

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES NOMINATION

NPS Form 10-900

USDI/NPS NRHP Registration Form (Rev. 8-86)

OMB No. 1024-0018

Key-Mize House, West Monroe, Ouachita Parish, LA

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United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

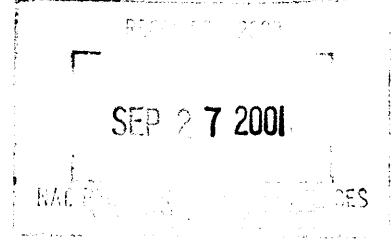
National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

1. NAME OF PROPERTY

Historic Name: Key-Mize House

Other Name/Site Number: Copley House

Sub Ref 1212



2. LOCATION

Street & Number 118 Copley Street

Not for publication: NA

City/Town West Monroe

Vicinity: NA

State: Louisiana Code: LA County: Ouachita

Code: 073

Zip Code: 71269

3. STATE/FEDERAL AGENCY CERTIFICATION

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this X 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 X meets does not meet the National Register Criteria.

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

Nationally: Statewide: Locally: X

Signature of Certifying Official/Title Jonathan Fricker LA Deputy SHPO, Dept. of Culture, Recreation and Tourism

9/24/01

Date

State or Federal Agency and Bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of Commenting or Other Official/Title

Date

State or Federal Agency and Bureau

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4. NATIONAL PARK SERVICE CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify that this property is:

11-10-01

- Entered in the National Register
Determined eligible for the National Register
Determined not eligible for the National Register
Removed from the National Register
Other (explain):

Signature of Keeper

Date of Action

5. CLASSIFICATION

Ownership of Property
Private: X
Public-Local:
Public-State:
Public-Federal:

Category of Property
Building(s): X
District:
Site:
Structure:
Object:

Number of Resources within Property
Contributing
1
1

Non contributing
4 buildings
sites
structures
objects
4 Total

Number of Contributing Resources Previously Listed in the National Register: 0

Name of Related Multiple Property Listing: NA

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6. FUNCTION OR USE

Historic: Domestic Sub: Single Dwelling
Current: Domestic Sub: Single Dwelling

7. DESCRIPTION

Architectural Classification: Greek Revival

Materials:

Foundation: Brick
Walls: Weatherboard
Roof: Asphalt
Other:

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Describe Present and Historic Physical Appearance.

The Key-Mize House stands on a quiet street near the Ouachita River levee in the Ouachita Parish City of West Monroe. Built c. 1850, the one-and-one-half story frame dwelling is a restrained example of the Greek Revival style. Although it has received major alterations inside and out, it retains enough of its original character to merit National Register consideration.

The owners believe the house to date to 1837. However, molding profiles found around the dwelling's windows indicate a c. 1850 date. The home's Greek Revival features still exist on its front gallery. These include paneled boxed columns with simple capitals (their bases are now missing) and an entablature outlining the gallery. The irregular column spacing on the gallery's west side was in place by at least c. 1900, per a historic photograph. (A rear gallery also existed, but whether it contained any attempt at decoration is unknown.) Other features, not necessarily related to the Greek Revival style, include an entrance with transom and sidelights and the home's original layout. It consists of a four room, center hall plan, which is still evident despite modification (see below).

Numerous alterations occurred to the house between roughly 1890 and 1920. For example:

1. The above mentioned c. 1900 photo also shows two other changes. First, a second facade door (without accompanying transom and sidelights) opened from the gallery into the east front room. This former door is now a window. Second, all of the home's original six-over-six windows were changed to six-over-one.
2. For some unexplained reason, the elevation of the main block's northeast rear corner room was recessed behind the roofline (see photo 4), perhaps when additions were made at the rear (see below). This room also received a set of paired windows.
3. The original sidelights, which would have had multiple panes, were replaced by one large pane of glass in each; and the home has lost its chimneys.
4. The floor plan experienced important changes:
 - a) The kitchen and dining room, once separated from the main house, were attached to the building's rear northeast corner. A new porch paralleling the dining room and connecting to the original rear gallery (forming an "L" shaped rear gallery) connected the central hall to the new space. Later, a bath was installed on the remaining part of the original rear gallery, the porch paralleling the dining room was enclosed, and the dining room was enlarged by adding a large bay window.
 - b) The west bedroom of the original house was also enlarged via a bay window. The ceilings of the bedroom and dining room extensions are lower than the ceilings in the rest of the rooms to which they are connected (see photograph).
 - c) The attic was finished to contain a small bathroom beneath the eaves, a hall, and two rooms. A staircase with a Colonial Revival balustrade was installed in the original central hall to reach the upper space. To bring light to the upper area, two large front dormers, each containing a set of two-over-two windows, were added. A large dormer was also added at the rear. Furthermore, windows were installed within the attic gables. The two on the east match the windows within the front dormers. However, those on the west consist of a set of three, six-over-one windows.
 - d) Three mantels, one each in the Colonial Revival, Italianate and Eastlake styles, were installed on the interior. The latter, located in the dining room, has reeding similar to that found on the room's wainscot.

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- e) The wall separating the east front room from the central hall was removed.

Despite the admittedly numerous alterations detailed above, the Key-Mize House is still able to convey its historic identity as a galleried cottage in the vernacular Greek Revival taste. As a rare example of pre-Queen Anne Revival styling within West Monroe, as well as a reflection of the architectural patrimony which preceded the founding of the community, the Key-Mize House is a legitimate candidate for National Register listing.

Non-Contributing Elements

In addition to the house, four other buildings stand on the site. These include a board and batten barn with a metal roof, a clapboard garage with an apartment above, a one-room clapboard cottage with an asphalt roof, and a small wood and metal tool shed with an attached animal pen. Because they are considerably later than the house and do not contribute to its architectural significance, they are being listed as non-contributing elements.

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8. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Applicable National Register Criteria: A__ B__ C X D__

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions): NA A__ B__ C__ D__ E__ F__ G__

Areas of Significance: Architecture

Period(s) of Significance: c. 1850

Significant Dates: c. 1850

Significant Person(s): NA

Cultural Affiliation: NA

Architect/Builder: unknown

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State Significance of Property, and Justify Criteria, Criteria Considerations, and Areas and Periods of Significance Noted Above.

The Key-Mize House is locally significant in the area of architecture as a landmark within the City of West Monroe. It achieves this distinction because it is the sole survivor to represent the community's earliest architectural patrimony.

Located across the Ouachita River from Monroe, West Monroe traces its ancestry to two small steamboat ports of the antebellum period – Cottonport (where the present downtown is located) and Trenton, to the north (where the Key-Mize House stands). The town of West Monroe, however, was not chartered until 1889, owing its existence directly to the arrival of the Vicksburg, Shreveport and Pacific Railroad earlier in the decade. The new town's economy, as had been the case with Cottonport and Trenton, was based on cotton (shipping, warehousing, cotton compress, cotton seed oil plant, etc.). Later the town benefited from the discovery of natural gas near Monroe in 1916.

As West Monroe developed, it gradually eradicated the traces of the two small port towns it replaced. Indeed, as growth continued over the years, the practice of replacing historic buildings with new construction continued. As a result, almost all of the roughly 200-300 historic buildings in the community date from c. 1915 through the 1930s. This patrimony consists of modest, mainly low-key bungalows, plain cottages, and plain early twentieth century commercial buildings. Only six houses (most of which have received major alterations) reflect the late nineteenth century Queen Anne Revival style popular when West Monroe was founded. Only one, the c. 1850 restrained Greek Revival style Key-Mize House, pre-dates the Queen Anne style. Thus, within the context of West Monroe, the house is a significant landmark.

Historical Note:

George Washington Copley built the house c. 1850. Copley, a lawyer, was appointed as a judge of the 12th Louisiana District Court in 1845. His widow sold the house to Dr. David H. Key in 1869. In 1891 the Key family sold the home to Lewis W. Mize. The Mize family made the majority of the alterations to the home and lived in the residence for 92 years. In 1983 Kathleen Mize Wilson sold the house to Marvin Brasher, who sold the home to current owners Philip and Betty Albritton in 2000. The Albrittons have restored the dwelling.

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9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

History of Key-Mize House compiled by West Monroe historian Ron Downing and submitted by owner; copy in National Register file.

Site visit by National Register staff.

Windshield survey of West Monroe conducted by National Register staff, Louisiana Division of Historic Preservation.

Previous documentation on file (NPS): NA

- Preliminary Determination of Individual Listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
- Previously Listed in the National Register. (partially)
- 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:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State Agency
- Federal Agency
- Local Government
- University
- Other (Specify Repository):

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

Acreage of Property: .912 acre

UTM References:	Zone	Easting	Northing
	15	581160	3598080

Verbal Boundary Description: See attached property plat map.

Boundary Justification: Boundary lines follow current property lines to recognize what remains of the original property associated with the house.

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11. FORM PREPARED BY

Name/Title: National Register staff

Address: Division of Historic Preservation, P. O. Box 44247, Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70804

Telephone: (225) 342-8160

Date: August 2001

PROPERTY OWNERS

Philip and Betty Albritton
118 Copley Street
West Monroe, Louisiana 71269
(318) 410-0227 (home)
(318) 388-1974 (work)