

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

DATA SHEET

STATE:

Louisiana

COUNTY:

Iberville

FOR NPS USE ONLY

ENTRY DATE

DEC 3 1975

1. NAME

COMMON:

St. Louis Plantation

AND/OR HISTORIC:

St. Louis

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:

Louisiana Highway 405, one mile south of Plaquemine, La.

MAR 6 1975

CITY OR TOWN:

Plaquemine

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT:

8th - Gillis Long

NATIONAL

STATE

Louisiana

CODE

22

COUNTY:

Iberville

CODE

0475

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP			STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building	<input type="checkbox"/> Public	<input type="checkbox"/> Public Acquisition:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied	Yes:	
<input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Structure	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private	<input type="checkbox"/> In Process	<input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Restricted	
<input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input type="checkbox"/> Both	<input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	<input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted	

PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Agricultural	<input type="checkbox"/> Government	<input type="checkbox"/> Park	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation	<input type="checkbox"/> Comments
<input type="checkbox"/> Commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> Industrial	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private Residence	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____	
<input type="checkbox"/> Educational	<input type="checkbox"/> Military	<input type="checkbox"/> Religious	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	_____	_____

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:

Edward J. Gay, Jr.

STREET AND NUMBER:

2800 July Street

CITY OR TOWN:

Baton Rouge

STATE:

Louisiana

CODE

22

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:

Clerk of Court, Iberville Parish Court House

STREET AND NUMBER:

Railroad Avenue

CITY OR TOWN:

Plaquemine

STATE

Louisiana

CODE

22

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:

Historical Land Marks in the Capital Region

DATE OF SURVEY: July, 1973

 Federal State County Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:

Capital Region Planning Commission

STREET AND NUMBER:

333 North 19th Street, P. O. Box 33555

CITY OR TOWN:

STATE

CODE

22

Baton Rouge

Louisiana

STATE

COUNTY

DEC 3

ENTRY NUMBER

DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
(Check One)			(Check One)			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered			<input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered			
			<input type="checkbox"/> Moved			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site						

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The present St. Louis Plantation House, built in 1858, in Iberville Parish, Louisiana, near Plaquemine, on the banks of the Mississippi River, was built as the replacement for an earlier house on the same site. Known as "Erwin's Castle", built by Jos. Erwin of Nashville, Tennessee about 1808, this earlier house was destroyed by flood in the early 1850's and no record of its appearance has been preserved.

The present house is not typical of its time and place, but resembles more the New Orleans Garden District houses of 10 or 15 years earlier, which probably inspired its design. Rather than affecting the fashionable Italianate style of the 50's, as did its nearby contemporaries Belle Grove (1857) and Nottoway (1858), St. Louis remains a chaste Greek Revival in style. Even in this it is unusual in being much more delicately scaled than the Greek Revival plantations of the 40's, such as Madewood (1844) and Ashland (1840). In fact, its configuration of superimposed galleries, Corinthian order upon Ionic, is unusual for plantation houses of the period (most of which had monumental colonnades), but typical of New Orleans detached townhouses (although slightly larger). A quite similar structure of the same age is found in the Garden District at 1134 First Street.

The house is a two story "raised cottage" of frame construction covered with clapboards, sitting on a brick basement partially below grade. The below grade basement, apparently used as a dairy, is a unique feature in the Louisiana delta where the water table is so close to the surface.

The roof of the main block is hipped behind a parapet and surmounted by a "widow's walk" enclosed by a turned baluster railing. From this elevation the river can be seen over the top of the levee which has been raised since the home was built.

In plan, the house has the usual central hall (16'-0" wide) flanked on either side by double parlors (22'-0" square). Recessed galleries run across the front and rear. An asymmetrical 2-story service wing projects from the rear, containing service rooms and the kitchen. The front gallery has round fluted columns at both levels, while the rear and service wing have square box pillars. A deep Ionic entablature unites the design by running unbroken around all four sides of the main block.

The rear gallery of the main block was unfortunately partially enclosed in rather haphazard fashion in 1909 to make two bathrooms and a sleeping porch. This damage could be easily rectified, however, as the original pillars, ceiling paneling, etc. from the open gallery remain in place.

The large rooms of the main block are today used as Living, Dining and Bedrooms, whereas the rear wing and attic are used for storage. All of the main rooms on both floors have mantel pieces, heavy cove mouldings, and plaster ceiling medallions. The mantels downstairs are carved Italian marble ordered out of catalogues from Philadelphia. There are one black, one red, and two white marble mantels. Second floor mantels are of wood. The original interior finish, now painted over, included marbelized bases coordinated with the color of the mantels; and all wood-work, doors, and windows were in "faux bois" or false oak graining. In the pantry, built-in shelves, base cabinets, and a loose work table were also oak grained. The original wall finish was paper, later painted over. The attic contains scraps of the original flowered wall-to-wall carpet and

S
M
I
N
S
T
R
U
C
T
I
O
N
S

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Continuation Sheet)

STATE	Louisiana	
COUNTY	Iberville	
FOR NPS USE ONLY		
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE	
DEC 3 1975		

(Number all entries)

7. Description St. Louis Plantation

Page 1

the summer straw floor matting.

The decorative items in the house ordered from catalogues, such as the cast iron balcony railing in front, the marble mantels, the plaster medallions, the coal scuttles, etc., betray the date of the house because of their organic, vegetable-like configuration and the arched shape of the mantels, as they are in affinity with the Italianate style then fashionable rather than the Greek style of the rest of the house.

The original kitchen in the rear wing is of some interest. It contains the old open brick hearth, into whose chimney is plugged a wood burning metal stove circa 1865, and a very early hot water heater fed by coils which circulate through the stove. Original built-in shelving and suspended food racks remain, as well as various loose equipment and furniture of an early date.

There is one bathroom which is very early, with a carved marble lavatory on iron legs. The original gas lights and piping are still in evidence, as well as a pull wire type servant's bell system and an intercom made of zinc tubing with megaphone shaped speakers at the terminals.

The house is set in an 18-acre landscaped yard, facing the river. To one side is a formal garden with brick walks flanked by sculpted hedges, with a large cast iron urn in the center. Originally the yard was surrounded by cypress picket fencing whitewashed, which is now gone.

Several outbuildings in the yard, an overseer's house, a hen house, turkey house, and barn have been demolished. Remaining are a dairy barn, and the brick smoke house now used as a garage. Behind it is a privy with an interesting latticed ventilation system.

Across and down the road from the main yard remain 6 of the original 12 "front place" wooden slave cottages.

The furnishings in the house today are from different periods. Many date from 1908 having been wedding presents of the last permanent occupants. However, several pieces date from much earlier than the house's construction and were probably salvaged from the 1809 house. One wardrobe in the house dates from about 1809. Of particular interest in the downstairs central hall is a large and ornate pier mirror, about 6'-0" wide and 10'-0" high, its frame and pilasters of gold leaf. Probably originating in the grand salon of a steamboat, this mirror was one of a matched pair formerly located at Live Oaks Plantation, Rosedale, Louisiana, and removed to St. Louis by mule cart many years ago.



3. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- | | | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian | <input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century | <input 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)

1858

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- | | | | |
|--|--------------------------------------|---|---|
| Aboriginal | <input type="checkbox"/> Education | <input checked="" 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 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape | <input type="checkbox"/> Architecture | |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art | <input type="checkbox"/> Military | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce | <input type="checkbox"/> Music | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications | | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation | | | |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

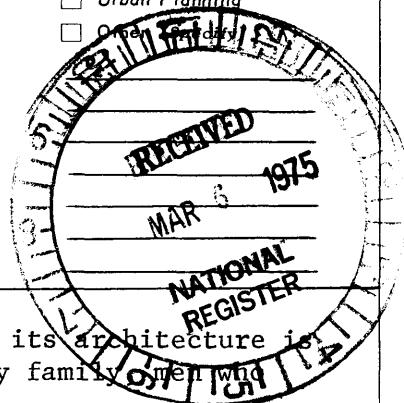
St. Louis Plantation is significant because its architecture is unusual for its location and also because of the Gay family men who played a prominent role in the state's history.

The plantation house resembles the New Orleans Garden District houses of about 1850 rather than having the Italianate or Monumental Greek Revival styles found in its neighboring contemporaries. It was built in 1857 by Edward J. Gay who came to Iberville Parish from St. Louis, Missouri. He also laid out the gardens and grounds which surround the house.

Mr. Gay's early background was as a merchant in St. Louis. There he was the first to engage in the direct importation of coffee by cargo into St. Louis. He was at the head of a firm whose trade extended from New Orleans to the sources of the Mississippi and Missouri Rivers.

After moving to Louisiana in 1856, Mr. Gay became the largest and one of the most influential planters in the state. He was first President of the Louisiana Sugar Exchange of New Orleans. He was active in opposing the secession movement in Louisiana, partly because his grandfather had been a soldier of the Revolutionary War. However, after secession he sided with the people of Louisiana. For reasons of health he did not serve in the War between the States, but his eldest son served in the Confederate Army. After the war he bent his energies to rebuilding the economy. He was reluctant to take part in the politics of Reconstruction, but Louisiana leaders assured him that only by his going to Congress could the Kellogg carpet-bag rule be abolished. In 1884 he ran against Kellogg himself and was elected by a handsome majority after a hard fought battle. He had a distinguished career in Congress serving on the Appropriations Committee, and was reelected twice. In 1889, while still serving as a member of Congress, he died at the St. Louis residence.

After Mr. Gay's death the house was occupied by his widow and then by his son, Andrew H. Gay. In 1909 the grandson of the founder, also named Edward J. Gay, brought his bride to live in the residence, and there they raised their five children. Young Edward J. Gay served with distinction as a member of the Louisiana House of Representatives for sixteen years, and was Chairman of the Appropriations Committee. In 1918 Mr. Gay was a candidate for the United States Senate to fill the unexpired term of Senator Robert Broussard. His opponents were former Governor Luther Hall and Mr. John Overton of Alexandria who later served in the Senate himself. Mr. Gay was nominated in the first primary and served Louisiana as United States Senator until 1921. He did not run for reelection. Later in his life Mr. Gay was on the Board of



9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Louisiana Department of Commerce and Industry, Louisiana Tourist Bureau,
"Louisiana Plantation Homes", State of Louisiana 1945-45.

Capital Region Planning Commission, "Historical Landmarks in the Capital
Region", 1973.

④ 15/672160/3600520
⑤ 15/671940/3550083

07M 10F 1W - 12-24-75

S E E I N S T R U C T I O N S

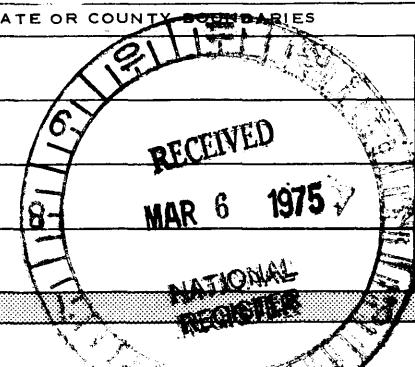
10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	OR	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE
NW	Degrees Minutes Seconds ° ' "	Degrees Minutes Seconds ° ' "		Degrees Minutes Seconds ° ' "	Degrees Minutes Seconds ° ' "
NE				UTM reading	
SE				15 671760 3349290	
SW				UTM on map	

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 18

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

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE



11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:

Robert Paul Adams, Chief Planner

ORGANIZATION

Capital Region Planning Commission

STREET AND NUMBER:

333 North 19th Street

CITY OR TOWN:

Baton Rouge

STATE	CODE
Louisiana	22

DATE: January 1975

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 *Jay R. Broussard*
Jay R. Broussard
State Historic Preservation Officer
Title Director, Department of Art,
Historical Preservation

Date February 28, 1975

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

John R. Broussard
Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date 12/3/75

ATTEST:

Charles Atkinson
Atkinson, Keeper of The National Register
Date 12/1/75

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Continuation Sheet)

STATE	Louisiana	
COUNTY	Iberville	
FOR NPS USE ONLY		
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE	
DEC 9 1975		

(Number all entries)

8. Statement of Significance St. Louis Plantation Page 1

Supervisors of Louisiana State University and served as Chairman of the Building Committee when the University was rebuilt on its present site.

Thus the St. Louis Residence was the home of at least two historical figures. It also contained the records of other earlier figures who made their work in history. One was Joseph Erwin who came from Tennessee to establish the St. Louis Plantation in 1807, after his son died in a duel with Andrew Jackson.

The other was Colonel Andrew Hynes of Tennessee who married Mr. Erwin's daughter. Colonel Hynes took part in the Battle of New Orleans, and his accounts of that battle and the events leading up to it were found years later in the attic of the St. Louis Residence, preserved there by Colonel Hynes' son-in-law, the first Edward J. Gay. The New Orleans Times Picayune called the collection of papers "one of the most important discoveries of the original Battle of New Orleans material found in many a day."



NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Continuation Sheet)

STATE	Louisiana
COUNTY	Iberville
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
DEC 3 1975	

(Number all entries)

ST. LOUIS PLANTATION (cont'd)

8. St. Louis Plantation is architecturally significant because it is a relatively unaltered example of the Greek Revival mode commonly found in the Garden District of New Orleans. Although located some 80 miles upriver from the Crescent City, St. Louis is much closer to the structures in that district than to many of the other surviving plantation houses from that era. The clapboard exterior and delicate columns, so unlike the popular conception of the Greek Revival plantation house in Louisiana, are among the notable features of this structure.

10. Acreage: 18 acres

Enclosed is corrected map and new UTM

1 NW 15/671970/3350580
A NE 15/672160/3350520
B SE 15/671940/3350080
C SW 15/671780/3350140



Also enclosed is a copy of a drawing of the landscaped grounds