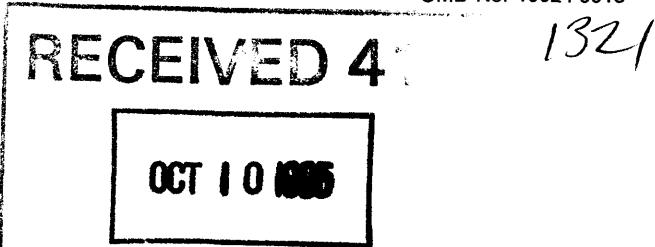


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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 in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, mark in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. 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 Caldwell House
other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number 105 E. Vermilion St. N/A not for publication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.)
Jonathan Fricker 10/5/95
Signature of certifying official/Title Jonathan Fricker, Date
LA Deputy SHPO, Department 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): _____

Edson A. Beall Signature of the Keeper Date of Action 11-22-95
Entered in the National Register

Caldwell House
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	
2		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)

DOMESTIC/single dwelling

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/single dwelling

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

Queen Anne Revival

Colonial Revival

Mediterranean Revival

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation concrete

walls stucco

roof tile

other

Narrative Description

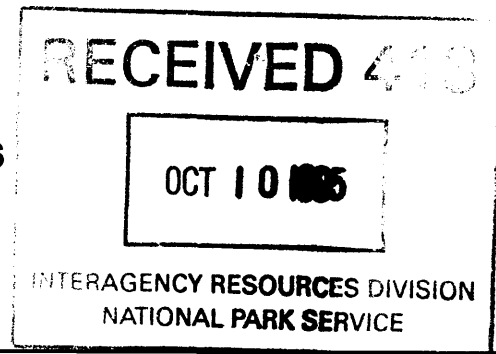
(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Caldwell House, Vermilion Parish, LA

Section number 7 Page 1



The Caldwell House (c. 1907) is a large two-story transitional residence displaying elements of the Queen Anne and Colonial Revival styles. It stands on a large, irregularly shaped parcel in an older, mixed use neighborhood near downtown Abbeville. Its original exterior brick walls received a stucco covering during the 1920s, and the roof was resurfaced in tiles at that time, giving the house the overall character of a Mediterranean Revival villa. Despite these and other, later alterations, the house remains eligible for National Register listing.

The Caldwell House is rigidly symmetrical, with its facade anchored at each corner with a turret-like projection. Each projection is surmounted by a low pitched roof. Despite the symmetry, these should be viewed within the Queen Anne tradition. Also indicative of the Queen Anne influence is the home's first floor wraparound gallery. The gallery wraps across the front and part way down one side. (Originally, as shown on a Sanborn map, it was symmetrically articulated, wrapping part way down both sides.) The building's Colonial Revival elements consist of its gallery columns and the balustrades outlining twin second floor balconies (one on the front and one on the west side). The gallery columns are in two sizes -- thicker columns defining the front and side entrances and slender columns elsewhere. The balconies are reached through large single doors surmounted by transoms and flanked by sidelights. Other exterior features include overhanging eaves; segmentally arched windows piercing the upper story of the mock turrets; tall shutters; a hipped roof; concrete quoins (now stuccoed over) emphasizing every angle of the facade; concrete lintels and sills; a molded cornice; and the front entrance, which features a transom and sidelights surmounted by a jack arch with a keystone.

The defining feature of the interior is its central hall/cross hall configuration. Three rooms stand on the east side of the central hall, while two rooms separated by a cross hall occupy the home's west side. This plan is repeated on the second floor. The home's stairway rises to a large landing in a single flight from the point where the central and cross halls meet, then reverses upon itself to rise in two parallel flights to the second floor. Other interior features include two working sets of pocket doors, vertical beaded board wainscot in the downstairs and upstairs hallways, molded baseboards and chair rails, a built-in cabinet in the dining room, transoms above all doors, pressed metal ceilings in three downstairs rooms, wooden floors, and possibly, one surviving original mantel.

As noted in the summary paragraph, the house was stuccoed in the 1920s and received a tile roof, reflecting no doubt the popularity of the Mission and Mediterranean Revival styles. One

CONTINUED

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

Caldwell House, Vermilion Parish, LA
Section number 7 Page 2

also suspects that the portion of the gallery on the eastern side of the house extending beyond the turret was removed at this time. Other alterations from the 1920s include the attachment of a frame kitchen to the rear of the structure, the construction of a bathroom behind the rear east room and beside the newly attached kitchen, the covering with panels of the beaded board ceilings in several rooms, the replacement of several mantels, and the truncation of the chimneys at the roofline.

Additional changes, for which dates are unavailable, include:

- 1) modifications to the gallery. Although the columns are the same as those appearing in a historic photo of the house, there have been some adjustments. The photo, taken of the west side of the house, shows a pair of thick Tuscan columns on each side of the entrance. Today, one of the four is missing. Today the front entrance is marked by one thick column on each side. Whether there were originally a pair on each side is uncertain. Also, it appears that the slender gallery column immediately beyond the right thicker entrance column has been moved. The spacing here is irregular. Finally, the gallery's balustrade has been lost.
- 2) the removal of one upstairs mantel,
- 3) the alteration of one dining room window on the west elevation,
- 4) the addition of three bathrooms on the second floor and the attachment of a small frame porch and carport behind the kitchen/bath addition.

Work completed to date as part of the current restoration includes:

- 1) the covering of the original plaster walls in all but one room with sheetrock, the exposure of the underlying brick wall in the remaining room, and the removal of the damaged ceiling in the lower floor central hall. The latter will be replaced.
- 2) the replacement of the bathroom located behind the rear east room (originally added during the 1920s) due to termite damage, and

CONTINUED

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Caldwell House, Vermilion Parish, LA
Section number 7 Page 3

- 3) the restoration of the Colonial Revival balustrade on the facade's second story balcony and the in-progress restoration of the balustrade on the west side balcony. Approximately 90 percent of the original materials are being reused in these restorations.

Although this list of alterations at first seems lengthy, the changes have had little impact upon the features which make the home architecturally significant. Most importantly, the unusual massing created by the turret-like projections on the facade survives intact. Known locally as the "castle" or the Caldwell Mansion, the house is an architectural landmark within Abbeville to even the most casual observer, due principally to its distinctive massing and grand villa-like appearance.

Contributing Element

A small frame outhouse with a metal roof stands near a rear corner of the property. Its two doors feature half-moon cutouts. The outhouse is being counted as a contributing element to this nomination because it appears to be contemporary with the Caldwell House.

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.
[X] 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.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

Period of Significance

c. 1907, 1920s

Significant Dates

c. 1907, 1920s

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Builder: Caldwell Contractors (c. 1907)

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 #

Primary location of additional data:

- [X] State Historic Preservation Office
Other State agency
Federal agency
Local government
University
Other

Name of repository:

Caldwell House
Name of Property

Vermilion Parish, LA
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreege of Property .6 acre

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	1 5	5 8 3 5 1 0	3 3 1 6 3 0 0
	Zone	Easting	Northing
2			

3			
	Zone	Easting	Northing
4			

See continuation sheet

Verbai 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 July 1995

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 Jeffry R. Gaspard

street & number 105 E. Vermilion St. telephone (318) 898-1840 (h)
(318) 893-5466 (o)

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**

Caldwell House, Abbeville, Vermilion Parish, LA

Section number 8 Page 1

The Caldwell House is locally significant in the area of architecture as a landmark in the early twentieth century residential heritage of the parish seat of Abbeville. It derives this distinction largely from its size and massing.

Located on the Vermilion River, the town of Abbeville is much older than its present historic building stock would indicate. It traces its founding to 1843, when Father Antoine Desire Megret purchased a tract of land on the river for construction of a chapel. The town that developed was incorporated in 1850, and in 1854 it became the parish seat of newly created Vermilion Parish. Apparently the town was very small and grew slowly until the coming of the Iberia and Vermilion Railroad (soon to be the Southern Pacific) in 1892. With the coming of the railroad, Abbeville emerged as a major rice processing center. Like other southwestern Louisiana towns such as Crowley and Jennings, Abbeville benefitted enormously from the "Great Louisiana Rice Boom" of the turn of the century in which mechanized agricultural techniques previously used in the Midwest for wheat production were brought to the prairies of Acadiana for the large-scale production of rice.

Because of the railroad and the rice boom it made possible, Abbeville grew rapidly and prospered greatly, as can be seen in its historic building stock. Despite its early founding, there are believed to be no buildings in the town which predate c.1890. An almost comprehensive survey, combined with SHPO knowledge, reveals that there are 250-300 extant historic buildings in Abbeville, the vast majority of which are residences. The residences that have the greatest visual impact on the overall character of the town are in the Queen Anne/Eastlake styles, reflecting the frenzy of building that occurred at the height of the rice boom (c.1895-1910). There are about 50 to 60 of these, some 18 of which have been identified by the SHPO as worthy of Register consideration. The remainder of Abbeville's historic residences are mainly low-key examples of the bungalow style. There are a sprinkling of houses from the 1930s that could best be described as watered down versions of the Tudor Revival style and a few examples of the Colonial Revival taste, almost all of which lack architectural distinction. Finally, there are various simple unstyled houses in the community.

It is against this background that the local landmark status of the Caldwell House emerges. In terms of residences, the only architectural "flowering" in Abbeville was the Queen Anne Revival (with its associated Eastlake ornamentation). Although the Caldwell House evolved during the historic period to its present appearance, it is obviously rooted in the Queen Anne style, despite the symmetry. And when compared to the town's Queen Anne landmarks, it is in the forefront because of its prominent twin turret-like projections which dominate the facade.

CONTINUED

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

Caldwell House, Abbeville, Vermilion Parish, LA

Section number $\frac{8}{9}$ Page $\frac{2}{1}$

The tower or turret was in some respects the ultimate Queen Anne device; however, it is very rarely found in Abbeville (mainly because all but seven examples of the style are one story). In fact, of the 50 or 60 Queen Anne houses in Abbeville, only two sport a tower or turret. Also, two one-story examples have turret-like projections. With its twin turret-like projections framing a symmetrical composition, the Caldwell House is one of Abbeville's most visually distinctive historic residences. Also, the sheer size of the house--over 5,000 square feet--makes it a landmark within the community. It has the presence of a villa or mansion when compared to virtually all other houses.

Historical Note

The Caldwell House is named for its owner/builder, Vernon Lee Caldwell. Along with his father and one brother, Caldwell was part of a brick making business which expanded into a general construction company known as Caldwell Brothers Contracting Company. In addition to the house, examples of buildings constructed by the company include schools in Abbeville, Kaplan and Gueydan. Vernon Lee Caldwell was also a civic leader who was involved in the establishment of the Bank of Erath and the Erath Sugar Company. He also served in the legislature as a member of both the House and the Senate.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Division of Historic Preservation. Standing Structures Survey of Abbeville, Vermilion Parish, Louisiana.

Historic photograph of the Caldwell House, exact date unknown but taken before remodeling; copy in National Register file.

History of Vermilion Parish, Louisiana, Abbeville, LA: Vermilion Historical Society, 1983, pp. 106-107, 345.

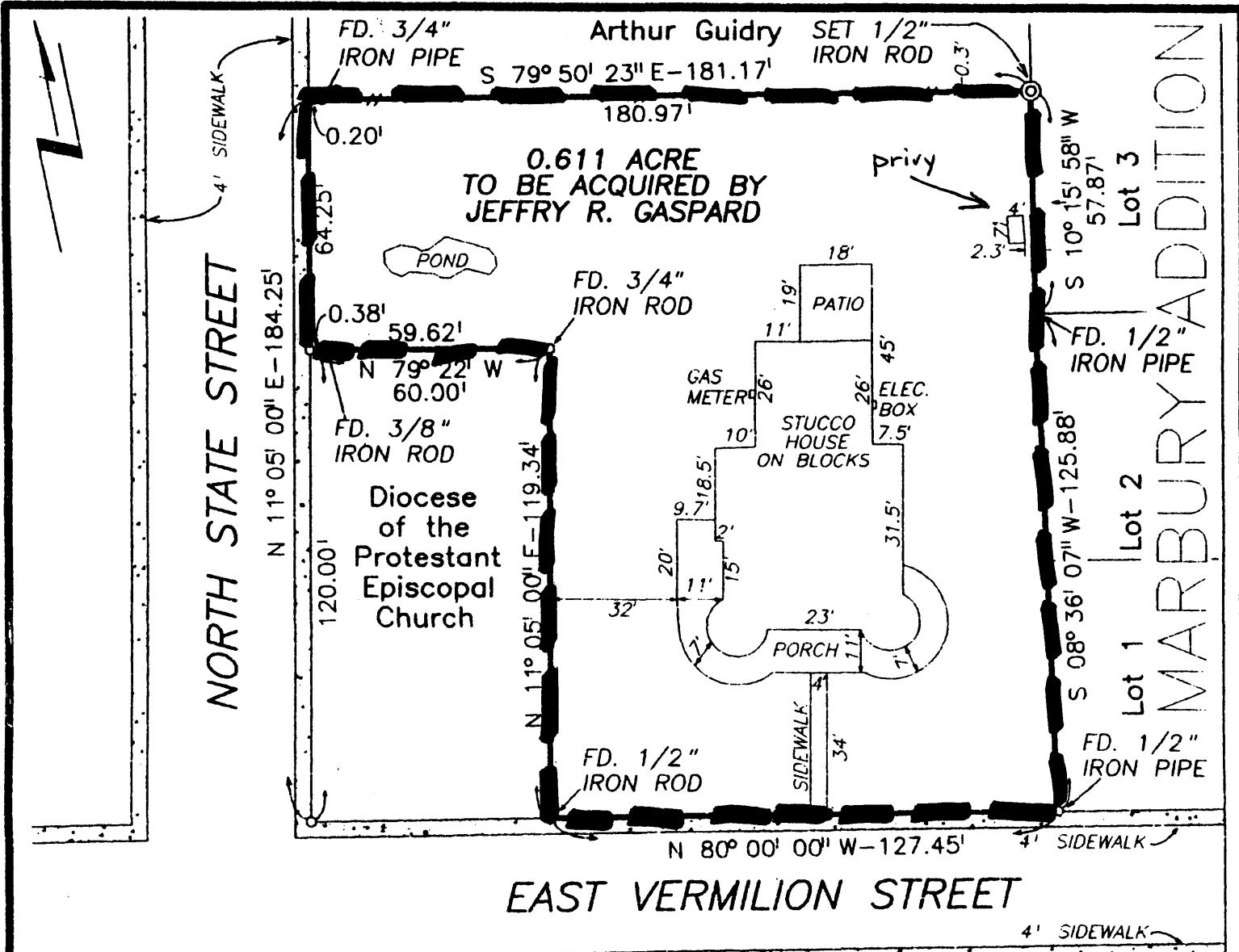
**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Caldwell House, Vermilion Parish, LA
Section number 10 Page 1


Boundary Description: See attached property plat map.

Justification: Boundaries follow property lines.



CALDWELL HOUSE

Abbeville, Vermilion Parish, LA

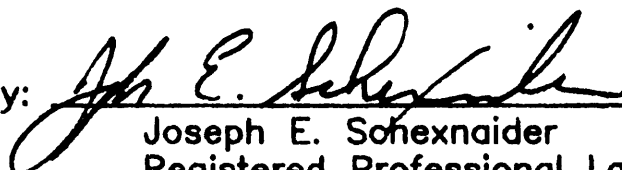
PLAT  Boundary

Showing improvement survey of a 0.611 acre tract of land to be acquired by J E F F R Y R. G A S P A R D from O L G A C A L D W E L L G O L D E N, having a municipal address of 105 East Vermilion Street, City of Abbeville, Third Ward of Vermilion Parish, State of Louisiana.

Scale: 1" = 40'

August 18, 1994

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

By: 
 Joseph E. Schexnaider
 Registered Professional Land
 Surveyor No. 3367

