the later days of the plantation. At some point, pigeon holes were cut in either end of the gabled roof so that the loft could be used as another pigeonnier. The building lost its chimney sometime between 1930 and 1940.

Early Nineteenth Century Barn (Building #7)

This one story frame structure originally had a complete Norman truss roof. However, many of the truss' timbers have been removed and the remaining members are propped up. Tenon holes and pegs are still visible in the structure. Despite the presence of the remnants of the truss, the barn cannot be classified as French Creole because its two room floorplan does not reflect Creole geometry. However, the barn appears to date to before 1820. The building's wide drop

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siding matches that found on the house and square nails are also visible. Wide flush boards are also found on the interior walls.

Overseer's House (Building #12)

Although the core of this one story frame building is Creole and may be antebellum, the structure was moved to its current site and expanded some time before or around 1900. It has two plain wraparound mantels, exposed beaded ceiling beams in some spaces, and French joinery. However, no historic infill survives. Salvaged parts were apparently used in the expansion. The building has been covered with asbestos shingles.

Shed (Building #13)

Building #13 is an early twentieth century board and batten shed.

French Creole Barn (Building #15)

Architectural evidence shows that the one story, frame French Creole barn was constructed at approximately the same time as the main house was expanded (c. 1803). The siding and nails used on each are identical. The barn stands on three foot high brick piers, features French joinery, and has a tall hipped roof supported by Norman trusses. Its plan reflects Creole geometry in that an inner core room is completely surrounded by ancillary spaces. In this case the ancillary spaces consist of a wide passageway on three sides of the core and a room on the fourth side. Some original door hinges with heart shaped ends survive. The original roofing material would have been wooden shingles. Today the barn has a metal roof.

Manager's House Privy (Building #16)

This privy is built of board and batten siding and has a corrugated metal roof. It appears to be over 50 years old.

Manager's House Storage Shed (Building #17)

This small board and batten shed with a corrugated metal roof appears to be over 50 years of age.

Manager's House (Building #21)

This one-and-one-half story frame house is typical of the 1920s. A folk bungalow, it stands on brick piers, has two front doors, and is two rooms wide and three rooms deep. Two small additional rooms have been added to the rear of

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this core. Large dormers and gables provide light to the upper story rooms. The building's only decorative element is a set of transom windows, one in each of the two front rooms. These are subdivided in a diamond-like pattern. The ceilings are covered by narrow gauge beaded board. This covering also survives on the walls beneath a later layer of wallboard.

Gardener's Shed (Building #22)

This one room shed is constructed of vertical planks, has a gabled roof, and appears to be over fifty years of age.

Pigeonnier (Building #23)

Whitney's surviving brick pigeonnier appears to have been built before 1820. The square shaped structure is almost a full two stories tall and has a hipped roof flared at the bottom in the French Creole manner. The original roof covering of wood shingles has been replaced with metal. The eaves originally rested upon shaped outriggers, about half of which have been replaced by plain rafters. Narrow rectangular screened openings, appearing to be original, are cut into each of the four walls directly beneath the roof. One of these openings has been expanded downward to create a second story door which must be reached by a ladder. Birds enter the second story roost through a series of holes cut into two of the pigeonnier's walls. Several cantilevered brick perches survive beneath these openings. The floorless bottom story was used for storage. It is pierced by an unglazed window with a batten shutter and an opening whose door has been lost. The woodwork around the doors and other openings appears to have been replaced.

Plantation Store (Building #24)

The Whitney Plantation Store (c. 1890) is a one story frame structure with a gabled roof extending over a porch. Three slender wooden posts support the porch gable; the fourth post has been lost. The store has front and rear French doors protected by screens and shutters. Shutters also protect the building's six over six glazed windows. The two room floorplan remains intact. A large sales room retains its original counters and shelving. A smaller office, located on the east side at the rear, features a sliding window which opens into the sales area. A small bathroom, added at a later date, is located beneath the attic stair.

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1884 Mialaret House (Building #27)

This frame house exhibits elements of both the Creole and Greek Revival styles. Of special importance is its briquette-entre-poteaux construction. Although at first glance it appears to date from the 1850s, it is believed that the house was actually constructed around 1884 using salvaged parts from the original Mialaret House, which was destroyed by a tornado in that year.

Archaeological Sites

The Whitney Plantation Historic District contains three archaeological sites: 16SJB11 (The Whitney House Site), 16SJB42, and 16SJB55. The sites were investigated by archaeologists from Coastal Environments, Inc. in 1991.

16SJB11, also known as the Whitney house site, is located immediately south of Louisiana Highway 18 in the extreme northwestern portion of irregular Section 17, T.11S., R.18E. The site adjoins the main Whitney big house and its complex of buildings.

The tract containing the big house residential complex was examined using intensive controlled shovel testing on a ten meter grid interval. The area was found to contain archaeological deposits with numerous ceramics, glass fragments, nails, brick rubble and other artifacts. Intact midden was located in several areas behind the main house, around Building #6, and south of the large French barn. In some areas, occupational debris was encountered to a depth of approximately 50 centimeters. In addition, two small refuse pits and an unidentified brick feature were located. The ceramics recovered included eight lead-glazed coarse earthenware sherds, two French faience sherds, 40 creamware sherds, 93 pearlware sherds, 89 whiteware sherds, 7 porcelain sherds and 5 stoneware sherds. The glass recovered was primarily from containers (214), with only 13 sherds of flat glass and one lamp glass sherd being recovered. Based on the ceramics, an initial occupation date around 1790 is indicated, while the glass indicates activities on the site through the 1950s.

16SJB42 is located downriver from the main complex on the south side of Louisiana Highway 18 in a plowed sugar cane field. It is located in the extreme northern end of Section 17. The densest concentration of cultural materials covers an area measuring approximately 70 meters SW-NE by 50 meters SE-NW. There

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is a scatter of surrounding artifacts, probably as a result of plowing. Archaeological investigations included extensive surface collections and shovel testing. The testing revealed that a midden between 7 and 18 centimeters deep overlies the natural levee sediments. Large numbers of eighteenth century European ceramics, such as French faience, faience brune, lead-glazed coarse earthenware, French slip-decorated coarse earthenwares, green-glazed Saintonge coarse earthenwares, and several sherds of English slip-decorated, combed coarse earthenware, were recovered. This last ceramic is very rare and unusual in Louisiana sites. A small quantity of historic aboriginal artifacts were also recovered, probably used in the kitchens and households of early colonial settlers. In addition to the mid-eighteenth century ceramics, a large number of late eighteenth and early nineteenth century creamwares and pearlwares were recovered, indicating occupation through the early part of the nineteenth century. Other artifacts included kaolin pipestems, gun flints and container glass.

It is believed that 16SJB42 represents the initial Euro-American occupation of the property encompassed within the later Whitney plantation. Estimates for the site's occupation are as early as 1750 through to 1820. This may be the original homesite of Ambrose Haydel after he and his family moved upriver from New Orleans, before the Whitney House site (16SJB11) was occupied. Although the midden lies within the plow zone and is therefore disturbed, it is highly probable that deep features such as wells, privies and trash pits survive beneath the plow zone. Further, as one of the earliest sites in the region, even the disturbed deposits have the potential to address a number of important questions about the early Euro-American settlement in the area.

16SJB55 is located just upriver of the main complex 30 meters south of Louisiana Highway 18 in the extreme northwest corner of Section 17. The site consists of a rectangular sheet midden up to 28 centimeters in depth. Most of the midden is in the plow zone, and has been disturbed. The midden is a dense concentration of mid to late nineteenth century architectural and occupational refuse. Among the artifacts collected: 209 whiteware sherds, 6 redware sherds, 93 stoneware sherds, 18 container glass sherds, brick rubble and shell. The artifacts indicate an occupation date between 1860 and 1890. The site is believed to have been the house site of P. St. Martin, who, in partnership with Theophile Perret, purchased Whitney Plantation in 1880. Like the original Mialaret House, this house was destroyed during a tornado in November 1884. Although the midden appears to have been largely disturbed by agricultural activities, there is a high probability that intact features, such as privies and trash pits, remain intact below the plow zone. Further, the relatively short span of occupation at the site suggests that even the disturbed midden deposits can provide significant information about an important time period in Louisiana's history.

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Archaeological site boundaries presented in this nomination are those drawn by Coastal Environment, Inc., based upon testing done in 1991. They represent the extent of artifact distributions, intact midden and/or archaeological features. The boundaries of 16 SJB 11 (the Whitney House Site) require further explanation. The area in front of the house was tested, but not included in the boundaries because no midden and few features were encountered, the principal exception being the already discernible foundation of a pigeonnier.

Non-Contributing Elements

Several structures within the Whitney Plantation Historic District have been designated as non-contributing elements due to their advanced state of deterioration, loss of integrity, and/or age of less than 50 years. A brief description of each follows:

Shed of Unknown Use (Building #2)

This low, open shed with plank walls and corrugated metal roof is less than 50 years of age.

Entertainment Pavilion (Building #3)

This structure is constructed of concrete blocks, with the upper walls screened on three sides. It dates to c. 1950.

Saddle Shed (Building #4)

This small frame structure was built from salvaged parts. In the opinion of the Division of Historic Preservation, it is less than 50 years of age.

Privy (Building #5)

Like the saddle shed, this small frame building was constructed from salvaged parts. It is also believed to be less than 50 years old.

Pump House/Shed (Building #8)

This wooden shed with a corrugated metal roof is so deteriorated that its integrity has been lost.

Agricultural Sheds (Building #s 9, 10, 14, 18)

These four low modern sheds are sheathed and roofed in corrugated metal.

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Garage (Building #11)

Built of re-used parts, this deteriorated small frame garage with a corrugated metal roof is less than 50 years old.

Clerk's House Shed (Building #19)

This low, one-room, corrugated metal shed is less than 50 years old.

Clerk's House (Building #20)

This one story, frame, four room house also shows signs of being constructed from salvaged parts. It is sheathed in asbestos shingles. It dates to the 1950s.

Modern Mialaret House (Building #25)

This simple, frame, one-story house appears to be less than 50 years of age.

Mialaret Barn (Building #26)

This frame building has undergone a great deal of patch and repair work over the years, including the total replacement of its roof structure. These problems are serious enough to compromise the integrity of the building.

Assessment of Integrity

While some of the domestic and agricultural outbuildings within the Whitney Plantation Historic District have been lost and others are in a deteriorated state, none of the contributing elements is so deteriorated that its historic character is destroyed. The district still easily conveys its identity as a plantation complex and, hence, retains its National Register eligibility. Although there are numerous non-contributing buildings, their visual impact is minimal because they are low in scale, and many are quite small. (Please refer to accompanying general view photos.) In fact, one barely even notices the non-contributing buildings because the larger historic buildings are visually dominant. Very importantly, the pigeonnier, French Creole barn, and plantation store, which are the district's most important surviving outbuildings, are all in relatively good condition. There is no question that someone from the historic period would recognize Whitney's historic dependencies.

Three issues of concern must be addressed regarding the integrity of Whitney's French Creole main house, which is being nominated for its architectural and artistic significance. The first is the replacement of the front lower gallery's round columns by thick piers. The classical styling of the

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twentieth century piers blends well with the 1836-39 pillars on the upper gallery. The late nineteenth century alteration of the dormers to a more classical appearance of the 1836-1839 remodeling. Thus, these changes are not significant visual intrusions.

The second issue is the addition of bathrooms within the home. Two of these are fitted neatly into the existing structure without impacting the floorplan or important decorative features. Unfortunately, the third bath does reduce the size of the loggia and encloses part of the wall paintings in that area. However, the jalousies hide this change from the outside, and the wall paintings remain intact on what are now two bathroom walls.

The condition and loss of some of Whitney's painted surfaces is the third integrity issue. Although it is unfortunate that the two doors and the dining room painting are now gone, much more of the decorative paintings survives than has been lost. Except for natural fading and a twentieth century covering of varnish, the loggia's exceedingly rare paintings remain intact and virtually untouched since their application. In addition, it is believed that the equally rare covered front gallery paintings can be exposed and restored. The salle's surviving paintings have also been covered by varnish, but otherwise they remain intact and untouched. They can also be returned to their original brilliance through treatment by professionals trained in art restoration. The change in the lower floor's paving material is not significant since the floor still exhibits the masonry character of the original. Other than these changes, the house remains remarkably intact and true to its c. 1839 post-remodeling appearance. As one of Louisiana's oldest and most artistically and architecturally outstanding Creole houses, the Whitney mansion is eminently eligible for National Register listing.

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The Whitney Plantation Historic District is significant because of the age, superior quality, rarity, and variety of its resources. The district's plantation house is significant at the state level in the area of architecture as one of Louisiana's most important examples of Creole architecture. Its Creole and Federal woodwork is particularly important. The home also contains painted ceilings, doors, and wall murals dating to between 1836 and 1839 which are significant at the national level in the area of art. Whitney is significant at the state level in the area of agriculture as an important surviving historic plantation complex. The period of significance under agriculture extends from c.1803, the date of the earliest dependency, to 1942, the fifty year cutoff. The plantation has remained in virtually constant agricultural production from its settlement up to and past the fifty year cutoff. Finally, the district is of state significance in the area of archaeology because its three archaeological sites address various research questions raised in Louisiana's Comprehensive Archaeological Plan, as outlined below. The date of occupation for 16 SJB 11 is c.1790 through the 1950s, c.1750-1820 for 16 SJB 42, and c.1860-90 for 16 SJB 55. Hence, the overall period of significance under archaeology is c.1750 to 1942, the fifty year cutoff.

ARCHITECTURE - STATE SIGNIFICANCE

The Whitney Plantation House is significant in the area of architecture at the state level because it is a rare and landmark example of a raised Creole plantation house -- the ultimate expression of French architecture in Louisiana. Whitney exhibits superior examples of rare Creole and Federal woodwork and a rare Creole construction technique. The home's age places it among the oldest known surviving Creole houses in Louisiana.

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 houses, while only approximately thirty (30) are members of the distinct group of substantial raised plantation houses regarded as the apex of the Creole style. Whitney is one of these.

One of the distinguishing features of these Creole houses was the French wraparound mantel, which in the earliest and finest of Creole homes was accompanied by a decorated overmantel. Today, only a small number of Creole houses containing these features survive. The Division of Historic Preservation knows of between five and ten houses in New Orleans and only eight outside that city in which wraparound mantels with decorative overmantels exist. The Whitney Plantation House is one of these early and rare Creole survivors. In addition, Whitney is special because the majority of its woodwork is in the Federal style.

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In Louisiana, far more Creole houses with Greek Revival woodwork have survived than have those showing Federal influence. Furthermore, the salle's mantel and overmantel also feature lozenges, a French motif which reinforces the home's Creole origin and is only occasionally found in combination with the Federal style.

In addition to its woodwork, the Whitney Plantation House is significant because it contains a complete Norman roof truss. Few examples of this rare Creole construction technique survive, and they are usually found only in very early Creole houses. Having reached its final size and configuration c. 1803, Whitney antedates all but a handful of the state's surviving French Creole homes.

ART - NATIONAL SIGNIFICANCE

Whitney's surviving exterior loggia wall paintings are of such rarity and importance that they are being nominated at the national level of significance in the area of art. Although the application of decorative paintings to the exterior of homes apparently was common in the Caribbean, and in particular in Cuba, it is incredibly rare in the United States. Only two instances are known. One is found at the Alsop House in Connecticut. The other is at Whitney. According to Frank Matero, an expert in preservation technology, art restoration and mural painting at the University of Pennsylvania, Whitney's paintings are believed to be earlier than the Alsop House and are known to be more intact. While Whitney's loggia paintings have remained virtually untouched and have suffered only natural fading since their 1830s application, large sections of the Connecticut house's decorations have been repainted. In addition, Whitney's paintings are of high quality as judged by American standards. The artist employed a variety of design motifs in completing the loggia. The painted features are foreshortened and rendered in three dimensions with appropriate shadow patterns, thus creating a realistic appearance. In addition, the shadow effects on the trompe l'oeil niche are quite sophisticated. The paintings are obviously the work of a skilled, well trained, and experienced professional painter. Matero states that the exterior paintings at Whitney make it the most important house of that period in the nation.

Although not as rare as the exterior murals, Whitney's painted salle ceiling and doors are also significant at the national level. There is no way to know exactly how many houses once had interior paintings, but it should be noted that such high style decoration would have been relatively uncommon because only the very wealthy could afford it. The same superior craftsmanship found on the loggia's trompe l'oeil niche is exhibited in the interior work. For example, Matero especially cites the simulated reflections of light in the ceiling's jeweled elements as illustrative of the artist's superior skill. He estimates

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that Whitney is one of less than twenty-five surviving houses dating to this early period and exhibiting this high quality of artistry.

AGRICULTURE - STATE SIGNIFICANCE

The Whitney Plantation Historic District is of state significance in the area of agriculture as one of Louisiana's rare surviving historic plantation complexes. Its distinction arises from the overall rarity of plantation complexes, the age and individual rarity of some of the buildings, and the fact that the complex illustrates the development of a plantation from the antebellum period well into the twentieth century.

Louisiana retains many plantation houses, but on the whole little attention has been given to preserving the coterie of dependencies that were the "workhorses" of cotton and sugar production. These support structures have lost their original utilitarian value and have either been left to fall down or been the victims of progress. Historically the landscape was dotted with hundreds of plantation complexes such as Whitney, but today they are rare survivors. More often than not, an old plantation in the state retains only the "big house" and sometimes one or two support structures. Whitney is one of only fifteen plantations with surviving complexes of agricultural dependencies. Thus, it is a very important visual reminder of the large agricultural enterprise common in antebellum and post-war Louisiana. Because the plantation was worked continuously throughout the historic period and dependencies were added as needs changed, the complex at Whitney also illustrates the pattern of change in plantation life and agriculture from the beginning of the nineteenth century to the required fifty year cutoff for significance (1942).

The special importance of the surviving pigeonnier, French Creole barn, and plantation store should also be noted in any assessment of Whitney. Each of these buildings is individually eligible for Register listing due to its rarity. It is impossible, of course, to know how many pigeonniers and Creole style barns once existed, but evidence indicates that they were important components of Creole plantations. Today there are only about eighteen surviving pigeonniers in Louisiana, and Whitney's Creole barn is the last example known to survive in the state. Equally important is the fact that the pigeonnier and both barns on the property date to the early nineteenth century, for outbuildings of such vintage are extremely rare.

Plantation stores such as that at Whitney represent a distinct period in southern agriculture--the postbellum plantation based on the tenant or wage labor system. Historically, Louisiana had hundreds of plantation stores. However, as

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agriculture became mechanized and fewer employees were needed, the plantation store was abandoned. Through the years the vast majority have been either demolished, allowed to deteriorate and fall down, or in some cases removed from the property. Although there is no survey of plantation stores in Louisiana, the staff of the Division of Historic Preservation is very familiar with the state's patrimony and knows of only about a dozen or so surviving examples. Although the building's period of significance ends with the 50 year cutoff in 1942, it should be noted that the store remained in operation well into the modern era.

ARCHAEOLOGY - STATE SIGNIFICANCE

The three archaeological resources in the Whitney Plantation Historic District are eligible for the National Register under Criterion D because clearly they are likely to yield information important to the history of Louisiana.

The archaeologists of Coastal Environments, Inc. who conducted the preliminary survey stated that Whitney is one of the richest historical sites which they have ever seen. Years of excavation and interpretation will be necessary to reveal the entire story of continuous habitation, which extends back into the middle of the eighteenth century.

The three historic sites within the historic district each have the potential to contribute to different aspects of the state's history. Louisiana's Comprehensive Archaeological Plan identifies seven cultural themes for Management Unit V which can be addressed at the three sites in the historic district. These are: The Influence of the Mississippi River on Historic Settlement; Historic Exploration and Colonization of Louisiana; Plantation Archaeology; Ethnic Enclaves: the Blacks, Acadians, Germans and other Immigrants; Euro-American Influence on the Landscape; The Steamboat Era; and Culture History. Some of these research themes can be addressed specifically at one or more of the three sites, while others, such as the Influence of the Mississippi River on Historic Settlement, Euro-American Influence on the Landscape, and Culture History, can only be addressed through studies focused on the historic district as a whole.

The Whitney House Site, 16SJB11, is significant as it contains midden deposits and archaeological features that can provide important information about the plantation and its residents during both the antebellum and postwar periods.

Louisiana's Comprehensive Archaeological Plan identifies numerous research questions that can be addressed from the archaeological deposits at 16SJB11. These include defining the role, regional diversity and history of Louisiana's antebellum plantation society; examining the differences between cotton and sugar plantations in the state; examining the differences between French and Anglo

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plantations; and the nature of slave life in Louisiana. For the postwar period, additional research questions are identified. These include the examination of the evolution of the postwar plantation and the changes that occurred as a result of the change in labor conditions. Were there regional differences? What was the impact of the rise of tenancy versus wage labor on the life of all residents on the plantations? What effect did this have on the archaeological record? How did the material culture of Louisiana change as a result of technological advances in the late nineteenth century? The role of the sugar plantation is particularly important in this area of Louisiana, yet, as Louisiana's Comprehensive Archaeological Plan mentions, it is only recently that sugar plantations have begun to be studied archaeologically. The Whitney House Site with intact archaeological features and midden deposits dating from the 1790s to the twentieth century has the potential to address these and many other issues in Louisiana's history.

16SJB42 has deposits dating between 1750 and 1820. While the midden deposits on the site are primarily in the plow zone, and therefore disturbed, there is a probability that undisturbed features survive below the plow zone. Further, our knowledge and understanding of eighteenth century settlement in this area is so limited that even disturbed deposits have the potential to contribute greatly. Louisiana's Comprehensive Archaeological Plan lists basic locational data on colonial agricultural complexes of the early German Coast settlers as a research priority. The development of the plantation from 1720 to 1803 is another research priority, and questions about the adaptation of Old World traits to Louisiana, early plantation industries, the development of "classic" settlement patterns, and degree of dependency on European goods could all be addressed at this site. The archaeology state plan notes that "historically this area was the focus of early Louisiana settlement and later sugar plantation culture...without these sites our knowledge of early settlement, the German and Acadian migrations and the development of sugar plantation culture may be lost."

16SJB55 has deposits dating between 1860-1890. While, once again, the midden deposits on the site are primarily in the plow zone, and therefore disturbed, there is a high probability that undisturbed features survive below. However, as a purely postwar site, and due to the limited occupation dates for the site, it represents a rare time capsule of the last third of the nineteenth century that is not contaminated with twentieth century deposits. This postwar period was an important time in Louisiana's development as radical changes were occurring throughout the state. Louisiana's Comprehensive Archaeological Plan discusses the changes that occurred after the Civil War as a major research theme. In local terms, as the site of the home of an owner of Whitney plantation, the site may have the potential to address some of the specific changes that occurred on Whitney plantation during this period, as well as other

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plantations in the region. Changes in the commercial, cultural and industrial development may be examined, along with questions of inter-ethnic interaction, and class relations.

Historical Note

The plantation which came to be known as Whitney appears to have been founded by Ambrose Haydel. A German, Haydel immigrated to Louisiana with his mother and siblings in 1721 and married shortly thereafter. Documentary evidence records the family's presence on the west bank in the 1760s and 1770s. Archaeological evidence suggests they may have been on the Whitney tract as early as 1750.

By the end of the eighteenth century, Haydel's sons, Jean Jacques, Sr. and Nicholas, owned adjoining plantations which included and expanded upon their father's original holdings. It was apparently Jean Jacques, Sr. who built the Whitney main house c. 1790 and expanded it c. 1803. In 1820 he sold the property to his sons Jean Jacques, Jr. and Marcellin. These two brothers consolidated the family's holdings by purchasing Nicholas' plantation from his heirs. Marcellin eventually gained total control of the tract, and it was he who commissioned the 1836-1839 remodeling. The plantation remained in his family's hands until it was sold to a Northerner, Bradish Johnson, after the Civil War. It was Johnson who actually named the property Whitney in honor of his grandson, Harry Payne Whitney.

In 1880 Johnson sold the plantation to partners P. St. Martin and Theophile Perret, who were related by marriage. The descendants of these two men lived on the plantation until the 1940s. In 1946 the property was acquired by the Barnes family, which sold the plantation to the Formosa Plastics Corporation in 1990. Formosa plans to build a huge industrial facility behind the historic district, but has pledged to preserve and restore the house and outbuildings as a museum of Creole culture.

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Site visit by National Register staff.

Telephone Interview with Thaddeus R. Kilpatrick, III, graduate student,
University of Pennsylvania, April 24, 1992.

Telephone Interview with Frank Matero, expert in preservation technology, art
restoration and mural painting at the University of Pennsylvania, April 27,
1992.

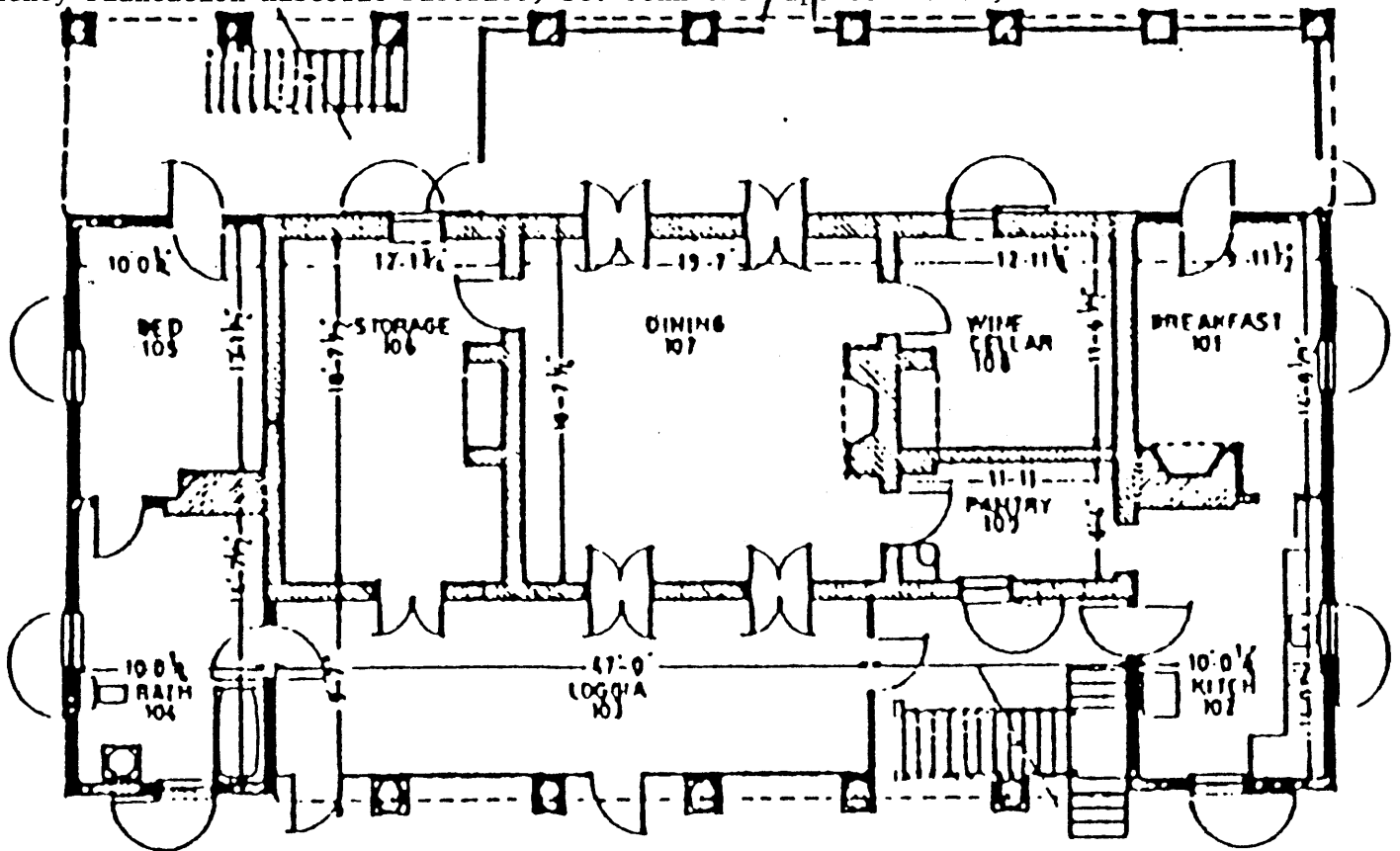
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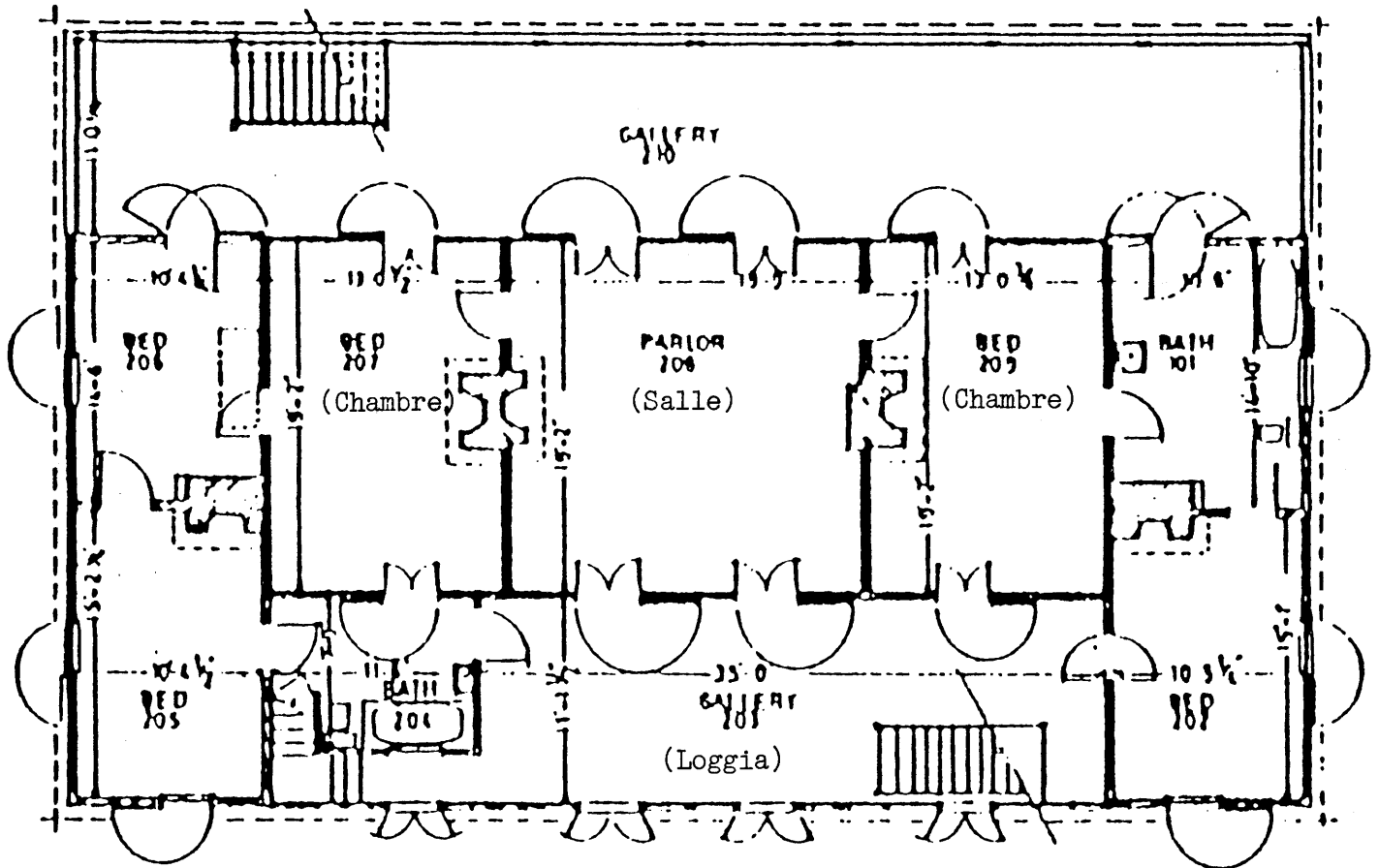
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Boundary Justification

Whitney Plantation was purchased by Formosa Plastics Company in 1990 and is the proposed site of a hugh rayon plant. For this reason, it did not seem appropriate to follow the historic boundaries of the plantation tract. Instead, the nominated boundaries follow the lines of a forty acre parcel set aside by Formosa Plastics as a historic zone for the Whitney complex. This zone was designed by a landscape architect to provide a setting with a maximum number of viewsheds. All of the extant buildings on the historic Whitney tract are within the forty acres, as are three important archaeological sites.



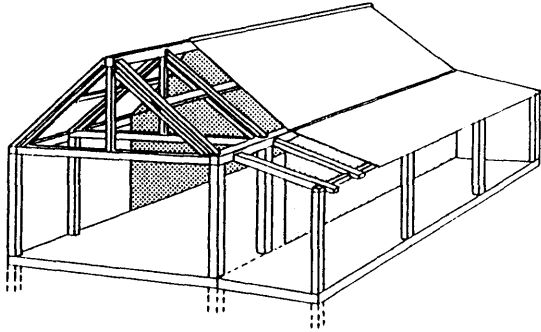
GROUND FLOOR PLAN



MAIN FLOOR PLAN

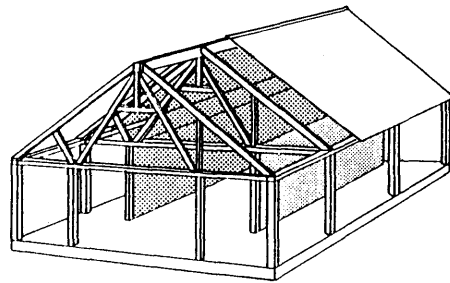
Whitney Plantation Historic District, St. John the Baptist Parish, LA

SOME CLASSES OF CREOLE VERNACULAR HOUSES



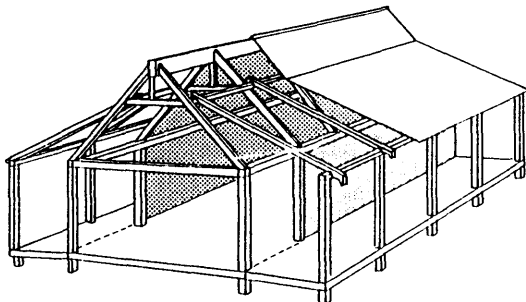
CLASS I

Single-pitch roof. Truss system includes the use of a king post and a double rafter system. Rafters set on wall plate. Inner rafters (truss blades) set on tie beam. Gallery optional. If present, gallery rafters tied into wall plate or front wall, and supported by an outer gallery plate, which is itself supported by light weight colonnettes.



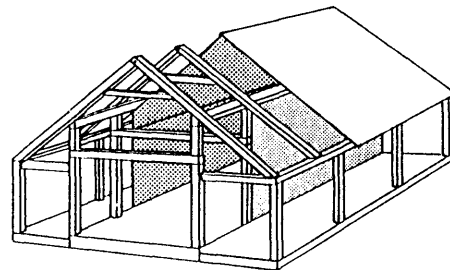
CLASS IIIa

Full (single-pitch) umbrella roof. Truss blades (principal rafters) mounted on wall plates. Long outer rafters mounted on outer gallery wall plates and let into or notched over the roof ridge. These rafters supported in their middles by posts (right side) or braces (left side), or by purlins supported by these.



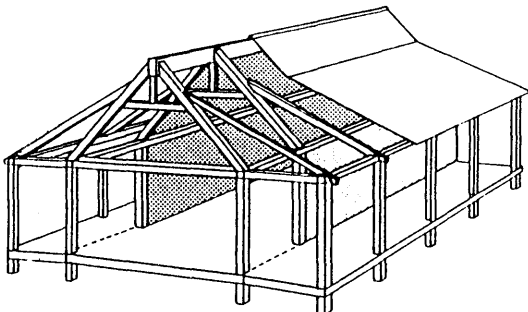
CLASS IIa

Mississippi Valley French Colonial broken-pitch roof (early form). Gallery always present. Gallery rafters notched over principal purlin and supported on outer gallery plate.



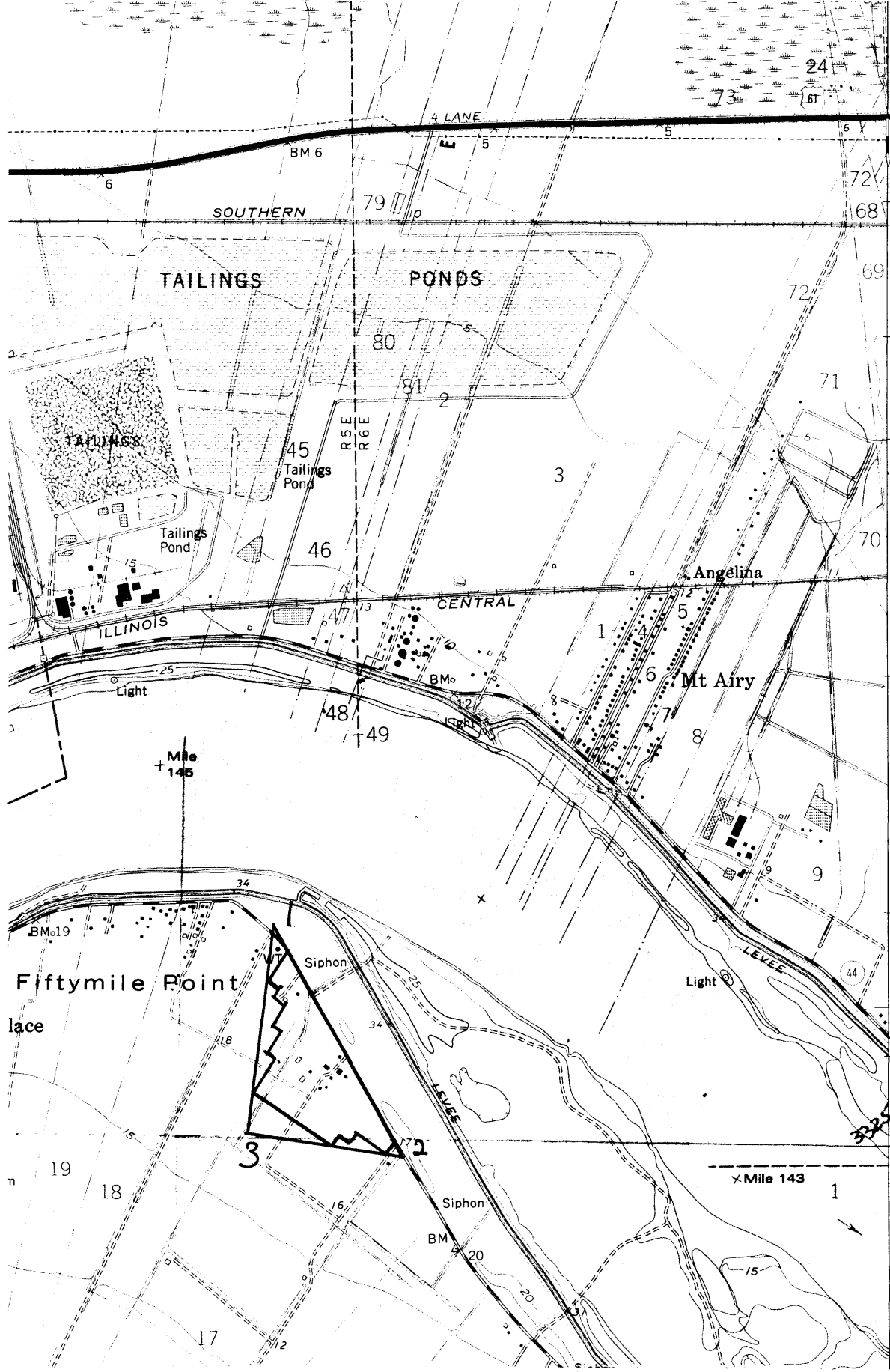
CLASS IIIb

Full (single-pitch) umbrella roof (later form). Truss blades now absent. Outer rafters supported in their middles by posts or by post-supported purlins. Roof ridge generally not present.



CLASS IIb

Mississippi Valley French Colonial broken-pitch roof (later form). Principal rafters (single or doubled) set on wall plate. Gallery rafters let into backs of principal rafters and supported on outer gallery plates.



9.1 MI
 LAPLACE (CUSTOM HOUSE) 38 MI
 NEW ORLEANS (RESERVE)
 7844 II SE
 T. II S
 3327
 3326
 2'30"
 1.5 MI
 GARYVILLE (U.S. 60) 9.7 MI
 1.4 MI
 LAPLACE 18 MI

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 Wallace vicinity of the plantation
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