

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM**

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: Louisiana	
COUNTY: Rapides Parish	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER 71.8.22.0003	DATE 8/5/71

1. NAME

COMMON:
Kent Plantation House

AND/OR HISTORIC:

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:
Bayou Rapides Road at Virginia Avenue

CITY OR TOWN:
Alexandria *vic.*

STATE: Louisiana CODE: 22 COUNTY: Rapides CODE: 079

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	<input type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Park <input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Comments <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) <u>Unused—awaiting renovation</u>

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:
State of Louisiana—La. Parks and Recreation Commission

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN: Baton Rouge STATE: Louisiana CODE: 22

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:
Clerk of Court

STREET AND NUMBER:
Rapides Parish Courthouse

CITY OR TOWN: Alexandria STATE: Louisiana CODE: 22

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY: Topographic Survey of a Lot Being Part of Kent Addition
~~None made at this time~~ Located Near Alexandria, Rapides Parish, La.

DATE OF SURVEY: Feb. 12, 1969 Federal State County Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:
Louis J. Daigre Associates

STREET AND NUMBER:
3006 Broadway

CITY OR TOWN: Alexandria STATE: Louisiana CODE: 22

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE: Louisiana

COUNTY: Rapides

ENTRY NUMBER: 71.8.22.0003

DATE: 8/5/71

FOR NPS USE ONLY

7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION

(Check One)

Excellent Good Fair Deteriorated Ruins Unexposed

(Check One)

Altered Unaltered

(Check One)

Moved Original Site

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (If known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

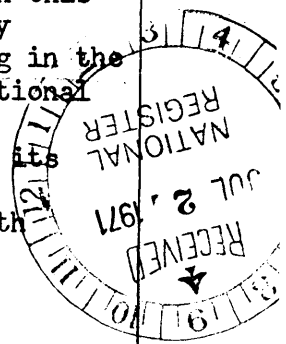
(By Samuel Wilson, Jr.)

The house dates from the very late eighteenth century or early nineteenth century, with flanking pavilions added, probably in the early 1830's or 40's. The rear addition including the rebuilding of the rear part of the roof was done subsequently.

The construction of the house is typical of the French and Spanish colonial periods in Louisiana, a type of construction that continued in use well into the period following the Louisiana Purchase in 1803. The house is raised well above the ground on brick pillars. Heavy timbers placed upon these pillars form the sills upon which the timbers of the wall or framework of "colombage" was erected. The spaces between these timbers was then filled with a mixture of mud and moss or deer hair called "bouzillage." Where protected by galleries or in the interior, this construction was left exposed or covered with a thin coating of plaster or layers of lime-wash, either white or colored. On exterior walls exposed to the weather, the "bouzillage" was covered with wide, feather-edged boards. When the flanking pavilions were built, the style had changed and they were covered on the outside with weatherboards, and, probably at the same time, the old board covering on the rest of the house was also covered over with weatherboards. It is also possible that new and larger columns were placed on the front gallery and a new cornice added, to give the house a then more stylish Greek Revival appearance.

The plan of the house is basically two large square rooms, each with a door and flanking windows opening onto the galleries. A single large chimney with fireplaces back-to-back furnished heat for the two rooms. A broad gallery surrounded the basic core, but probably before the house was completed the end galleries were enclosed with "bouzillage" to form an additional room at each end of the house and another small room or "cabined" enclosed each end of the gallery at the rear. This was a characteristic plan form of the French and Spanish colonial periods in Louisiana which also continued to be used after 1803. Evidence in the framing of the joists of the rear gallery floor indicates the location of a stairway at one end, leading to the ground or basement floor. A large hipped roof covered the entire house including the galleries, protecting the interior from sun and rain and enabling the doors and windows to be left open for maximum ventilation even during the heaviest summer rains. The owners eventually may have desired to enclose the recessed rear gallery, as often happened, and then built a new rear gallery across the entire back of the house. At that time, the entire rear slope of the roof was rebuilt, without, however, disturbing the original rear hip rafters which may still be seen in the attic. Perhaps the builder decided to widen this new rear gallery after the new hip rafters had been set and did so by allowing the new rafters to extend below the old eave line, resulting in the curious roof form as seen in the side elevations of the house. Additional exploration of the structure of this rear addition might reveal more information regarding its original form and detail. Perhaps some of its original columns might be found concealed in the walls, for this was undoubtedly built as an open gallery, possibly partially enclosed with wood louvers.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS



3. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

<input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian	<input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 18th Century	<input type="checkbox"/> 20th Century
<input type="checkbox"/> 15th Century	<input type="checkbox"/> 17th Century	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 19th Century	

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known)

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

<input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal	<input type="checkbox"/> Education	<input type="checkbox"/> Political	<input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning
<input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> Engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)
<input type="checkbox"/> Historic	<input type="checkbox"/> Industry	<input type="checkbox"/> Science	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> Invention	<input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture	_____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Art	<input type="checkbox"/> Literature	<input type="checkbox"/> Theater	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> Military	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Communications	<input type="checkbox"/> Music		_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Conservation			_____

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Kent House offers several unique features of historical significance. It appears to be the oldest remaining structure in Central Louisiana (pending completion of the State survey). It is a very rare example of the Creole architecture of the country plantation homes found in the area in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century; it provides the perfect setting for a museum of historical artifacts from the area, which is now lacking. The home was built by a prominent French family and has had a colorful history as it passed through several families and owners during the ensuing 170 years.

The structure was the second house built by Pierre Baillio II between 1796 and 1800. Records indicate that his father, Pierre I, was a native of France and a soldier in the King's Army at Natchitoches, where he married in 1743. Pierre II was his eldest son. Young Pierre moved to Point Coupee Parish and at the age of 18 married Magdelain Emelie LaCour in 1791. The wedding is recorded in St. Ann's Catholic Church at Morganza. The couple moved to Rapides Parish about 1793 or 1794. In 1794 he was given a land grant of 501 acres north of the present Alexandria and later received five additional land grants for himself and his children totaling approximately 1741 acres. The land grant which apparently covers the site of Kent House is dated 1795, was signed by Baron de Carondelet and is on display at Louisiana State University at Alexandria. Pierre II built one house, then prior to 1800, started another which is the present Kent House. Family tradition relates that Pierre started his slaves on construction of the foundation and left for New Orleans to purchase furnishings. His was delayed, and upon his tardy return, he found the work still continuing. This resulted in the house being unusually high off the ground, but with the local flooding characteristics, it was just as well. This occurred some 12 years before Alexander Fulton was to lay out the town of Alexandria, then known as "El Rapide".

The house was built from the land itself—clay for the rose colored brick, huge handhewn cypress trunks for the beams, pillars and floors, and deer hair and mud for the "bouzillage" walls. Construction was by slaves belonging to Pierre. The deep, wide windows were designed with the possibility of fighting hostile Indians in mind. Pierre II died in 1824 and his wife in 1838. They are buried, side by side, in the old and historic Rapides Cemetery across the Red River on the high ground of Pineville.

(Continued)

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

16

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Costantino, Ruth T. How to Know French Antiques. New York: Potter, 1961
 Cooper, J. Wesley. A Treasury of Louisiana Plantation Homes. Natchez: Southern Historical Publications, 1961.
 Deering, Davis. Alexandria House 1750-1830. New York: Bonanza, 1946.
 Dorman, Caroline. Flowers Native to the Deep South. Baton Rouge: Claitor's Book Store, 1958.
 Hinckley, Lewis F. A Directory of Antique Furniture. New York: Bonanza, 1953.
 Marse, Francis C. Furniture of the Olden Time. New York: Macmillan, 1940.

(Continued)

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	31° 18' 13"	92° 29' 00"		° ' "	° ' "	
NE	31° 18' 14"	92° 28' 58"				
SE	31° 18' 09"	92° 28' 55"				
SW	31° 18' 08"	92° 28' 58"				

ATW
 15/5492
 3463120
 CV

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 2

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

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
N/A			
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE: Committee

ORGANIZATION: Kent Plantation House, Inc. DATE: April 12, 1971

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN: Alexandria STATE: Louisiana CODE: 17

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION **NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION**

As the designated State Liaison 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. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National State Local

Name: George W. Peake

Title: State Liaison Officer

Date: 18 June 1971

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

Ernest A. Cannally
 Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

AUG 5 1971

Date: _____

ATTEST: William M. ...
 Keeper of The National Register

Date: AUG 3 1971

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(Continuation Sheet)

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718.22.0003	8/5/71

(Number all entries)

8. Statement of Significance (continued)

In 1842, the heirs of Pierre and Emelie sold the plantation to the Hynson family who named it Kent after their ancestral home in Kent County, Maryland. At Mr. Hynson's death in 1875, he left the property to his youngest daughter, Sallie A. Hynson, who married Mr. James A. Ringgold of St. Louis. They lived in the home until after his death, then she sold the property to the "Kent Company" in 1905. Following this, the home changed hands several times, until Mr. Louis Daigre purchased it for a residence. The Daigre family occupied the home until 1949 when it was sold to the American Legion for a meeting hall. The Legion used the house until 1963 when that organization decided to demolish the home and construct a new facility on the site.

At this point, local citizens, concerned for the heritage of Central Louisiana, were ignited to action by the possibility of losing this historic structure. Following the organization of a non-profit corporation, Kent Plantation House, Inc., for the purpose of preserving and restoring the home, some \$25,000 was raised from 217 individual contributors and several benefit functions to purchase the home and site a few blocks away on the original land grant of Pierre II. The house was moved to this site in January, 1964 and later deeded to the Louisiana Parks and Recreation Commission. This latter action was taken with the understanding that state and federal funds would be sought for restoration of the building to its original state, furnishing of the home as an historical museum, landscaping of the site, and other related improvements. Registration with the National Park Service is sought as one more step toward the proper recognition of the Kent Plantation House as Central Louisiana's most historic landmark.

9. Major Bibliographical References (continued)

- Natives Preferred. Baton Rouge: Claitor's Book Store, 1965.
- Nutting, Wallace. Furniture Treasury. (2 vol.) New York: Macmillan, 1948.
- Overdyke, Darrell. Louisiana Plantation Homes, Colonial and Ante Bellum. New York: Architectural Book Publishing Co., 1965.
- Pratt, Dorothy and Richard. A Guide to Early American Homes South. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1956
- Rogers, M. R. American Interior Design. New York: Bonanza, 1947
- Scott, Natalie and W. P. Spratting. Old Plantation Houses in Louisiana. New York: Lent and Groff, 1927.
- Williams, Henry and Ottalie. A Guide to Old American Houses 1700-1900. New York: Barnes, 1962.
- Williams, Henry and Ottalie. Old American Houses, How to Restore, Remodel and Reproduce Them. New York: Bonanza, 1957.

