

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number _____ Page _____

SUPPLEMENTARY LISTING RECORD

NRIS Reference Number: 97001127

Date Listed: 9/16/97

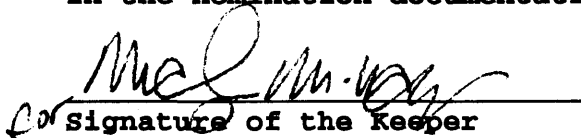
Richard Cattle Auction Barn
Property Name

Vermilion
County

LOUISIANA
State

N/A
Multiple Name

This property is listed in the National Register of Historic Places in accordance with the attached nomination documentation subject to the following exceptions, exclusions, or amendments, notwithstanding the National Park Service certification included in the nomination documentation.


Signature of the Keeper

9/16/97
Date of Action

=====
Amended Items in Nomination:

Section No. 8

This nomination is amended to change the period of significance to 1937-1947, reflecting the association of these buildings with the continuing operation of Avery Richard's livestock operation.

DISTRIBUTION:

- National Register property file
- Nominating Authority (without nomination attachment)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form



1127

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 Richard Cattle Auction Barn

other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number 1307 South Henry Street N/A not for publication

city or town Abbeville N/A vicinity

state Louisiana code LA county Vermilion code 113 zip code 70510

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.)
Gerri Hobdy 8/7/97
Signature of certifying official/Title Gerri Hobdy, LA Date
SHPO, Dept of Culture, Recreation and Tourism
State of Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:
 entered in the National Register. See continuation sheet.
 determined eligible for the National Register. See continuation sheet.
 determined not eligible for the National Register.
 removed from the National Register.
 other, (explain:) _____

Signature of the Keeper Ma J. M. Key Date of Action 9/16/97

Richard Cattle Auction Barn
Name of Property

Vermilion 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	
_____	_____	buildings
_____	_____	sites
_____	_____	structures
_____	_____	objects
2	0	Total

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

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

Agriculture / animal facility

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

Agriculture / animal facility

Commerce / specialty store

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

No style

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation concrete

walls weatherboard, asphalt

roof metal

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): 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 # _____

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Commerce

Period of Significance

1946 (auction barn); 1937 (slaughterhouse)

Significant Dates

1946, 1937

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

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 approx. 2 acres

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	1 5	5 8 1 5 2 0	3 3 1 5 4 0 0
	Zone	Easting	Northing
2			

3			
	Zone	Easting	Northing
4			

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

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

Boundary Justification

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

11. Form Prepared By

name/title National Register staff

organization Division of Historic Preservation date May 1997

street & number P. O. Box 44247 telephone 504-342-8160

city or town Baton Rouge state LA zip code 70804

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name John Avery Richard III

street & number 1229 South Henry telephone 318-893-5760

city or town Abbeville state LA zip code 70510

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

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

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Richard Cattle Auction Barn, Vermilion Parish, LA

Section number 7 Page 1

The Richard Cattle Auction Barn (1946) is a large one story frame building located on the Vermilion River on the outskirts of Abbeville. Although there have been some changes, the auction barn still looks very much as it did when built. Also on the property, and included as a contributing element, is a small slaughterhouse built in 1937.

The broad low-slung auction barn has a distinctive profile. There is a low-pitch gable end section at the middle rising a few feet above a large low-pitch shed roof section on each side. Livestock pens take up most of the shed roof sections; pens are also located toward the rear of the barn. A large auction arena spans much of the front of the building. Light and ventilation are provided via four windows high on the facade (the auction arena) and small windows along the sides of the higher central portion of the barn. In fact, the central portion reads almost like a long monitor roof, albeit a broad and spreading one. An office is located at the front on the western side.

Cattle arrived at the Richard barn via trucks and barges. On the west side of the barn, behind the office, are two cattle chutes -- one for incoming and one for outgoing. Cattle entered the barn one at a time via the chute; then they passed single file down a corridor marked off by wood slats. While in line they were tagged. Then they were taken to holding pens (also made of wood slats with spaces between the slats) for prospective buyers to view from an elevated walkway. When it was time for the weekly auction to begin, the animals entered the auction arena one at a time via a swing door. The round-shaped area where the cattle stood is surrounded by a steel railing on a concrete base. Behind it is a platform for the auctioneer and other personnel. Rising above the dirt-floored area for the cattle, in a semicircular, amphitheater fashion, is wooden seating for buyers. After a given animal was sold, it was led to the weighing room beneath the auctioneer's stage. This smallish rectangular room has a steel grate on its dirt floor to give cattle greater footing. The weighing apparatus is not visible without descending down a small trap door. After being sold, cattle were sent to holding pens for eventual loading via the previously mentioned chute. As one would imagine with such a utilitarian building, the walls and ceiling of the auction arena and office are simply finished, in this case with flush boards. As mentioned previously, the cattle stalls and other "working areas" are formed of wooden slats with spaces between. The only areas of the auction barn with a ceiling are the arena and the office.

Alterations since construction include (besides general deterioration):

(1) The front and the office portion of the western side have been sheathed in a brick-patterned asphalt material. The original boards are beneath, and the owner plans to remove the

CONTINUED

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Richard Cattle Auction Barn, Vermilion Parish, LA

Section number 7 Page 2

simulation brick as part of an upcoming rehabilitation project. (Some of the boards are visible on the side office wall -- see photo 2).

(2) When the present owner, the son of the builder, acquired the barn from his father's estate, the roof had caved in at the rear, damaging some of the cattle pens. He shored up the roof and removed the damaged pens to create an open area for his use in training horses.

(3) A third chute, suitable for more modern vehicles, was added toward the rear sometime before the barn closed in the 1970s.

(4) There have been a few minor equipment updates in the arena area (for example, an electric board for displaying weights). Also, a makeshift stage has been set on top of a portion of the area where the cattle stood during an auction. It extends from the auctioneer's platform to rest on the steel railing. It will soon be removed.

Assessment of Integrity:

All in all, the cattle auction barn is well preserved. With its distinctive profile, its virtually unchanged auction arena, its weighing room and most of its original cattle pens, including the elevated viewing walkway, it conveys its historic identity and significance quite well.

Contributing Element:

To the rear of the auction barn, between it and the Vermilion River, is a small frame slaughterhouse built by Mr. Richard in 1937. It is being counted as a contributing element because it represents the beginnings of Avery Richard in the livestock business and is obviously historically related to the main resource. Most of the slaughterhouse's original character survives despite its conversion into an artist's studio. Surviving is the basic form and fabric of the building plus such purpose-defining features as hooks in the ceiling for hanging carcasses and a circular concrete basin sunken into the floor which was used for boiling and scraping. Alterations to the building include salvaged decorative doors and the installation of simple shelves in the front.

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

Richard Cattle Auction Barn, Vermilion Parish, LA

Section number 8 Page 1

The Richard Cattle Auction Barn is locally significant in the area of commerce because its construction in 1946 was an important development in the Vermilion Parish cattle industry. It was built during a growth period in the local cattle industry and provided a much needed service.

Although cattle had long been in Louisiana, they did not become an important economic factor until the twentieth century, with the greatest advancements being made in the 1930s. Indeed, it is this decade in which cattle production increased significantly throughout the South. Due to various factors, including an increased emphasis upon diversification and improvements in cattle disease control, the South experienced an increase of two million beef cattle between 1930 and 1940. This represented an overall increase of 17%, with certain states increasing production by 40 to 50 percent. The source for these figures is a 1941 volume entitled *Beef Cattle Production in the South*. The author notes that in the past this region "has been considered the poorest beef producing region of the nation." By contrast, it "has suddenly boomed into extensive cattle production."

Louisiana shared in this progress, with cattle production increasing by 38.5 percent between 1930 and 1940. The numbers continued to grow in the 1940s. A 1944-45 report noted that in the past ten years cattle raising had made "steady progress as to numbers and value." In 1935 there were 815,000 head of cattle, which by 1945 had grown to 1,115,000. More importantly, due to increasing prices per head, the total value of the herd had grown from eight and one-half million dollars to nearly thirty-eight million. More than three-quarters of the cattle herd was in the neighboring coastal parishes of Vermilion, where the Richard barn is located, and Cameron. It appears that the two jockeyed for the title of number one in cattle production. A 1945 source gives this distinction to Vermilion, while the 1950 census gives Cameron a 3,000 head margin. Because so much of Vermilion is marsh land, its tillable acreage (for something other than rice, a major crop) is limited. By the 1950 census, there were 55,000 head of cattle in the parish, much of it in the marshes and on Pecan Island.

It is against this background that the significance of the opening of the Richard Cattle Auction Barn emerges. It was built at a time when the local cattle industry had been in a growth phase for the last fifteen years. The principal means of making a living in 1940s Vermilion Parish were farming, especially rice, and the cattle industry. Old-timers regard it as the parish's first auction barn. However, one former employee interviewed for this nomination indicated that Mr. Richard had a small, open air auction facility on the property when he started working there c.1940. Others indicate that the cattle auctions held at "Avery's Place" (Avery Richard) prior to

CONTINUED

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Richard Cattle Auction Barn, Vermilion Parish, LA
Section number 8 Page 2

the present barn were outdoors. A copy of a November 1941 advertisement in the local paper has been uncovered; however, it makes no reference to a building, simply "Avery's Place."

The date of the candidate building was provided by Avery Richard's widow, who relates that they married in 1945 and that the auction barn was built in 1946. Even if Richard previously had an auction facility on the property, the present large barn with its roughly 500 head of cattle capacity, auction arena, and office represented a major improvement over a small, open-air facility. The individual who remembered an earlier facility, Warren LeLeux, noted that it was a small, very local affair and did not have many buyers.

By former employees' estimates, a typical weekly sale in the candidate auction barn involved 200 or so head. As noted previously, cattle arrived via barge and truck. Sellers ranged from full-time cattlemen to Cajun families with a head or two. Individuals interviewed for this nomination indicate that about every farmer owned a few head of cattle on the side. Buyers were from southern Louisiana and southeastern Texas. It should be stressed that Richard's auction barn was a very important marketing facility. It remained the only auction barn in the parish until the early 1950s, when one opened in Gueydan. The only other nearby auction barns when it was constructed were in Lafayette and Opelousas, some twenty-five to forty miles away respectively. Had there been no Richard auction barn, sellers in the area would have had to transport their cattle to these communities or engage in direct buying and selling, the latter, of course, not being as efficient. Richard's provided an important commodity -- someone to bring buyers and sellers together in one convenient place. And because it was an auction rather than a one-on-one sale, the chances of a higher price were much better. On the buyer's side, there was the opportunity to look over more cattle. Interviewees also indicated that one of the reasons people particularly liked to do business at Richard's was the fact that a seller did not have to wait on his check; it was given to him at the end of the auction.

The various individuals interviewed for this nomination remember the auction barn being packed with people when it first opened and for most of its tenure. Apparently the auctioneering was quite an attraction in and of itself, and interviewees joked that there were perhaps more people in attendance than cattle on some occasions. The auctioneer would sometimes go back and forth from French to English depending on his audience. Tuesday afternoon auctions at the Richard barn were recalled fondly as being a "way of life" for people in the cattle business. Interviewees particularly emphasized that it was more than just a marketing device -- that the auctions were a place to meet and talk with friends. One former cattleman noted that there were two things one made sure they did in a given week -- go to the Tuesday afternoon auction at

CONTINUED

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Richard Cattle Auction Barn, Vermilion Parish, LA
Section number 8 Page 3

Richard's and attend Mass. Richard's Auction Barn remained a local institution into the 1970s when it closed. People familiar with the area indicate that it is one of only two old auction barns remaining. It is presently owned by John Avery Richard III, the builder's son, who uses the office for his saddle making/repairing business and a portion of the rear to train horses. Richard and his wife have plans to rehabilitate the building and use it as a facility to promote the region's French heritage.

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Richard Cattle Auction Barn, Vermilion Parish, LA
Section number 9 Page 1

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Williams, D. W. *Beef Cattle Production in the South*. Danville, Illinois: Interstate Printers and Publishers, 1941.

Interviews with Mrs. John Avery Richard II, Doris Meaux, Warren LeLeux, Daniel Broussard, and Una Broussard Evans, conducted by Donna Fricker, National Register Coordinator, June 2, 1997.

Vermilion Parish Resources and Facilities, State of Louisiana, Department of Public Works, July 15, 1946.

Thirty-Second Biennial Report and Early History of the Department of Agriculture and Immigration, 1944-45.

This is Louisiana, State Department of Commerce and Industry, 1940.

Louisiana, 1947, Department of Agriculture and Immigration.

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

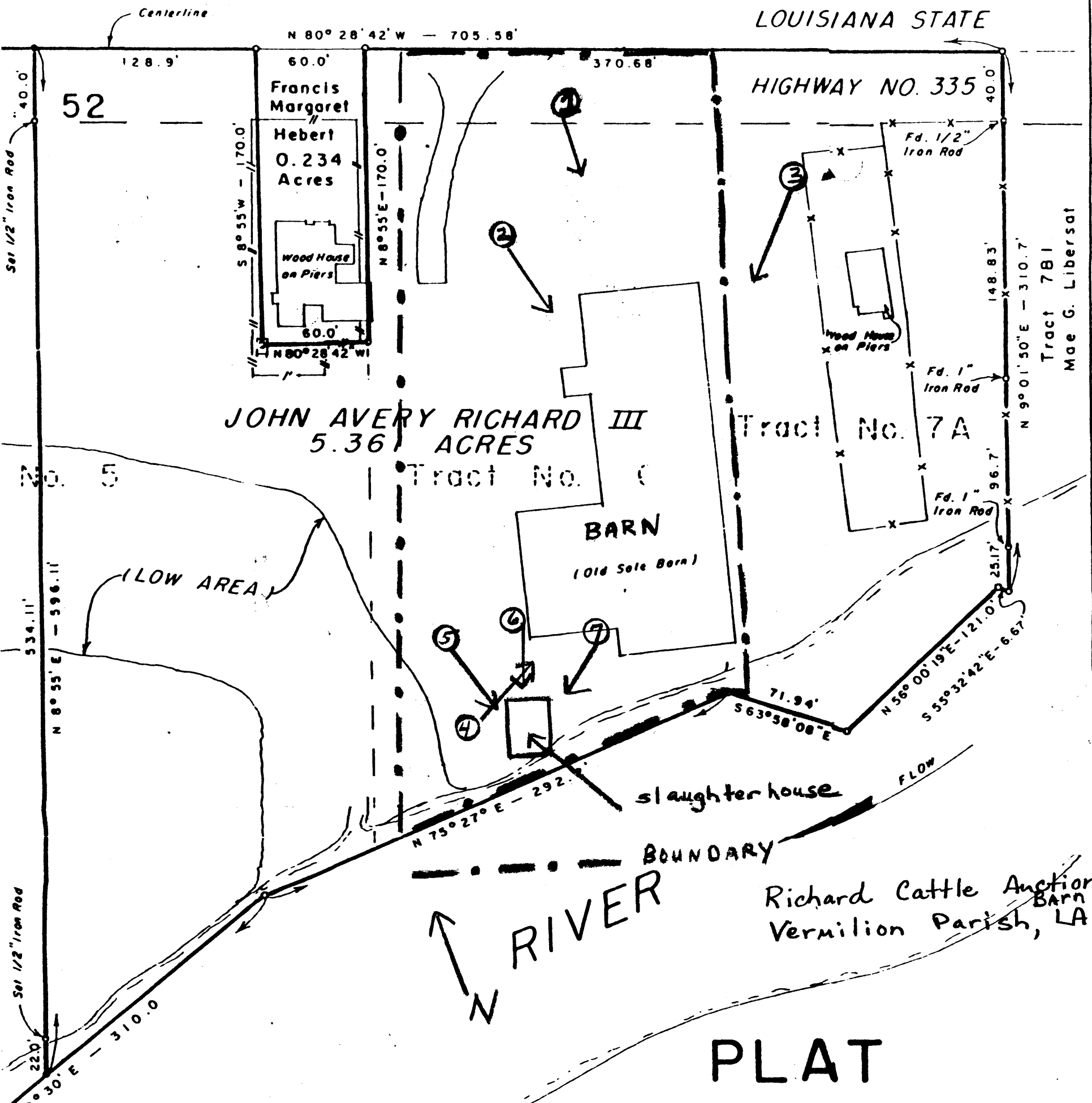
Richard Cattle Auction Barn, Vermilion Parish, LA

Section number 10 Page 1

Boundary Description: See attached plat map.

Justification:

Boundaries were chosen to encompass the auction barn and the nearby slaughterhouse. They follow property lines to the north and south (respectively, Louisiana Hwy. 335 and the Vermilion River). The boundary line to the east does not follow the property line because doing so would have meant including a non-contributing residence. The western property line was not used because it would have meant including unnecessary acreage. In addition to encompassing the barn and adjacent slaughterhouse, the nominated area recognizes the critical relationship to the river and highway.



PLAT

Showing survey and division of the property of JOHN AVERY RICHARD, III & PATRICIA ANN RICHARD, being situated in Irregular Section 52, T 12 S - R 3 E, Third Ward of Vermilion Parish, State of Louisiana.
 Scale: 1" = 60' November 19, 1991

J. E. SCHEXNAIDER & ASSOCIATES, INC.
 ABBEVILLE, LOUISIANA

By *Joseph E. Schexnaider*
 Joseph E. Schexnaider
 Registered Surveyor No. 3367



"NE VARIETUR"
 For identification with a Judgment rendered by me on the ___ day of November, 1991.

DISTRICT JUDGE

557