

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

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received MAR 12 1984
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 Armitage

and or common same

2. Location

street & number LA HWY 20 ^{and} Colonial Drive N/A not for publication

city, town Schriever vic. vicinity of

state LA code 22 county Terrebonne Parish code 109

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<u>N/A</u> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<u>N/A</u> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Mr. and Mrs. Frank W. Wurzlow, Jr. 504-446-1772

street & number P. O. Box 177

city, town Schriever N/A vicinity of state LA 70395

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Terrebonne Parish Courthouse

street & number Main Street (no specific address) P. O. Box 1569

city, town Houma state LA 70361

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title LA Historic Sites Survey has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 1980 federal state county local

depository for survey records LA State Historic Preservation Office

city, town Baton Rouge state LA

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> original site	Moved 50' south and 35' west
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> moved	date in 1962,
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed			

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Armitage (1852) is a story and a half, frame, Greek Revival plantation house located in a suburban setting on the west bank of Bayou Terrebonne about one mile south of Thibodaux near the small community of Schriever. Despite a few changes and a very short move, the house easily retains its National Register eligibility.

The pit sawn structure is supported on a continuous brick skirting wall. The two chimneys are located against the gabled end walls of the house. Each gable is surmounted by a slight gable parapet. The front gallery features six heavily proportioned Doric posts and a full entablature. There is no rear gallery. Windows are six over six. The shutters have movable louvers in the lower panels and fixed louvers in the upper panels. The slate roof (Welsh red slate) and cast-iron gutters are original. The front exterior wall is stuccoed and scored to resemble ashlar.

Armitage's plan is a combination of American and Creole influenced features. It has a central hall, but also features a pair of rear cabinets with a long narrow room set between them. (In some more advanced Creole houses a long narrow room of this kind takes the place of the normal rear gallery.) An interesting feature of the plan is that the front door is set on axis with the rear door of the central hall, which in turn is set on axis with the rear door of the house. This rear door is set directly in the center of the aforementioned long narrow rear room and is flanked by windows. This yields an axuality in plan which suggests the hand of an architect.

The steep staircase is located in the central hall, and features a large turned newel post. Most of the doors feature six molded panels of equal size, ear-molded frames, and drip cornices. There are four pilastered aedicule style mantels in the house, none of which wrap around the flue. The unusually deep baseboards have elaborately molded tops.

Some of the false graining (faux bois) in the house has been lost; however, the considerable amount that does remain is of excellent quality. The doorway in the living room is grained in red and white oak. The door itself is grained in bird's eye maple with feathered mahogany panels on one side and burl of bird's eye maple panels on the other. The panels below the windows in the living room are grained in burl of bird's eye maple. The upstairs doors feature quarter grained oak and feathered mahogany panels. The one notable exception is the door in the master bedroom which has elaborately grained burl of bird's eye maple panels. The only other remaining false graining in the house is in the upper skirting of the stair well.

In 1962 the house was moved fifty feet south and thirty-five feet west in order to center it on the lot and to provide for some distance from a road which had been built. This move obviously has not affected Armitage's National Register eligibility because the house was not moved out of the area which is the context for its significance.

CONTINUED

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For NPS use only

received

date entered

Continuation sheet

Armitage

Item number 7

Page 2

7. Description (cont'd)

By and large Armitage retains its original appearance; however, the following changes have been made by the present owners to provide for living convenience:

1. Two upstairs transoms have been covered in matching false graining to provide for privacy.
2. One of the cabinets has been converted into a kitchen.
3. Bathrooms and closets have been installed.
4. The upstairs originally had two 18' x 5½' closets and one 48' x 5½' closet. One of the 18' closets is now a bathroom and the other two closets have been subdivided. Originally each 18' closet had a small window opening into the bedroom, and the 48' closet had two similar windows. One of these windows has been retained.
5. The rear of the house received a new stoop, a covered entrance, and three dormers.
6. The large narrow room at the rear of the ground story was paneled in cypress boards. (These are original boards that were taken from the rear attic.)

In addition, the following historic features of the house had to be replaced in kind by the present owners due to damage or deterioration:

1. The mantel in the present dining room, which was made with cypress taken from the attic. (About one-half of the floorboards in this room are original; the remainder are original floorboards taken from the front attic.)
2. All interior drip cornices.
3. All ceiling medallions.
4. Both chimneys. (They were rebuilt with the original bricks.)
5. All of the water drain spouts. (The one remaining original zinc spout, which bore the date "1852," was in too poor of a condition to use, but served as the model for the four reproductions now in place.)
6. Some of the glass.
7. The gallery balustrade. (One of the balusters is original and was used as the model for the others.)

The present owners have built to the rear of the house a walled garden containing the old plantation milk house, a garage and a gazebo. The brick milk house was moved a few feet to its present site in 1962. Its Victorian vergeboards, although reproductions, are identical to the original ones. The

CONTINUED

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For NPS use only

received

date entered

Continuation sheet Armitage

Item number 7

Page 3

7. Description (cont'd)

garage is built of bricks from the old Houma Academy Building (demolished) and is styled to resemble the milk house. The gazebo is the former observatory which stood atop the Houma Academy Building (built in 1859 and designed by Henry Howard).

Because it is the only remaining outbuilding from the Armitage Plantation, the milk house is listed as a contributing element. The gazebo and the garage are listed as non-contributing elements because they are not historic features of the property.

Assessment of Integrity:

The aforementioned alterations have not affected Armitage's artistic significance because the case for eligibility is based upon the faux bois (false graining) work that survives.

Nor have they affected Armitage's eligibility in the area of architecture. The case for architectural significance is based upon Armitage's identity as a Greek Revival house. In our opinion, that identity is clearly established by the historic features which still survive--i.e., the mass of the house, the classical gallery, the three original mantels, the ear molded doors, and the fenestration pattern.

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/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900–	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates 1852 **Builder/Architect** Builder; Francis L. Mead

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph) Criterion C

Armitage is of state significance in the area of art because it features some of Louisiana's finest false graining. It is also locally significant in the area of architecture as a relatively rare surviving example of a Greek Revival plantation house in Terrebonne Parish.

ART - STATE LEVEL:

Decorative arts experts John Geiser III and H. P. Bacot (curator of the Anglo-American Museum, Louisiana State University) have asserted that the extant false graining at Armitage is among the finest in Louisiana. But defining its quality in relation to other examples is difficult because no survey exists on the subject. Moreover, the quality of false graining is a subjective judgement.

However, in assessing the false graining at Armitage one can make the following general statements to substantiate its statewide significance:

1. False graining was extremely popular in the mid-nineteenth century and many Louisiana plantation houses had it. Armitage is one of a small minority of period plantation houses where the false graining survives in original condition more or less unretouched.

2. The false graining at Armitage is superior to much of the extant work around the state because it resembles the woods depicted so closely that it can easily be mistaken for them.

3. The false graining at Armitage features a greater variety of woods in combination than one usually finds. Many extant examples feature one wood throughout the house. Sometimes there is one principal wood, but the door panels are picked out in a different wood. By comparison, at Armitage there are five different woods used throughout the house and four of them appear in a single door and door frame.

ARCHITECTURE - LOCAL LEVEL:

Terrebonne Parish developed during the first half of the nineteenth century as a center for the growing and refining of sugar. Like most of Louisiana's sugar parishes, the parish's economy boomed in the thirty years or so prior to the Civil War. As a result, during this period a large number of Greek Revival plantation houses were built which represented something of an architectural "flowering" for the parish.

CONTINUED

9. Major Bibliographical References

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property approximately 3 acres

Quadrangle name Thibodaux, LA

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UTM References

A

1	5	7	1	1	1	2	0	3	3	9	4	4	8	0
Zone			Easting					Northing						

B

Zone			Easting					Northing						

C

Zone			Easting					Northing						

D

Zone			Easting					Northing						

E

Zone			Easting					Northing						

F

Zone			Easting					Northing						

G

Zone			Easting					Northing						

H

Zone			Easting					Northing						

Verbal boundary description and justification

Please refer to enclosed sketch map for description, Please refer to Item 10 continuation sheet for justification,

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state N/A code county code

state code county code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title National Register Staff ASSISTED BY OWNERS

organization Division of Historic Preservation date January 1984
State of Louisiana

street & number P. O. Box 44247 telephone 504-342-6682

city or town Baton Rouge state LA 70804

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

As the designated State Historic Preservation 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.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature *Robert B. DeBlieux*

title State Historic Preservation Officer Robert B. DeBlieux date March 5, 1984

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

Entered in the National Register date 4/12/84

Alvares Byers
Keeper of the National Register

Attest: _____ date _____

Chief of Registration

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For NPS use only

received

date entered

Continuation sheet

Armitage

Item number

8

Page

2

8. Significance (cont'd)

The importance of Armitage within this context can be illustrated by examining the census schedules of 1860. On the eve of the Civil War, there were forty-four large slaveholdings (i.e., fifty or more slaves) in the parish. Of these, the average size per slaveholding was 115.2 and only six involved individuals who did not reside in the parish. In addition, there were undoubtedly numerous slaveholdings of less than 50. Given the above, it is clear that there must have been numerous Greek Revival plantation houses and cottages in Terrebonne Parish on the eve of the Civil War (probably at least sixty). However, as far as the State Historic Preservation Office can determine, there are only six remaining examples. Consequently Armitage is of special importance in the architectural heritage of the parish.

Historical Note:

Armitage was built by Francis L. Mead, who was from New Haven, Connecticut. In 1859 it was sold to his stepson-in-law, Charles B. Armitage, who died there in 1872.

The house was originally centered on a three arpent wide by twenty arpent deep tract of land (1 arpent = 192 feet). In the 1890's the four children of a subsequent owner, Darden Roundtree, partitioned the property, and the 163 feet by twenty arpents lot on which the house was situated was allotted to his daughter, Valerie Roundtree Malbrough. The present owners purchased the house from the children of Mrs. Malbrough in 1948.

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For NPS use only

received

date entered

Continuation sheet

Armitage

Item number

9

Page

2

9. Bibliography

Terrebonne Parish Conveyance Records

Louisiana Historic Standing Structures Survey, Terrebonne Parish, LA SHPO.

Menn, Joseph K. The Large Slaveholders of Louisiana - 1860, Gretna: Pelican Publishing Company, 1976.

Bacot, H. P. Curator, Anglo-American Museum, Louisiana State University.
Personal communication, January 9, 1984.

Geiser, John, III. Personal communication, January 9, 1984. Mr. Geiser is the interior designer who assisted the present owners in restoring Armitage's interiors.

History of the property provided by owners, Copy in National Register file, LA SHPO.

**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service
National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**



Continuation sheet

Armitage

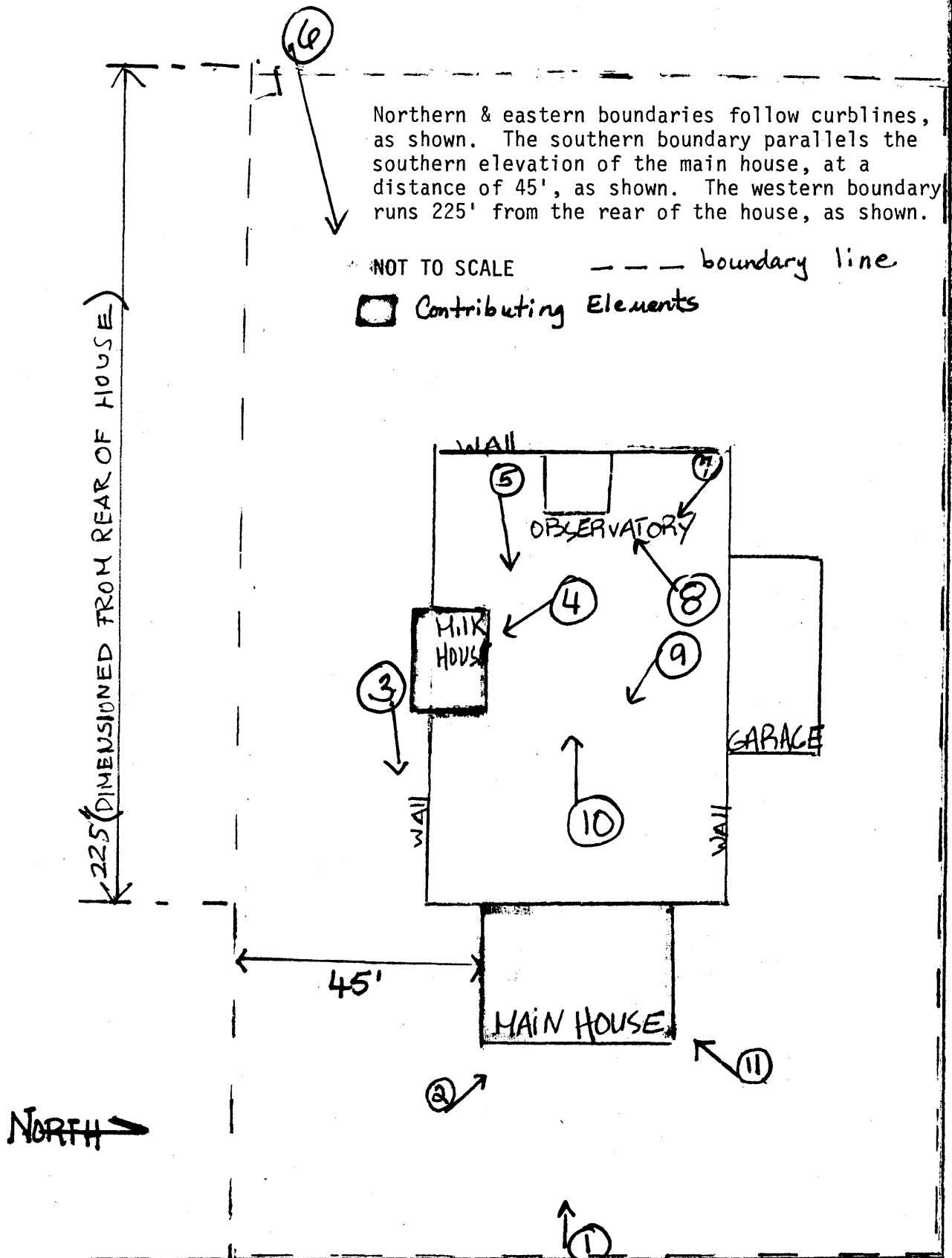
Item number 10

Page 2

10. Boundary Justification:

The boundary lines were drawn to take in the immediate surroundings of the house. The large front and rear yards retain something of the rural setting the house once enjoyed. In addition, the milk house in the rear yard is Armitage's only remaining historic outbuilding.

ARMITAGE, TERRE BONNE PARISH



COLONIAL DRIVE

ROUTE 20