

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

THEME: Architecture

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**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 **Madam John's Legacy**

AND/OR COMMON

Madam John's Legacy

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER **632 Dumaine Street**

___NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

New Orleans

___ VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

2nd

STATE

Louisiana

CODE

22

COUNTY

Orleans

CODE

071

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
___DISTRICT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	___AGRICULTURE <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	___PRIVATE	___UNOCCUPIED	___COMMERCIAL ___PARK
___STRUCTURE	___BOTH	___WORK IN PROGRESS	___EDUCATIONAL ___PRIVATE RESIDENCE
___SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	___ENTERTAINMENT ___RELIGIOUS
___OBJECT	___IN PROCESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	___GOVERNMENT ___SCIENTIFIC
	___BEING CONSIDERED	___YES: UNRESTRICTED	___INDUSTRIAL ___TRANSPORTATION
		___NO	___MILITARY ___OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME **State of Louisiana
Administered by
Louisiana State Museum**

(Left half of the Stable owned by Pierson-
Harrie Advertising
624 Dumaine Street -New Orleans,La.)

STREET & NUMBER

751 Chartres Street

CITY, TOWN

New Orleans

___ VICINITY OF

STATE

Louisiana

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC **Orleans Parish Courthouse**

STREET & NUMBER

421 Loyola Avenue

CITY, TOWN

New Orleans

STATE

Louisiana

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE **Historic American Buildings Survey (4 drawings, 5 data pages)**

DATE

1963

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

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Restoration of Madam John's Legacy was completed in the fall of 1974. The Louisiana legislature appropriated \$145,000 for the renovation, \$72,000 came from state museum admission funds and \$193,000 was given by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

The work was started in 1972 and an effort was made to follow the original design and to use existing materials whenever possible. Measured drawings from the Historic American Buildings Survey and various inventories with descriptions of the house and contents were utilized. The plan of the restoration was to restore the building to as early a state as the research and documentation could support, while at the same time retaining late additions of great interest if they did not conflict directly with the early building.

Stairways and openings were moved back to original locations but two out-buildings, an old chimney and the house's dormer windows were left in place. The dormer windows were added about 1826. New fireplaces, mantels and cornices were placed in the living room and new columns were put on the front.

Walls, inside and out, were repainted to match the earliest colors found, and an original patch of plaster was left in each room to show a cross section of the many different shades used over the years. Madam John's was also equipped with modern plumbing, air conditioning, an electrical system, burglar alarms and fire-detection equipment.

Madam John's Legacy is a slightly altered example of early French colonial architecture. It is considered typical of many of the Veux Carre houses built in the early 18th century by middle class families.

The above-ground basement walls are solid brick. The inner walls of the upper story are constructed of brick and wood; the exterior is covered with horizontal wood planks. A rear patio separates the house from the two-story brick slave quarters. The entrance to the house is from this courtyard area by a stair which rises to the main floor gallery. Beneath a stairway of the slave quarters an original privy was found during the work.

The privy discovery was part of an archaeological excavation conducted by J. Richard Shenkel, assistant professor in the Department of Anthropology and Geography at Louisiana State University in New Orleans. He also found brick and wood fragments two to three feet below the current grade. The dumping of trash on a house's grounds was once a common practice and streets gradually rose with layers of mud, wood, cobblestones and asphalt. It was often necessary to raise the lintels of doors to compensate. Shenkel found that the ground at Madam John's is now two feet higher than when the house was built, and thus architectural proportions are not the same.

(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 1788

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Madam John's Legacy, which received its name from a George Washington Cable story, was built in 1788, after an earlier building on the site had been destroyed. It is an outstanding surviving example in the United States of a French colonial townhouse of the raised-cottage type as well as one of the oldest extant buildings in the Vieux Carre, dating before the second great fire in 1794. The basement of the two-and-a-half story dwelling has thick brick walls, the second story is brick-between-post construction covered with horizontal wood planks. A narrow court in the rear separates the dwelling from brick slave quarters and outbuildings. Although the city has engulfed the house which was once surrounded by a large city lot, Madam John's Legacy still presents the best illustration of a French colonial townhouse.

HISTORY

The property of Madam John's Legacy was owned by Elizabeth Real, wife of Captain Jean Pascal, from 1722-28 to the 1770's. The report of an Indian massacre at the Natchez Post, census data, a marriage contract, two mortgages, letters and maps provide a property record for this period. A building contract dated 1788 shows that the house was destroyed that year, perhaps in the fire, and a new one was rebuilt that same year. After that date the house changed hands frequently. In 1826 a wealthier owner^{was} alterations which included adding dormers and changing the columns on the front. In the late nineteenth-century the house was broken into apartments, two on the main floor, three in the servants or slave quarters and one in the stable. In 1826 the property was purchased by Mrs. I. I. Lemann, who continued to use the house as apartments until 1947 when she donated it to the Louisiana State Museum. Madam John's Legacy was operated as a museum until 1965 when extensive hurricane damage forced its closing. The restoration was continually postponed until 1974 when work was begun. It was reopened as a house museum of the late eighteenth century in May, 1975.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

(See Continuation Sheet)

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY .5 acre

UTM REFERENCES

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

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Madam John's Legacy fronts on Dumaine Street a distance of 63 feet 9 inches, occupying Square 47, Lot 20 enclosed by a wall on all sides. Because half of the stable is located on the far side of the east wall the boundary is extended around the stable walls to include the entire building as part of the landmark designation.

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

7/3/75

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

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.

FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE

TITLE

DATE

Designated April 15, 1970
date

Boundary Certificate
George F. Meyer
April 15, 1970
date

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

W. J. [Signature] 8/10/77

DATE

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 house rests on an eight-foot high surface basement that has protected the living quarters from Mississippi River floods since its original construction somewhere between 1722-28. A building contract dated 1788 shows that the house was somehow destroyed and a new one built in its place that year, with much of the original materials.

The house dates from the time of the walled town when all houses were free standing in the midst of gardens. As this property was gradually sold, various outbuildings were moved or destroyed and others put in their place. The current stable dates from 1826.

The stable is two stories and housed servants on the second floor. Stalls and a kitchen with huge fireplace filled the ground floor. The half containing the kitchen was included in the sale of property around 1845 and is now an apartment on an adjoining lot.

In 1845 a garconniere or slaves quarters, was constructed to replace the space lost by selling land which contained half of the stable. This building was originally three stories but hurricane damage in 1952 reduced it to two stories. Only the exteriors of these outbuildings were restored because of lack of funds.

The main house has been extensively wired and equipped for air conditioning. Because of this, the natural ventilating system of high ceilings and doors opening into front and back galleries will not be utilized as an interpretive feature of the living style of the period. Track lighting has also been installed for exhibition purposes.

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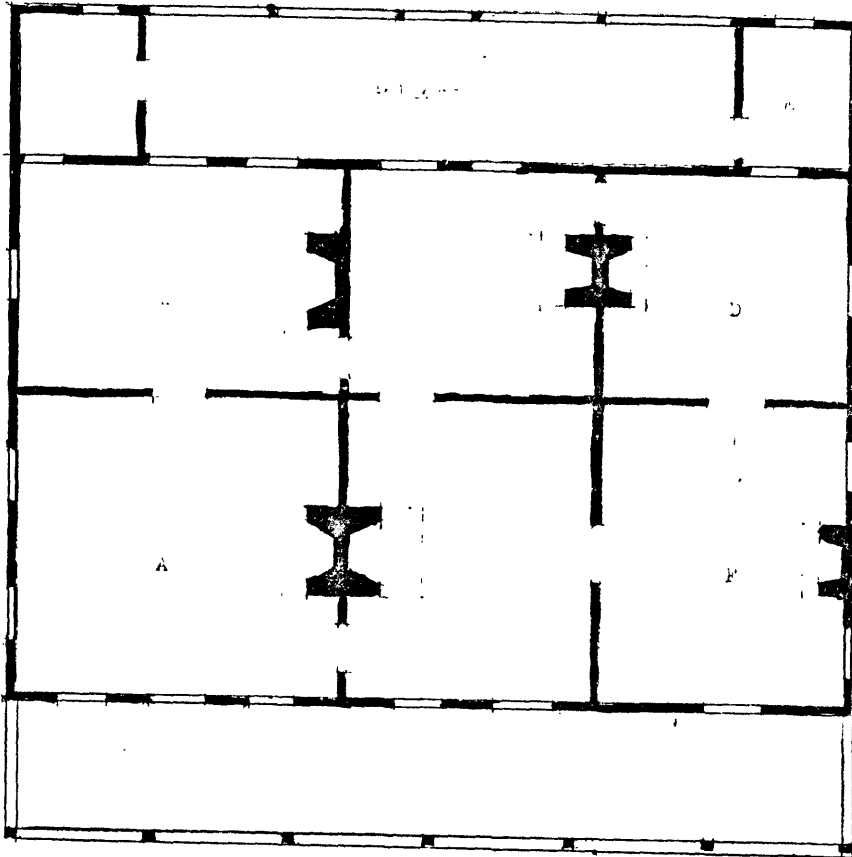
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Description - Madam John's Legacy

Rear or courtyard side



Front or Dumaine Street Side

Floor plan of Madam John's Legacy

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Nicholson, Arnold, American Houses in History, New York, 1965.

Personal interview with F. Monroe Labouisse, III, restoration architect for
Madam John's Legacy.

Vieux Carre Commission Files, Vieux Carre Commission, New Orleans.