

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

THEME: Architecture

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DATE ENTERED

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

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC Homeplace Plantation House

AND/OR COMMON

Homeplace Plantation House (Keller Homestead)

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER La 18, .5 mile south of Hahnville Post Office

CITY, TOWN

Hahnville

VICINITY OF

___ NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

3rd

STATE

Louisiana

CODE

22

COUNTY

St. Charles

CODE

089

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE <input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL <input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT <input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT <input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL <input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME Mr. ~~Richard L. Keller~~ Richard J. Keller

STREET & NUMBER

Route 1, ~~Box 100~~ Box 343

CITY, TOWN

Hahnville

___ VICINITY OF

STATE

Louisiana

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC St. Charles Parish Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

River Road

CITY, TOWN

Hahnville

STATE

Louisiana

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE Historic American Buildings Survey
(12 sheets, 1940) (20 photos; c. 1899, 1936, 1940)

DATE

1940

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS

Library of Congress/Annex

CITY, TOWN

Washington

STATE

D.C.

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Homeplace Plantation House is located on the west bank of the Mississippi River at Hahnville in St. Charles Parish. It is a true Louisiana French colonial house and along with Parlange is among the very few of the larger examples left today. The house has the same plan as Parlange as well as many of the same structural details which seem to relate the two houses.

The two-story, hipped and dormered roofed building is two rooms deep and four across, all opening onto the sixteen foot gallery or veranda that surrounds the house. This feature of all openings functioning as doors as well as windows is not uncommon in this area where the climate made cross ventilation and high ceilings a necessity.

The original stairs were located at the northeast and southwest corners of the gallery. The northeast or front stair no longer exists. The present set of stairs located in the center of the front facade were added in 1900. There is also a small interior service stair beginning in the basement and continuing to the attic, but it is clear that the main method of communication between floors was the exterior stair.

The walls of the ground-story are of brick as are the pillars supporting the gallery floor. The brick of these pillars was made in wedge molds, like those seen at Parlange. They were then covered with stucco. These pillars have the same unfinished capitals and bases as at Parlange, while the simple light cornice and gallery balustrades are identical in construction suggesting the same master builder.

The upper gallery is of wood with exposed beams and wide cypress floor and ceiling planking. The upper story walls are constructed of cypress timbers in-filled with clay and Spanish moss. The steeply pitched hipped roof which shelters the house by forming the broad veranda is covered by cypress shakes, the most recent covering replacing the roof destroyed by a hurricane in 1965.

The lower story, with its thick brick walls and floors, contained seven service rooms, including the large dining room, a pantry, two wine rooms, a hall and two storage rooms. The wine rooms still retain some of the original wine racks for storing the bottles. The alternating green-gray and white Italian marble squares of the dining room are still in place, although the original marble mantelpiece has ~~regretfully~~ been entirely removed because of its deteriorating condition. Some remnants of the original wooden gratings, with their alternating patterns still remain. These gratings are found throughout the area and are one of the most interesting decorative features of the architecture.

(Continued)

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES 1787-1791

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Homeplace Plantation, erected between 1787 and 1791, is one of the finest and least altered examples of a large French colonial raised-cottage house in the United States. Its only peer is Parlange Plantation, also a national historic landmark. The two-story house is two rooms deep with a sixteen foot wide gallery or veranda on all sides, providing separate access to each of the second story rooms for cross ventilation. The ground floor level is of plantation-made brick and the second story walls are cypress timber in-filled with clay and Spanish moss. Homeplace still sits within a sugar plantation, as it has from its beginning and although modern industry closely surrounds its boundaries, the house maintains its stately presence set far back from the road facing the Mississippi levees.

HISTORY

The exact details of construction and original ownership are uncertain, but it is known that Homeplace Plantation House was built between 1787 and 1791, and was owned by both Pierre Gaillard and Louis Edmond Fortier during its early years. The Fortier family owned the house until 1856. It then changed hands a number of times before Pierre Anatole Keller purchased the property in 1889. The last child of Pierre Keller, Richard Keller Sr., still supervises its maintenance today.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

(See Continuation Sheet)

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY C- 746

UTM REFERENCES

A	1,5	7,5,0	3,1,0	3,3	1,8	4,3,0	B	1,5	7,5,0	3,9,0	3,3	1,8	1,1,0
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING
C	1,5	7,4,9	7,4,0	3,3	1,7	8,1,0	D	1,5	7,4,9	6,1,0	3,3	1,8	0,7,0
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

(See Continuation Sheet)

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Patricia Heintzelman, Architectural Historian, Landmark Review Project

ORGANIZATION

Historic Sites Survey, National Park Service

DATE

7/14/75

STREET & NUMBER

1100 L Street NW.

TELEPHONE

202-523-5464

CITY OR TOWN

Washington

STATE

D.C. 20240

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS

NATIONAL

STATE

LOCAL

Landmark Designated April 15, 1977 date
 Boundary Certified April 16, 1977 date

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), 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.

FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE

TITLE

DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

Patricia Heintzelman

DATE

4/24/79

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION ATTEST:

DATE

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

(NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARKS)

NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARKS

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The interiors of the main living floor are simple. The rooms vary in size, placed irregularly over the plan with no center hall, but all leading out onto the gallery. This again emphasizes the importance of exterior circulation. There are no carved marble mantels or plaster moldings and cornices such as are usually found in the large plantation houses of Maryland and Virginia. As at Parlange, the woodwork is sparingly used at the base and casings. The floors are wide cypress boards, two inches thick, and the mantels are also of wood. Unlike mantels in the north, these in Louisiana extend several feet into the room and the mantelpiece or fireplace is boxed around the walls and paneled on the sides. The proportions are attenuated with the narrow overmantel extending to the very high ceilings, an indigenous stylistic feature found at Parlange and in elegant New Orleans houses. Those at Homeplace are not as elaborate as at Parlange, but the delicate detailing of applied fluted pilasters and turned colonnettes is in keeping with its later date.

The side walls are plastered and were once covered with imported French paper. As on the veranda, the ceiling planks are exposed. This is a common construction practice, found at Parlange and in New Orleans. At Homeplace the transoms are still in place over the tall doors, including the interior openings in the cross ventilation system.

In 1900, when the new front stairs were added, other alterations were made. Two chimneys in the rear were removed. Originally these two, with another central chimney, afforded a fireplace for each of the eight rooms on the upper floor.

The kitchen building, which originally stood in front of the oak tree, was moved to the rear of the house, placed on raised pillars, and connected to the veranda. In 1918 a kitchenette was built, enclosing a portion of the porch, then in 1926 a bathroom was also built on the south side which juts out onto the porch area.

Tall brick pillars at the south end of the house once supported a wooden cistern which supplied water to the house for many years. The cistern was once part of the sugar mill which was disposed of in 1894. A few iron vats still exist on the grounds today. The great house was originally accompanied by the usual servant's quarters, pigeoniers, carriage house and other detached

(Continued)

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buildings of a large scale plantation. Only the carriage house, to the right rear of the house remains. The old plantation well, 24 feet deep, with cobblestone lining the sides about six feet below the top, also remains. Old sugar kettles and griss wheels are scattered about the plantation from the sugar mill which was torn down in 1894. The plantation bell, cast in 1806 was knocked from its original place by Hurricane Betsy in 1965 and is now kept in a basement room. This same hurricane also partially ruined the huge old pecan trees which line the drive to the house.

Homeplace Plantation House still sits within a sugar plantation, facing the Mississippi River as it has for almost two centuries. Modern industry and roads enclose it on all sides and a nuclear plant is now being constructed to the north, but the old house manages to retain its air of dignified serenity and remnants of its former elegance within its shrinking environment.

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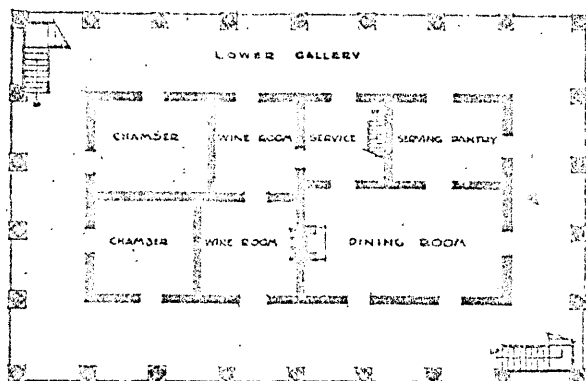
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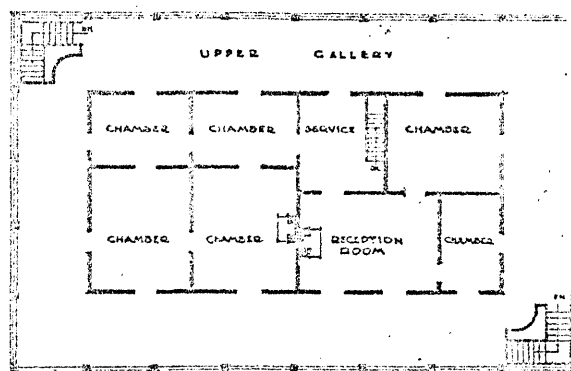
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GROUND FLOOR PLAN



SECOND FLOOR PLAN

Original floor plan of Homeplace Plantation House

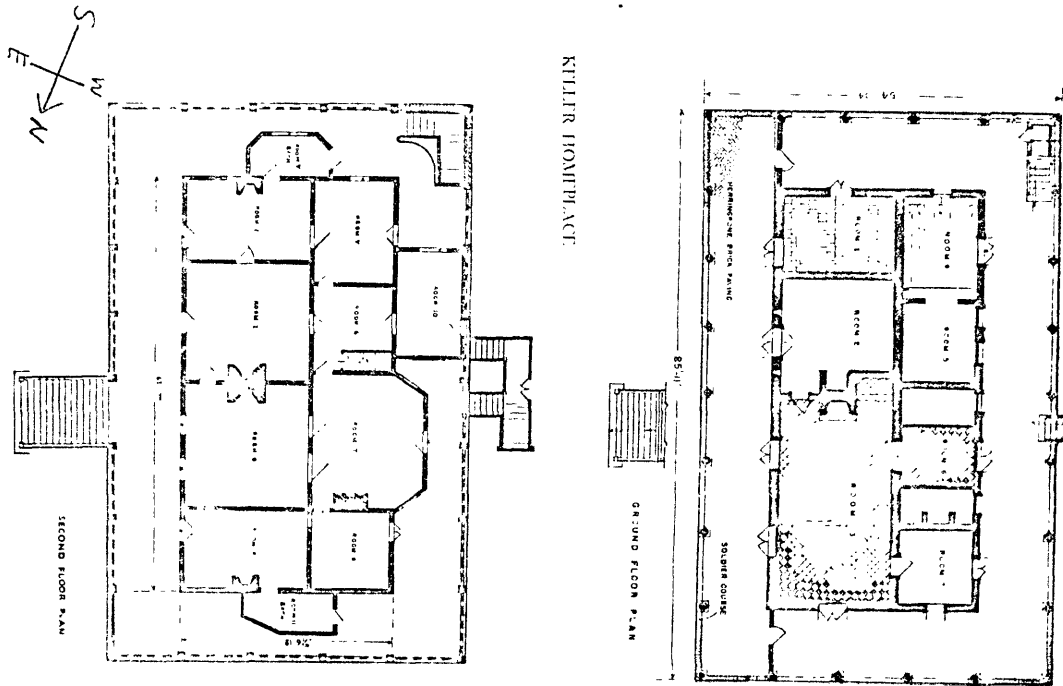
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Plan of Homeplace Plantation House following later alterations

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Beginning at Point X on the west bank of the Mississippi River (approximately 2000' east of Holy Rosary Church—See Sketch map A) proceed southwest 2.5 miles, more or less, to a point; thence north 3000', more or less, to a point; thence northeast 2.5 miles, more or less, to the west bank of the Mississippi River; thence south along the westbank of the Mississippi River to the point of origin.