# THE NEW ORLEANS SHOTGUN HOUSE:

# AN ANTHROPOLOGICAL AND GEOGRAPHIC HISTORY

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# Cover Letter

Herein, please find the first five chapters of proposed publishable manuscript on the history of the shotgun house in New Orleans. We anticipate that these chapters will be augmented with three more in the following grant cycle, depending, of course, on the wishes of the Division of Historic Preservation and its Grant Evaluation Committee. At the time of the next submission we will submit copies of the entire fully-integrated manuscript. This is because in the writing of the final chapters, we expect to have certain changes and insertions in the earlier chapters being submitted here.

We have learned that the completion of a book manuscript is a task which is very difficult to coordinate with a specific set of calendrical deadlines. No chapter is ever as complete, well-worded and well-illustrated as you wish it could be. There is always one more archival source which needs to be tracked down, and one more photograph of a house illustrative of a specific type which needs to be taken. You always hear of specialists who have more knowledge who need to be interviewed. More editing always remains to be done. That is, of course, the status of the present manuscript. We expect that there will be time for some corrections before the final manuscript has been assembled.

The current manuscript is, however, a full and complete work which, together with its remaining chapters could successfully be submitted to a publisher. Publishing books of the type of the Creole Cottage and the Shotgun histories, require a great deal of give and take with the publisher and their editors. Experience with the Creole Cottage manuscript, submitted last year, proves that we must expect a considerable amount of re-writing in order to satisfy their editorial and marketing wishes. Our current plans are to submit the completed Shotgun House manuscript, and then begin work on the revisions of both books.

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# SHOTGUN – AMERICA'S HOUSE

## PREFACE:

## FUNNY OLD HOUSE

"I suppose that it is a residence, for it does not look like one. That is the rule in that region." (George Washington Cable, *Old Creole Days, p. 156).*

If, while strolling through the back side of the French Quarter in New Orleans one day, you happened to cross old Rampart Street and continued walking, you would find yourself in the remains of that curious and historically unique neighborhood called Tremé. It is not a neighborhood of the colonial period. Rather, it traces its origins to the early American period when waves of immigrants to the city were spreading beyond the old fortifications which defined the limits of the Spanish colonial town. In the first and second decades of the nineteenth century, land developers such as Claude Tremé were laying out satellite suburbs, which Francophones referred to as *faubourgs* or "false cities" – that is neighborhoods without their own governments. Here, as in the *Vieux Carré,* little wooden cottages sit right up against the *banquette*, or sidewalk. They are modest houses, usually fifteen to forty feet wide on the street, and they stand nearly shoulder to shoulder, with very narrow passageways separating those not attached directly by party walls. Most are simple single story cottages; very few exceed two stories in height. Some have only two doors in the façade; others have three or four doors and some have combinations of doors and windows. These are clearly not typical American style houses. They are the unique and colorful urban vernacular architecture of southern Louisiana from the early nineteenth century.

Some of the house types are well known and respected exemplars of the first decades of American rule in Louisiana. The Creole Cottage and the Shotgun House are two of the most abundant; but there are others for which there is no common name. Indeed, some are not even recognized as existing house types by any but the most architecturally knowledgeable residents of the city. No social stigma has arisen to submerge their recognition due to some unfortunate association with race or class or occupation.

Rather, they are simply not recognized as recurring house forms at all. There is no shared vocabulary to describe them. They are the invisible architecture of the city.



**Fig. P.1. The little house at 1126 Rue Quartier, New Orleans. This was our house for a year and a half on the edge of the French Quarter. The house type is known as an *appentis* cottage, or shed-roofed cottage. It was a common type between ca. 1795 and 1840.**

As I write this, I am seated in one of these little houses near the edge of the French Quarter. It is late January and Mardi-Gras is fast approaching. My house is sufficiently unusual that the causal passer-by might mistake it for another type of building entirely. The façade is sheathed in weathered clapboards of widely varying widths, all painted in pale yellow. The house is narrow, only twenty feet wide, with two doors opening directly onto the six foot wide *banquette* or sidewalk. Each door is protected by double batten storm shutters painted blue-gray. The doors are set curiously close together in the façade, giving the house a somewhat cross-eyed appearance, but one might walk right past this little cottage and never even notice its colorful peculiarities. Each side is nearly hidden between trees -- a fruitful lemon tree on one side, and towering magnolia, white jasmine, and banana trees in a garden on the other. Pink ligustrum

creeps up the left-hand corner and over the roof, hiding the joint between this house and the next. The fruit of the lemon tree is so large that when fully ripe it is taken for grapefruit by causal passers-by. By day, colorful butterflies and dragonflies flit between the leaves of the little jungle, and bright green lizards jump from leaf to leaf. At night, the sweet perfume of the jasmine floods the atmosphere surrounding the house, more overpowering as that of a lady of the evening trolling for her seventh trick.

Half hidden in this lush setting, you might well pass by without remarking on the size of the house. It is tiny – only two main rooms deep and one room wide, with an added rear shed that provides for a modern kitchen and bathroom. It is smaller than most apartments. The yard is only four feet wider than the house, with a small overgrown rear patio where the old kitchen once stood. Who would want to live in such a miniature place?

Not only is the house diminutive, its roof appears to be curiously unsuitable. It is a single shed, sloping from upper left side to lower right side at a thirty degree angle. On the left, where it laps up against the party wall of a three-story tall townhouse, the roof is almost two stories tall, but on the right side it descends to about ten feet above the walk. It overhangs two feet, protecting a walkway which runs along the entire side of the house. In front, the roof breaks, sloping towards the sidewalk and forming a curious right triangle “hip.” An extension of the front roof shed, very common in these neighborhoods, juts about four feet out over the sidewalk. In New Orleans this is called an *abat vent* (wind knocker), but it is in reality more of an *abat pluie,* for it neatly protects passers-by from the rain, and on hot cloudless summer days, the blazing sun.

The original house had no windows at all – only French doors. Each swinging leaf of these narrow double doors was graced with twelve small glass lights. There were two such doors facing the street, and one facing the side of each room. These provided the original inhabitants with abundant light. In cold or stormy weather, the heavy outer storm shutters were closed and locked in place, providing protection and security, but darkening the house.

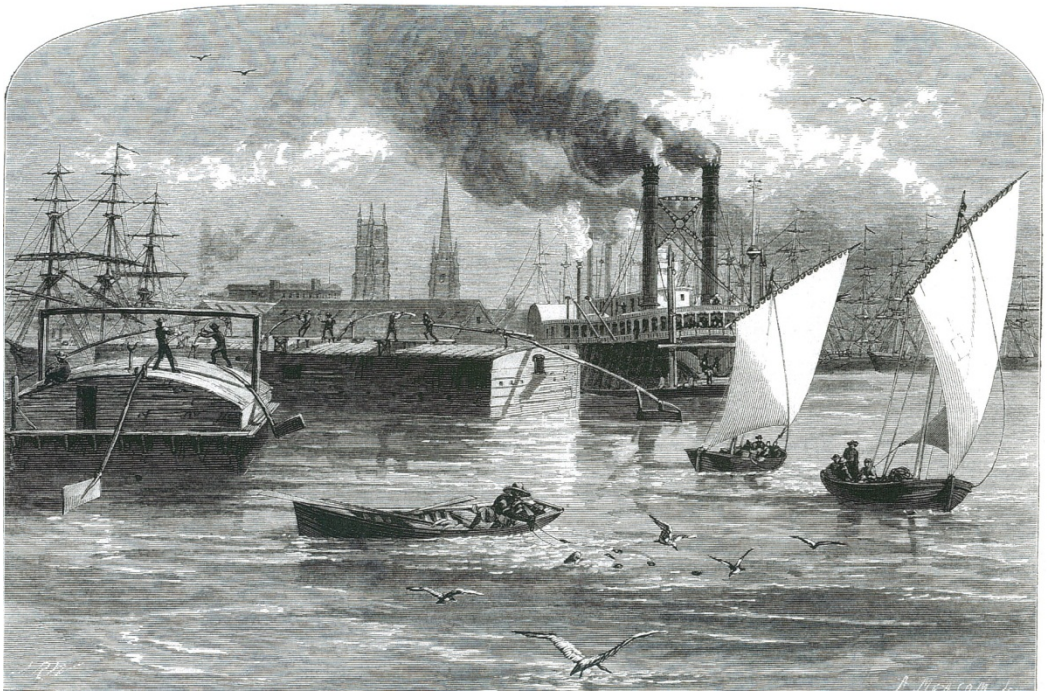


**Fig. P.2 Flatboats and small craft on the Mississippi at New Orleans, from a 19th century sketch. The square-rigger and the steam boat are indicative of the cosmopolitan nature of the commerce of New Orleans. Image Courtesy the historic New Orleans Collection.**

The little house is lightly constructed. Its walls are framed up out of what in the early decades of the nineteenth century were called *bois de chaland,* or flatboat planks. They derived from the many hundreds of barge-like craft which transported goods down the Mississippi River annually from as far away as Missouri, Kentucky and Pennsylvania. Once their cargoes of grain, oil, hides and other commodities of the country had been disembarked, the flatboats themselves were broken up on the *batture* (river bank) and sold to lumber dealers. The rough-hewn planks were two-by-twelves, though widths varied in those early days of hand fabrication. To form the wall of a house they were toe-nailed vertically onto a heavy cypress sill without a frame of any kind to support or stiffen them, yet this inadequate arrangement has been standing here now for 178 years through hurricanes and floods, without structural failure.

The ceilings of these little houses were equally distinctive. In traditional French roofs, the joists which support the ceiling boards are exposed to view from below. To soften the stark structural décor, the carpenter ran a beading plain down the lower edges of each ceiling beam, transforming its edges into what the French referred to as a *baguette* or a three-quarter round bead. The result resembled a small decorative rod running parallel to each edge of the joist. In later years, many of the exposed-joist ceilings have been sealed over with planks in the English fashion, hiding a portion of the charm of the old French ceilings. In the case of my house, the carpenter added new faux joists below the ceiling boards, taking pity on us unreconstructed preservationists. He nailed a set of false joists to the bottom of the smooth new ceiling, but unfortunately *sans baguettes*! Sic transit Gloria!



**Fig. P.3. Beaded ceiling joists, Spanish Custom House ca. 1796, under renovation 2013: Moss Street, Bayou St. John, New Orleans. Note baguettes or beads.**

Not everyone is so susceptible to the charms of an old Creole house in New Orleans as were the nineteenth century writers George Washington Cable and Lafcadio Hearn.[1] While they glorified in the overgrown decay of the old houses of New Orleans, today many residents feel they must radically adjust those common architectural expectations to standards which folks have become accustomed in other parts of the country. For example, the utter and complete lack of any insulation at all might be a problem for those not used to living closer to nature than we generally prefer. The exterior walls of the little house consist of a palisade of two inch thick vertical planks, sheathed with overlapping clapboards on the exterior, and with lath and plaster on the interior. Excess moisture, not heat, was the principal concern of the builder of ore. In wooden buildings resting near the damp ground and repeatedly subjected to rainstorms and a climate averaging roughly sixty-five inches of rain annually, local builders quickly learned to design their houses to maximize the flow of air through and around the frame of the house. No matter how wet the house might become in flood or hurricane, properly ventilated wood dried out within a day or two following the storm. A house with adequate air-flow -- beneath, above and around -- retarded the growth of wood-attacking fungus which, in turn, suppressed the ubiquitous and voracious termites native to these semi-tropical climes. Properly designed, even inexpensive wooden houses might stand for a century or two without major deterioration.

Careful design did not guarantee that the old house would not feel the ravages of age, though. In New Orleans, one does not expect an old house to remain square, plumb and level. Old houses lean and sag, some apparently to the point of collapse, though, like old men with canes, they may hang on for decades in that condition. Such is the case with my own little house. No floor is level. No door is fitted snugly to its warped frame. Walls stand out of plumb and roof rafters sag with the weight of slate or tile. Living in such an abode is rather akin to living on a yacht at sea. The floor pitches and rises as one moves from room to room, but one's body becomes accustomed to this rising and falling, and soon you never think about it. But quaff an extra dram or two and get a bit too active in bed at night, and in the morning

[1] Cable, George Washington.1879. *Old Creole Days*, New York: Charles Scribner's Sons; Hearn, Lafcadio. 1883. "The Scenes of Cable's Romances," *Century Magazine*.

you might awake to discover that your bed has mysteriously migrated down slope to the other side of the room with you still in it.

At some point in the month of May in New Orleans, the termites swarm on several consecutive nights. They fill the humid air in clouds and swarm about the streetlights. Should a neophyte resident happen to leave the outer security lights burning on such a night, at some point he might look down at the threshold to discover a scene taken right out of a horror movie. There, a sheet of wiggling winged termites is flowing in under the door like water. Or, one may awaken in the black early hours of the morning with termites crawling over every exposed part of his body. I have had both of these experiences. Fortunately, mating terrmites are harmless and nothing that a good can of bug spray, a broom, and a darkened house exterior cannot rectify.

Traditional French houses had no closets. Armoires substituted for the storage of clothing, which was folded and placed on shelves. A really traditional house is not modernized to accommodate twenty-first century tastes in this respect. You don't ask, "Where is the closet?" Rather, find a convenient place to stretch a bar or a chord to hang a few of your more elegant items which, when donned, would show their folds. Most houses are now fitted with modern bathrooms and kitchens, but in the rear yard or patio you will likely trip across the ancient foundations of the former two-story kitchen which accommodated both the open cooking hearth with all of its iron paraphernalia, and small bedrooms for one or two servants. Also, there were the privies, the cistern, and room permitting, perhaps a fountain or a parterre garden as a reminder of old world elegance.

In answer to the question posed above, I can briefly describe the history of this particular house in the Tremé neighborhood. In 1834 Tremé was still being settled. Here, many of the landowners were free people of color. Louisiana was the only place in the United States where free blacks could be legal landowners and many were. As many Free Women of Color owned property in Tremé as Free Men of Color. They were artisans, businesswomen and landladies. Many were not literate, so unfortunately, they bequeathed us no diaries or other personal documents which would have revealed the fascinating details of their daily lives.

One Berthile Houdart, f.c.l. (*femme de colour libre*), owned a forty-five foot wide property on old Quartier Street. In 1834, the property passed to another Free Woman of Color, Palmyre Berquier, her daughter. She first inherited a fifteen foot wide strip of land from her mother, Berthile, The following year she received another contiguous strip only seven and one-half feet in width (all French measure). Apparently, Palmyre had discovered that her original strip of land, only fifteen feet by forty feet deep, was inadequate for the purpose to which she wished to put it. The original forty-five foot wide strip of Houdart property was now subdivided into two halves, each 22.5 feet wide on the street. Shortly thereafter (1835), two small *appentis* (shed roofed) houses appear on these lots. In April of 1842, Palmyre sold her combined piece of property, now 22.5 feet wide, to *her* daughter, "together with all *circonstances* and *dependances* [improvements and service buildings] thereon." The house and properties were passed to the granddaughter, Marie Rose Arcueil, in the name of *her* own daughter, Victoria Rose Pepin. At the time, Rose Pepin was only about one year old. So four generations of this family were owners of the property. Victoria Rose resided there for many years. Her house remained in her name until her succession of April 7, 1909, when it passed to Mrs. Lucie Lafferrandirie, the wife of one Richard Ducros. Lucie also appears to have been a descendant of the Houdart family. From that time, the house passed down through many hands until it became the property of a local landlord, who kindly rented it to me.

The current owner assumed that in some former time a disaster had befallen the little house, and it was quickly and cheaply fitted with an unusual shed roof. However, that is not the case. The little house is typical of the period in which it was built. We may refer to these nameless little houses as *appentis* (shed roof) houses, and they were once common. Many dozens still stand in the French Quarter, in Tremé, and in Marigny, and many more are depicted in the wonderful archival paintings housed in the New Orleans Notarial Archive. Existing *appentis* houses are dated to between 1801 and the 1840s. They were built in different widths: two-bay, three-bay and four bay, but almost always with only doors in their facades. Appentis cottages played a significant role in the adoption of the shotgun house in New Orleans. They were commonly built by or for free people of color, and one wonders if they are in some way historically

related to the rear patio *appentis* service structures which lined the sides of the courtyards of larger Spanish colonial townhouses in the 1790s, but, as they say, that is a story for another time and place.

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If, walking through the back side of the French Quarter in New Orleans one day, you happened to cross old Rampart Street, you would find yourself in the remains of that curious and historically unique neighborhood called Tremé. It is not a neighborhood of the colonial period. Rather, it traces its origins to the early American period when waves of immigrants to the city were spreading out beyond the old fortifications of the Spanish town. They were settling in new satellite suburbs which the French referred to as *faubourgs* or "false cities" – that is, without their own governments. The new faubourgs were named for the landowner who subdivided extensive plantation holdings and created a new urban neighborhood. Such was the case with Claude Tremé, who owned a plantation directly adjacent to the Spanish fortifications or ramparts of the century-old French-Spanish city of New Orleans. Tremé began to sell off his land holdings beginning about 1800. Free People of Color were among his favored buyers.

In Tremé, as in the *Vieux Carré,* the little wooden cottages sit right up against the *banquette,* or sidewalk. They are smaller houses, usually twenty to forty feet wide on the street, sitting nearly shoulder to shoulder. They are almost all one or two stories in height. Some have only two doors in the façade. Others have three or four, but they are clearly not the typical American style houses one is accustomed to outside of Louisiana. They are the emblems of a local vernacular architecture of the early nineteenth century, one which is unique to New Orleans.

Some of these house forms are well known and respected exemplars of the first decades of American rule in Louisiana. The Creole Cottage and the Shotgun house are two of the most abundant here, but there are others for which there is no common name. Indeed, some are not even recognized as existing by any but the most architecturally knowledgeable residents of this part of the city. It is not that

they are ignored because of some social stigma or some unfortunate association with race or class. Rather, they are simply not recognized as typical house types at all. There is no locally shared vocabulary to describe them.

As I write this, I am seated in one of these little houses near the edge of the French Quarter. It is late January and Mardi-Gras is fast approaching. My house is sufficiently unusual that the causal passer-by might mistake it for another type of building entirely. He or she might assume that some previous owner modified a once-typical New Orleans house in a curious way for some mysterious reason. Its façade is sheathed in weathered clapboards of widely varying widths, all painted in a pale yellow. The house is narrow, only twenty feet wide -- its two front doors opening directly onto the six foot wide *banquette* (Fig. 1.1)



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Each door is protected by double batten storm shutters painted blue-green. The doors are set curiously close together in the façade, giving the house a somewhat cross-eyed appearance, but one might walk right past this little cottage and never even notice these colorful peculiarities. Each side is nearly

hidden between tropical trees -- a fruitful lemon tree on one side, and towering magnolia, white jasmine and banana trees in a garden on the other. Pink lagustrum creeps up the left-hand corner and over the roof, hiding the joint between this house and the next. The fruit of the lemon tree is so large that when fully ripe it is taken for grapefruit by causal passers-by. By day, colorful butterflies and dragonflies flit between the leaves of the local jungle, and bright green lizards jump from leaf to leaf. At night, the perfume from the jasmine floods the atmosphere surrounding the house, more overpowering as that of a lady of the evening trolling for her seventh trick.

The house is tiny – only two main rooms deep and one room wide, with an added rear shed that houses the modern kitchen and bathroom. This free-standing house is smaller than most apartments. The yard is only four feet wider than the house, with a small overgrown rear patio where the old kitchen once stood. Who would want to live in such a miniature place?

Not only is the house diminutive, its roof appears to be curiously unnatural. It is a single shed. As viewed from the street, it slopes from left side to right at a thirty degree pitch. On the left side the roof is almost two stories tall where it laps up against the party wall of a three-story tall townhouse, but on the right side it descends to about ten feet above the walk. There, it overhangs the side of the house by about two feet, protecting a walkway which runs along the entire side. In front, the roof breaks, sloping towards the sidewalk and forming a curious triangle. An extension of the front roof, very common in these neighborhoods, juts about four feet out over the sidewalk. In New Orleans this is called an *abat vent* (wind knocker), but it is in reality more of an *abat pluie,* for it neatly protects passers-by from the rain, and on hot cloudless summer days, the blazing sun.

The original house had no windows at all – only French doors front, side and rear. Sliding sash windows are an English invention. Each swinging leaf of these narrow double doors was graced with twelve small glass lights. There were two such doors facing the street and one in each room facing the side. These provided the original inhabitants with abundant light, filtered through the ever-changing vegetation of the surrounding garden. In cold or stormy weather, the heavy outer storm shutters were closed and locked in place with heavy iron hooks, providing both protection and security, but darkening

the house. But despite their undeniable charm, non-locals soon learned to beware the French style double-leaf door. It is far easier to pinch one's fingers when closing a French door than it is a single-leaf door.

This little house is lightly constructed. Its walls are framed up out of what in the early decades of the nineteenth century were called *bois de chaland*, or flatboat planks. They derived from the many hundreds of barge like craft which transported goods down the Mississippi River annually from as far away as Missouri, Kentucky and Pennsylvania (Fig. 1.1). Once their cargoes of grain, oil, hides, hardwoods and other commodities of the country had been disembarked, the boats themselves were broken up on the *batture* (river bank) and sold to lumber dealers. The rough-hewn cypress planks were approximately two-by-twelves, though widths varied in those early days of hand fabrication. To form the wall of a house they were toe-nailed vertically on a heavy sill without a frame of any kind to support or stiffen them, yet this ridiculous palisade arrangement has been standing here now for one-hundred and eighty years through hurricanes and floods, without structural failure.

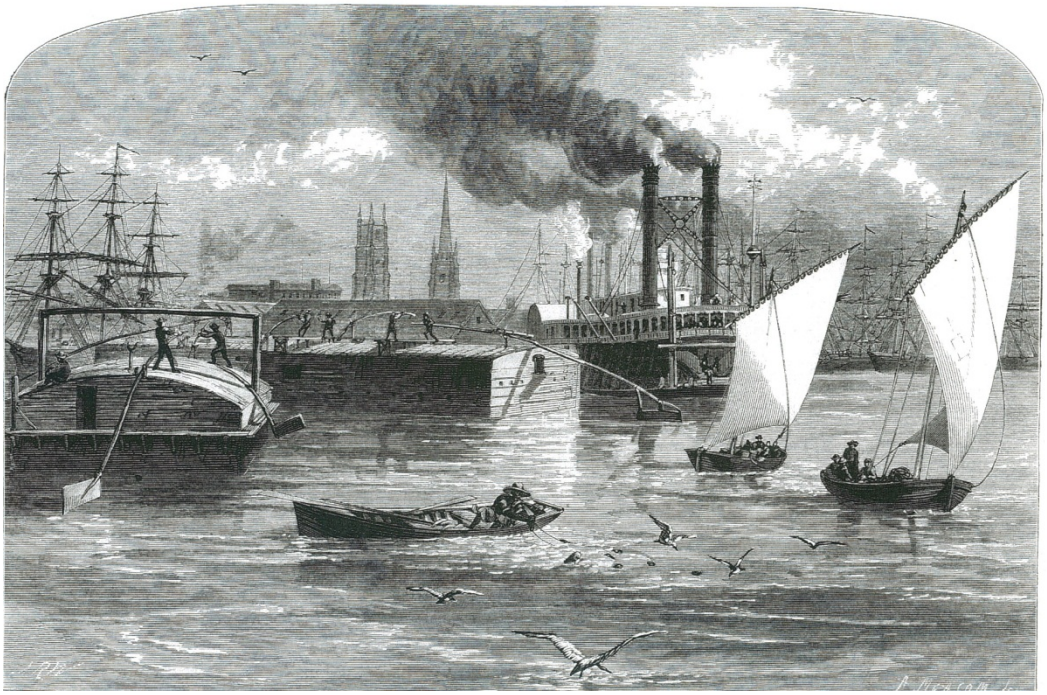


**Fig. 1.2 Flatboats and small craft on the Mississippi at New Orleans, from a 19th century sketch. The square-rigger and the steam boat are indicative of the cosmopolitan nature of the commerce of New Orleans. Image Courtesy the historic New Orleans Collection.**

The ceilings of these little houses were equally distinctive. In traditional French roofs, the joists which support the ceiling boards are exposed to view from below. To soften the stark structural décor, the carpenter ran a beading plane down the lower edges of each ceiling beam, transforming both edges into what the French referred to as a decorative *baguette*. The result resembled a small three-quarter round decorative rod called a bead at each lower edge of the joist (Fig. 1.2). In later years, many of the exposed joist ceilings have been sealed over with planks in the English fashion, hiding a portion of the charm of the old French ceilings. In the case of my house, the carpenter took pity on a few of us unreconstructed preservationists. He nailed new faux joists below the secondary ceiling boards, but unfortunately *sans baguettes*! Sic transit Gloria!



**Fig. 1.3. Beaded ceiling joists, Spanish Custom House ca. 1796, under renovation 2013: Moss Street, Bayou St. John, New Orleans. Note baguettes or beads.**

Not everyone is as susceptible to the charms of an old Creole house in New Orleans as were the nineteenth century writers, George Washington Cable and Lafcadio Hearn.[1] While they glorified in the overgrown decay of the old houses, today many feel they must adjust their architectural expectations to the standards of other parts of the country. For example, the utter and complete lack of any insulation in

old New Orleans houses might be a problem for those not used to living a bit closer to nature than we prefer today. The exterior walls of my little house consist of a palisade of two inch thick vertical planks, sheathed with overlapping horizontal clapboards on the exterior, and with lath and plaster on the interior. Excess moisture, not heat, was the principal concern of the builder of yore. In wooden buildings resting near the damp ground and repeatedly subjected to soaking in a climate averaging roughly sixty-five inches of rain annually, local builders quickly learned to design their houses to maximize the flow of air through and around the frame of the house. No matter how wet the house might become in flood or hurricane, properly ventilated wood dried out within a day or two following the storm. A house with adequate air-flow -- beneath, above and around -- retarded the growth of wood-attacking fungus which, in turn, suppressed the ubiquitous and voracious termites native to these semi-tropical climes. Even inexpensive wooden houses, properly designed, might stand for a century or two without major deterioration.

Traditional Creole construction did not guarantee that the old house would not feel the ravages of age. In New Orleans one does not expect an old house to remain square, plumb and level. They lean and sag, some apparently to the point of collapse. Like old men with canes, they may hang on for decades in that condition. No floor is level. No door is fitted snugly to its warped frame. Morning light streams in through the gaps in the storm shutters. Walls stand out of plumb and roof rafters sag with the weight of slate or tile. Domestic life is rather akin to living on a yacht at sea. The floor pitches and rises as one moves from room to room. “The floor was of wide slabs fastened down with spikes, and the sloping up and down in one or two broad undulations, as if they had drifted far enough down the current of time to feel the tide swell.”[2] One soon gets used to the rising and falling and never thinks about it. But quaff an extra dram or two and get a bit too active in bed at night and in the morning you awake to discover that your bed has migrated mysteriously down slope to the other side of the room with you still in it.

In the month of May on a few consecutive nights the termites of New Orleans come out to play. They fill the humid air in clouds and swarm about the streetlights. Should a neophyte resident (like me) happen to leave the outer security lights burning on such a night, at some point he might look down at the threshold to discover a scene taken right out of a horror movie. There, a sheet of wiggling winged termites is flowing in under the door like water. Or, one may awake the early hours of the morning with termites crawling over every part of his body. I have had both of these experiences. Fortunately, mating termites are harmless and nothing that a good can of bug spray, a broom, and a darkened house cannot rectify.

Traditional French houses had no closets. Armoires substituted for the storage of clothing, which was folded and placed on shelves. A really traditional house is not modernized to accommodate twenty-first century tastes in this respect. You don't ask, "Where is the closet?" Rather, find a convenient place to stretch a bar or a chord to hang the few of your more elegant items which would otherwise show their folds. Houses are now fitted with modern bathrooms and kitchens, but in the rear yard or patio you will likely trip across the ancient foundations of the former two-story kitchen which accommodated both the open hearth with all of its iron paraphernalia, and the bedrooms for one or two servants. Also, there were the privies, the cistern, and perhaps a fountain or a diminutive parterre garden as a reminder of old world elegance.

In answer to the question of who lived in these little wooden cottages, I can briefly describe the history of this particular house. In 1834 the Tremé neighborhood was still being settled. Many of the landowners were free people of color. Louisiana was the only place in the United States where free blacks could be legal landowners, and many were. As many free women of color owned property in Tremé, as free men of color. They were artisans, businesswomen and landladies. Most were not literate, so unfortunately, they bequeathed us no diaries or other personal documents which would have revealed the exigencies of their quotidian experiences.

One Berthile Houdart, f.c.l. (*femme de couleur libre--f*ree woman of color), owned a forty-five foot wide property on old Quartier Street near Rampart. In 1834, the property passed to another free woman of color, Palmyre Berquier, her daughter (also f.c.l.). Palmyre first inherited a fifteen foot wide

strip of land from her mother. The following year she received another contiguous strip only seven and one-half feet in width (all French measure). Apparently, Palmyre had discovered that her original strip of land, about forty feet deep, was inadequate for the purpose to which she wished to put it. The original forty-five foot wide strip of Houdart property was now subdivided into two halves, each 22.5 feet wide on the street. Shortly thereafter (1835), two small *appentis* (shed roofed) houses appear on these lots. In April of 1842, Palmyre sold her combined piece of property, now 22.5 feet wide, to *her* daughter, "together with all *circonstances* (works) and *dependances* (service buildings) thereon." The house and properties were passed to the granddaughter, Marie Rose Arcueil, in the name of *her* own daughter, Victoria Rose Pepin. At the time, Rose Pepin was only about one year old. So four generations of this family were owners of the property. Victoria Rose resided there for many years. Her house remained in her name until her succession of April 7, 1909, when it passed to Mrs. Lucie Lafferrandirie, the wife of Richard Ducros. Lucie also appears to have been a descendant of the Houdart family. The practice of piecing together small pieces of land to make up houseplots was common among free women in New Orleans. So was the successive inheritance from mother to daughter. Even inexpensive houses such as this little *appentis* cottage were highly valued and held tenaciously for many generations. The strength of female family bonds and the willingness to modify the established ground rules of land partition to fit the immediate needs were emblems of the character of the Creole woman of color in early American New Orleans.

## CHAPTER 1: THE IMPORTANCE OF LOUISIANA'S ARCHITECTURAL HISTORY: AN ANTHROPOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

**"Who does your past belong to, today, Baby?"**
**(Rosanne Cash, "Seven Year Ache")**

The anthropologist Rudolf Colloredo-Mansfeld once investigated a whole new set of vernacular housetypes which appeared rather suddenly in an Andean village. In some cases, the owners didn't even live in their elegant new houses. They had moved to more active trading towns. Once built, their new houses just sat there empty – overt statements about the excessive wealth of locals who had gone on to better things and a better life-style. Looking into this social symbolism, Colloredo-Mansfeld demonstrated that under conditions of economic development and globalization, architectural forms may become powerful symbols of new social status, even in remote and culturally conservative Andean settlements.[1]

Certain progressive architects have adopted an anthropological perspective when explaining their conceptualizations of buildings. In his 2005 Ted Talk, the architect Ole Scheeren argued that the people who live and work inside a building are as much a part of the architecture of that structure as the materials from which it is fabricated. "If form follows *fiction*, we could think of architecture and buildings as a space of stories -- stories of the people that live there, of the people that work in these buildings. And we could start to imagine the experiences our buildings create… I'm interested in fiction not as the implausible but as the real, as the reality of what architecture means for the people that live in it and with it" [emphasis added].[2]

Such insightful interpretations encourage us to ponder how our accepted approaches to the study of historic domestic architecture might be expanded and made more explanatory. From whence do new types and styles of houses originate? Why are they remodeled, and how do they die? In exploring these questions, let's consider some of the ways in which academically trained scholars have constructed the architectural histories of our own city -- New Orleans.

## Heroes of Architectural History

The architectural history of the Crescent City is significantly more complex and multifaceted than that of most American places, yet New Orleans is one of the best-studied urban communities in America. Generations of architectural historians have devoted their lives to uncovering the mysteries of the numerous unique styles which are found in no other American place. Many of the centuries-old styles have been given the designation, “Creole.”

**Sam Wilson, Jr., the Early Architecture Interpreted.** Great reformers succeed, largely, because they bring a variety of different skills and distinct knowledge bases to their efforts. No matter how experienced and dedicated a scholar might be, if he or she specializes too narrowly, the product of those efforts are in constant danger of foundering on the rocky sides of a too-narrow channel. In the end, the message fails to get out. In contrast, the contributions of the dedicated generalist may rise above the limitations inherent in a single specialization. Multiple perspectives reinforce one-another synergistically. This was the advantage that Samuel Wilson, Jr. Fellow of the American Institute of Architects brought to the interpretation of historic architecture of New Orleans. His career spanned sixty-years. One of the first well-trained scholars to document our architectural history, Sam was uniquely qualified to educate New Orleans about his passions. Far from being an ivory tower recluse, he was both a multi-lingual scholar of unusual capacity and a hands-on field worker who crawled in, under, and around the old buildings of New Orleans until he had learned their secrets better than anyone else. He was architect, building technician, historian, preservationist, educator, organizer, and champion of French architectural heritage in his native city. He inspired an entire generation of preservationists.



**Fig. 1.1. Sam Wilson, 1996, as photographed by John Lawrence. Image courtesy John Lawrence.**

Sam was a natural-born scholar. He entered Tulane University at the age of fifteen, and graduated from the School of Architecture in 1931 – not a great year for a new architect to find work. Nevertheless, he joined a local architectural firm headed by the Moise Goldstein and worked on several projects including Dillard University and the Sears building. In 1935 he was hired by the firm of Armstrong and Koch. He soon established a fine working relationship with Richard Koch, another Tulane architectural graduate.[3] Working for the Historic American Buildings Survey, they began documenting the historic buildings of the French Quarter and the river parishes. “I used to go out with Mr. Koch. We’d drive all over the state. He was an excellent photographer. We photographed plantation houses.”

This new Federal program was instituted to put unemployed architects to work during the great depression. Koch directed the Louisiana division, under the architectural historian Charles Peterson, who had proposed the establishment of an Historic American Buildings Survey to the Roosevelt administration's Works Progress Administration. Koch, Wilson, and a team of draftsmen, artists and architects documented numerous important monuments and common houses in and around New Orleans. They did detailed measured drawings of the Cabildo and the Presbytere, the Ursuline Convent, the Beauregard-Keys house, Madam John's Legacy, the Bosque house, Casa Flinard, and dozens of others. In recording the minute details of these historic buildings, they became intimately familiar with the evolution of New Orleans architectural styles. "Mr. Wilson's knowledge of such small details could be astonishing," according to Ann Masson, Executive Director of the Gallier House. "He could look at shutters or baseboards or millwork trim and say, 'This is obviously a replacement.' Each of the periods had its own style, even in small details, and Sam had this ability." [4]

In 1938, Moise Goldstein recommended Wilson for an Edward W. Langley grant from the American Institute of Architects. Its purpose was to conduct historical research on New Orleans in the archives of France. Sam traveled across Europe, including Nazi Germany, before landing in Paris. Sam had studied French for years in high school and college, but he never learned conversational French. Nevertheless, he conducted pioneering research in the architectural records of the Archives Nationales, Ministère des Colonies, and Bibliotheque Nationales, documenting French colonial buildings in the United States. "I could read the stuff pretty well. In fact, by the time I got finished in Paris I could read eighteenth century French much better than I could read the Paris newspaper. After six months he returned with a treasure trove of materials which formed the basis of his numerous articles published throughout the remainder of his life. "I had photographs made. They were all on glass negatives. I still have this box of glass negatives. It weighs a ton. I had to drag it home." [5]

Wilson's lengthy list of publications reveals his broad interests. In part, he focused on the history of individual buildings, and in the accomplishments of specific French architects and engineers in Louisiana. During the French colonial period (1699-1765), for example, Wilson studied the drawings and buildings of Pierre le Blond de la Tour (1st Engineer of the colony, ca. 1718-1724), Adrian de Pauger, 2nd engineer of the Louisiana

colony, 1720-1724), Pierre Baron, acting King's Engineer, 1727, Ignace François Broutin, King's Engineer (1st Ursuline Convent, 2nd Ursuline Convent 1730 – 1759), Alexandre De Batz [Wilson 1963, Louisiana Drawings of Alexandre De Batz, JSAH 22(2):75-89]. and Claude Joseph Dubreuil de Villars, (1730s through the 1750s). He provided detailed descriptions and illustrated interpretations of their contributions.[6]

Most of his scholarly effort ended up in rather obscure or difficult to obtain publications. Fortunately, many of his articles have been collected by two of his protégés, Jean M. Farnsworth and Ann M. Masson. Their book is entitled *The Architecture of Colonial Louisiana*. One of Sam's best articles, "Architecture in Eighteenth-Century West Florida" is included in that volume, but two others are not. They are: "Architecture of Early Sugar Plantations," and "Gulf Coast Architecture." Also not to be missed is his review of the development of the French Quarter and its architecture, in *The Vieux Carré, New Orleans: Its Plan, Its Growth, Its Architecture.* [7]

Wilson's also conducted extensive research into the early-American period and its architects, particularly Benjamin Henry Bonval Latrobe, and his father, Benjamin Latrobe.[8] The elder Latrobe "is generally regarded as the founder of professional architecture in the United States." Many of Wilson's most important contributions were not in his writings, but in his legacy of preservation. He was instrumental in organizing a number of the most important preservation groups in the city of New Orleans, including the Louisiana Landmarks Commission and the Friends of the Cabildo (1956). This latter volunteer group, associated with the Louisiana State Museum, has been responsible for the publication of eight volumes devoted to the architecture and history of specific New Orleans neighborhoods (but not the French Quarter). Sam, with historian Leonard Huber, organized the Vieux Carré Survey in the early 1960s. This invaluable tool documents the history of each property and each building in the 108 squares (blocks) of the French Quarter. Concerning shotgun houses, Sam says, "When we were doing the Survey, little shot-gun cottages were not considered of any great importance, but they were part of the scene and shouldn't be indiscriminately demolished. We didn't think they were terribly important thirty years ago. Late Victorian shot-gun cottages of the late 1880s and 1890s are now looked

on with more interest than they had [been] at that time. So we have upgraded them from "part of the scene" (the yellow category), to "of architectural importance" (the green category).[9]

Sam's assessment of the wider cultural landscapes of Louisiana was that they were largely attributable to the work of influential trained architects and their imitators. Wilson worked before scholarly interest had turned to the processes of cultural diffusion and the form of cultural amalgamations called creolization. He eschewed the term "Creole" except to refer to several buildings "which have come to be known as 'French Creole' cottage[s], having a gallery across the front over which the slope of the gable-ended roof extends.…" He appears to have felt that French colonial architecture was best explained as a series of logical adaptations of domestic French forms to the heat and humidity of the tropics.

Unlike Charles Peterson, Wilson did not much explore the cultural diffusion of Caribbean colonial architecture to Louisiana. One of his most complete statements on the influence of the French West Indian colonies is: "French Canadian architecture was modified in Louisiana by influences from the French colonies in the West Indies where climatic conditions were more akin to those of Louisiana…. in Port-au-Prince Haiti, the former French colony of St. Domingue, the typical steep hipped French roof is extended at a lower pitch over the gallery to provide protection from sun and rain and resulting in the distinctive roof line that became a characteristic of the Louisiana colonial house." [10]

One of the finest surviving "West Indian style" houses in New Orleans is the Pitot house on Bayou St. John. Sam was instrumental in saving and documenting this important house. The house was originally begun in 1799, probably designed by the French architect Hilaire Boutté for Bartholemé Bosque, a wealthy Spanish merchant and shipping agent. Construction continued until at least 1804 or later. The house was eventually sold to James Pitot, a businessman from Normandy via Saint Domingue (1781-92), and later Philadelphia. In 1804-05 Pitot served as the first Mayor of New Orleans, He purchased the house which bears his name in 1810. Sam wrote a small book on this house and its history. He clearly recognized that some of its early builders and owners came from Saint-Domingue before the Haitian revolution, but he does not consider the house to be specifically West Indian in form. "The house was typical of those built in Louisiana during the colonial period – three rooms across the front, opening

onto a broad gallery, and two smaller rooms called *cabinets* in the rear with a recessed gallery between them." [11]

**The Friends of the Cabildo – The Written Record Revealed.** By 1960, Richard Koch, Sam Wilson and other architects had established an active preservation movement in New Orleans. It was unusually effective – composed of a mixture of university trained scholars and educated amateurs. Many of its participants had been introduced to preservation through Sam Wilson and his popular courses in New Orleans architectural history at Tulane University. Coming out of Louisiana's educational system, it was not unusual for graduates to be skilled in reading French and sometimes Spanish as well. The preservation movement coalesced around a series of volunteer and governmental organizations, particularly the Louisiana Landmarks Society, the Friends of the Cabildo, the Vieux Carré Commission, and the Louisiana Chapter of the American Institute of Architects, among others. It was supported by John W. Lawrence, Dean of the School of Architecture at Tulane, and by Professor of Architecture Bernard Lemann. It included the local businessman and historian Leonard Huber, the founder of the Historic New Orleans Collection, General Kemper Williams, the architectural artist, Boyd Cruise, the historian Edith Long, the photographer Betsy Swanson, and the archivist Sally K. Reeves. Bernard Lemann, New Orleans. Other active members included: Ann Masson and Roulhac Toledano, Dr. Calhoon of the Pelican Press, and Mary Lou Christovich, who translated an enormous amount of French.

## Advances Outside of Academic Architectural History

As the architectural history of New Orleans was advancing through the twentieth century, another, completely separate approach was occurring quite outside of the field. A loosely joined farrago of American, British and French disciplines had begun to coalesce. The each shared an interest in the material culture of the common people. Taken together, one might imagine them as a venn diagram of seven or eight intersecting circles of different sizes, all surrounding a central circle (field). Eventually, the central circle would come to be called Vernacular Architecture Studies. The disciplines included American studies, cultural geography, cultural anthropology, archaeology, social history, material culture studies, structuralism, French postmodern social philosophy, folklore, and, creolization studies, among others. At first, few art or architectural historians were attracted to these new groups.

This diverse group of outside scholars inspired several new approaches to architectural history. Beginning in the 1960s, they began, slowly, to recognize a core of interests, centered upon the cultures of common people and the interrelationships between the built environment and the social construction of culture and architecture. Their interests coalesced around new academic societies and journals. Foremost among these were: The Pioneer America Society (*Material Culture*), the Vernacular Architecture Forum (*Buildings and Landscapes*), and in Great Britain, the Vernacular Architecture Group. Others included the International Association for the Study of Traditional Environments (*Traditional Dwellings and Settlements Review*), the American Folklore Society (*Journal of American* Folklore), and the journal *Winterthur Portfolio*.

**Fred B. Kniffen – Architectural Geography.** Vernacular Architecture Studies originated right here in Louisiana. They begin in 1929 with the conceptual struggles of a new LSU professor to better understand Louisiana's landscapes and its people. Fred B. Kniffen [Pron.: *niffen*] was a recent Ph.D. from the University of California at Berkeley. He was hired to teach geography at LSU, but he had never been to Louisiana previously. Upon his arrival, he was mystified by the cultural complexity of the state. But, Kniffen came well-prepared to investigate this conglomerate of cultures. He had profited from studies

under two of the leading academics of his time – Carl Sauer, the foremost human geographer of the field, and Alfred Kroeber, the leading American cultural anthropologist. Kniffen had taken classes from, and done summer field work with, both. When faced with investigating the cultural divisions of Louisiana, Kniffen selected the "folk" houses of the common people as representing some of the best possible evidence for historical settlement patterns. Settlement patterns represented one of the principal divisions of the earth's surface which so fascinated cultural geographers. Houses were ethnically distinctive, long-lasting, and to a great extent they remained associated with the people who built them (or their descendants). But how to map the enormous variability among the rural houses spread across the state? Drawing upon the classification systems used by archaeologists who assemble the variety of artifacts they recover into unified cultures, Kniffen undertook a typology of rural Louisiana houses. His principal question was, "When anticipating comparative and historical studies, how does one sort houses into their most useful and productive categories?"



**Fig. 1.2 Fred B. Kniffen in 1977, as photographed by Don Nugent, Staff Photographer, Dept. Geography & Anthropology, LSU.**

Kniffen felt that cultural geographers had failed to define the qualities of the landscape "in precise and unmistakable terms. One emerged with a smattering of this and that, rather than clear, definite

qualities and quantities." [12] So, although he was untrained in architectural history or the evolution of American architectural styles, he began to record the overt features of the houses that he could see from the road: overall shape, plan, roof form, full-width in-set porches and other appendages, location of chimneys, number of stories. He also recorded information on the residencts – their race and culture. Information on the houses along each segment of rural road was collected on long tally sheets, together with their location as indicated on his odometer. Kniffen observed while his wife drove their "Model A" Ford automobile with spare tires tied to its back. They would eventually drive over ten thousand miles of Louisiana's highways and back roads.

Once Kniffen had described numerous houses on the landscape, he observed that most fell into clearly defined groups, with only a smattering of outliers [As described in, Kniffen, 1990. The Study of Folk Architecture]. The often-repeated combinations of features became his house and barn types. Kniffen coined names for these types, many of which are still used today: shotgun house, I house, dogtrot house, saddlebag house, log pen, etc. Each type received a symbol, and these were the ones entered in the next iteration of his survey sheets. Kniffen surveyed throughout the entire state, eventually compiling 80,000 survey sheets with which he could map the densities and distributions of each house type.[13] What Kniffen had done better than anyone before him was to classify American house types on the basis of their geometrical features alone, while omitting other less diagnostic information such as materials of construction, age of the house, and decorative features. Kniffen had established the first scientific classification of three-dimensional house shapes. Today we refer to these as form classes. His work, "Louisiana house types," was published in the *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* – the first publication of its type.[14] It convinced geographers and others that, not only did specific vernacular house types exist in Louisiana, but that they clustered into regions. Soon, other scholars were employing Kniffen's method, surveying the vernacular architecture of other parts of the United States. A revolution in the study of American common houses had begun.

Fred Kniffen brought other contributions to the table of Vernacular Architectural Studies. He demonstrated that the long distance diffusion of building geometry was a commonplace phenomenon. The

geometrical forms of traditional buildings are somehow firmly lodged in the minds of pioneers as they travel across oceans and across continents.[15] Geometrical patterns of vernacular buildings include room sizes and functions, overall plan organization, placement of functional spaces within the larger plan, and traditional methods of expanding or elaborating a plan. But, perhaps, first among Kniffen's contributions was his leadership in recruiting excellent students and associates. These, he encouraged to engage more fully and more scientifically in the study of cultural landscapes. Foremost among his protégés was Henry Glassie.

**Henry Glassie –Architectural syntax and architectural ethnography**. Glassie is one of America's most creative students of folklore and vernacular architecture. Henry was an undergraduate at Tulane University in New Orleans in 1963-64, when he first met Fred Kniffen. The two shared their interest in cultural landscapes and folklore. Fred Kniffen recognized Henry's keen analytical talents and recommended that he be admitted to the Cooperstown Graduate Program at SUNY in 1965. Soon, Henry's carrier in folklore was under way. In the preface to his first book, *Pattern in the Material Folk Culture of the Eastern United States,* Henry states: "My greatest debt is to Professor Fred Kniffen, who sparked my interest in material culture and who has remained a constant inspiration and friend. Without him, both this book and I would have been quite different.[17]

I believe that it is not unfair to state that Henry almost single-handedly revolutionized the study of vernacular architecture in the United States. The first of his several contributions was in his reconceptualization of the interpretation of house types. While Fred Kniffen had concentrated upon patterns of building forms, Henry dug down into the guts of building typology. Even in his early book, he appreciated the significance of building plans as a basis for comparative study of folk houses. Henry demanded a scrupulous level of recording and documentation. He was the first to apply generative-transformational grammar to the interpretation of building geometry.[18] Henry separated house forms into plan types and form classes. The result was a more penetrating understanding of the partially interrelated, partially independent components of the traditional house and the distinctive cultural meanings that they

embody. Though his grammatical interpretations of individual houses and their multiple layers of formative rules were, perhaps, too detailed for the average researcher to duplicate, Henry showed us that it is possible to investigate institutions of material culture in much the same ways that linguists study the grammars of languages. No more sophisticated methodology has been discovered. For example, Henry showed that Fred Kniffen's I house form was, in fact, an entire series of relatively independent folk plan types derived from a variety of historic and cultural sources, but brought together in the eighteenth century and treated as a common symbol of rural agricultural success and economic independence in the eastern United States.

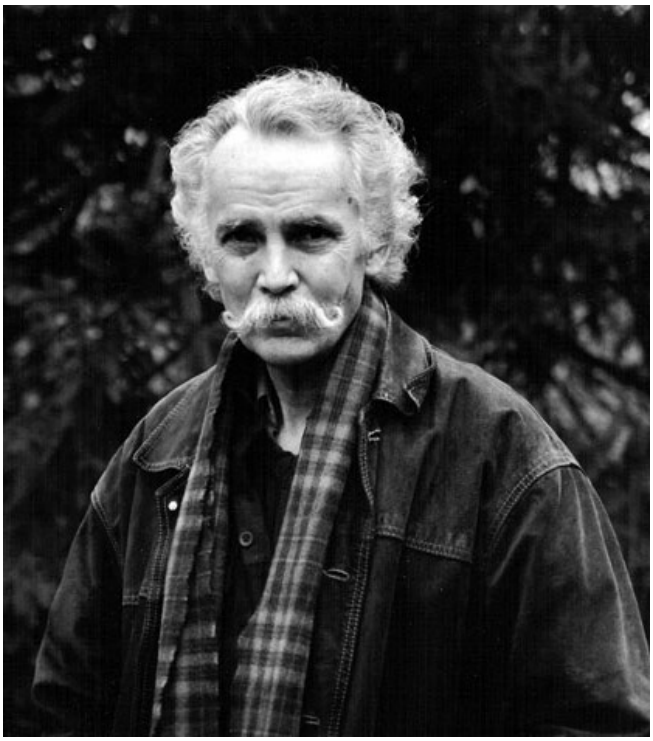


**Fig. 1.3 Henry Glassie in Ireland.**

Henry's second major achievement was embodied in his ethnographic turn. More than any other field worker, perhaps, Henry came to appreciate that traditional house forms could only be understood when one was intimately familiar with the people who designed them, built them, and lived in them. In its plan and its decorative features, each traditional building is a sensitive indicator of the rules of social

etiquette, social identity and social aspiration. When those rules are changed by social upheaval or class competition, traditional vernacular architecture transforms as well. Home owners are stimulated to communicate their new identities through architectural transformations. Broad architectural histories were impossible without a much more detailed ethnography than had ever been practiced by architectural historians. In effect, Henry was turning traditional architectural history on its head. The authority of the Academy was being replaced by the authority of the Folk.

Beginning with years of field work in Virginia, rural England, and Ireland, Henry watched as people revolutionized their architectures under the impact of the capitalistic, money-based societies which inexorably and inevitably came to dominate traditional rural communities across the world. As the values of the homeowners changed under dominating market economies, so did the meanings of spaces inside the traditional home, and so did the symbolic values embodied of the houses. Communal spaces open to outsiders, once so important to the sociability of the mutually supporting community, disappeared. They were replaced by private spaces and increased levels of isolation and independence of individual families. Gradually the house became more of a machine for demonstrating social identity and for separating different kinds of people into different spaces. Social status replaced communitas.[19] New floorplans and new materials of construction symbolized a revolution in the lifeways of the traditional community. Material culture studies now had to include, not only the study of artifacts, but the study of the people who created them and used them.

**John Michael Vlach – the Comparative Dimension**. Between the years 1972 and 1975, John Vlach [pron: vlatsh] became one of Henry Glassie's graduate students in the Folklore program at the University of Indiana. John was encouraged to write his doctoral dissertation on the origins of Kniffen's shotgun house. At the time, no one understood the history of this curious but surprisingly popular American house form. Rather fantastic theories of origin had been suggested by various architectural historians and other scholars. Most commentators had generalized on the basis of a single narrow body of evidence. There was no attempt at a big picture. The result was a veritable Rashomon of shotgun house histories, with little

connection between any of them.

Conducting field work in Louisiana, John consulted with the cultural geographers, Milton Newton and Fred Kniffen, and briefly with this author, all at the Dept. of Geography and Anthropology at LSU. William Knipmeyer [pron: nipmeyer], an earlier Ph.D. student with Fred Kniffen, had developed the prevailing geographical theory of shotgun house origins. Shotgun houses are thickly distributed along the bayous of southern Louisiana. They are also used as tenant and laborer's houses across the state. Knipmeyer argued in his doctoral dissertation that the shotgun house was ultimately derived from the palmetto houses of Choctaw and other indigenous tribes living along the bayous. In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, palmetto covered structures were gradually replaced by the "Camp" – a rectangular temporary house type of one or two rooms with its front door in the gabled end and its roof ridge perpendicular to the bayou or the road.[20] Both palmetto houses and Camps usually had full-width front porches. Camps were composed mostly of frame construction, the walls covered with board and batten or clapboards. Knipmeyer argued for a continuous evolution from indigenous palmettos, through camps, and then to shotgun houses. The earlier house types usually contained one or two rooms but, shotguns were typically two or three rooms in depth, often with L or T additions at the back. They were intended for permanent living, as opposed to the seasonal use of the camps. As the camp became larger and better constructed in wood frame, it moved from the "trapper—fisher—swamper complex" into the farming and plantation landscapes of southern Louisiana.[21] Other writers also held that the Shotgun house was a French reworking of a traditional indigenous abode from early colonial days. They also suggested that the shotgun house originated in Louisiana as a strictly rural form, evolving from trappers' cabins. John Vlach set out to provide an alternative history of the Shotgun house.



**Fig. 1.4. John Vlach. JDE Photo 2008.**

In New Orleans, John Vlach interviewed Sam Wilson, who believed that the shotgun house was popularized in New Orleans in late Victorian times because the residential lots of the city had been progressively subdivided into curious segments 120 feet in depth by only 30 or 20 or even 15 feet wide on the street. Such narrow houses were the only form that could fit on such severely segmented lots. It was true that tens of thousands of shotgun houses still stood in New Orleans, being built in the 1870s – 1910s, but documentation seemingly did not extend further back than about 1840. Wilson's account was a clear example of the homely old architectural wisdom – "form follows function." Milton Newton quickly eviscerated the argument: "That the shotgun fits narrow lots is undeniable, but this explains part of its success, not its origin." [22]

John was fully cognizant of the complexity of this particular kind of human artifact. "A house may be the most meaningful object in the material repertoire of a people." [23] John's principal research

question became: In what ways was this popular American housetype influenced by African traditions of vernacular architecture? In order to explore this question, John adopted the methods of Fred Kniffen and Henry Glassie. He did extensive architectural fieldwork in Louisiana, in Haiti, and in southwest Nigeria among the Yoruba peoples [He had previously worked in Ghana.]. The fieldwork methodology required detailed measured drawings of numerous folk houses. One entire volume of John's two-volume dissertation is devoted to plans and descriptions of traditional houses in the three communities, as well as to information on the location, the owner, the dimensions, the date of construction, and the materials of construction. John combined these empirical data with whatever historical documentation he could uncover, and with interviews with those familiar with the vernacular architecture of the three regions. He explored the archival records in each of the three places, to the extent that it was possible to do so. We will return to the details of John's findings in Chapter Two. Here, we note that cutting-edge research in vernacular architecture studies, and in architectural history, has never been far from Louisiana. This applies, particularly, to the shotgun house. Louisiana has attracted first-rate scholars who have established a long track record of innovative interpretations of our cultural landscapes.

## Conclusion

Each of these scholars, from Sam Wilson to John Vlach contributed enormously to our knowledge of Louisiana Architecture and its history. Each brought different perspectives. Some contributed theoretical frameworks which helped others, including the present authors, in their own studies. However, none of these excellent scholars considered Creolization as a central organizing framework, and none contributed to the larger portrait of the Atlantic World and sought out the place of Louisiana's architecture within it. No previous scholar has begun with the configuration of distinctive and historic features which make up Louisiana's Creole architecture, and then sought to tell the story of their diffusion from distant lands and their Creolization from very distinct and incompatible architectural traditions. Just how did buildings such

as the shotgun house and the Creole cottage get assembled, and why were they selected (or invented) over all of the other possibilities? Since these questions have never been adequately addressed, we begin by exploring the question of the kinds of conceptual framework which might work best in supplying explanations of this kind.

## CHAPTER 2

## CREOLIZATION AND THE ATLANTIC LINEAR COTTAGE

## A PREHISTORY OF THE SHOTGUN HOUSE

The shotgun house is far older than its first appearance in New Orleans. To trace its origins we must cast our imaginations back through time, across the Caribbean Sea, and ultimately to the coasts of West Africa in the sixteenth century. The architecture which gave rise to today's Linear Cottages is to be found in the first settlements populated by both Europeans and West Africans.

The origins of the Atlantic Linear Cottage are best understood through the lens of creolization. Creolization refers to the radical forms of culture blending which occur whenever groups of people coming from unlike and historically separated cultures are cast together and forced to work and communicate under conditions which require social coordination and intimacy. A recent definition of creolization appears on the University of Warwick's Creole Social and Cultural Studies Program web site:

> The cross-fertilizaton which takes place between different cultures when they interact. The locals select particular elements from in-coming cultures, endow these with meanings different from those they possessed in the original culture and then creatively merge these with indigenous traditions to create totally new forms.[24]

Creolization is a popular academic topic which has generated hundreds of dissertations and papers in technical journals over the last thirty-five years. Here, we will eschew its nuances and theoretical details. For our purposes it is sufficient to point out that in material culture, including vernacular architecture, creolization occurs on two separate levels simultaneously. It is not possible to understand how this mechanism works without an appreciation of the interaction between these levels of culture (Fig. 2.1).

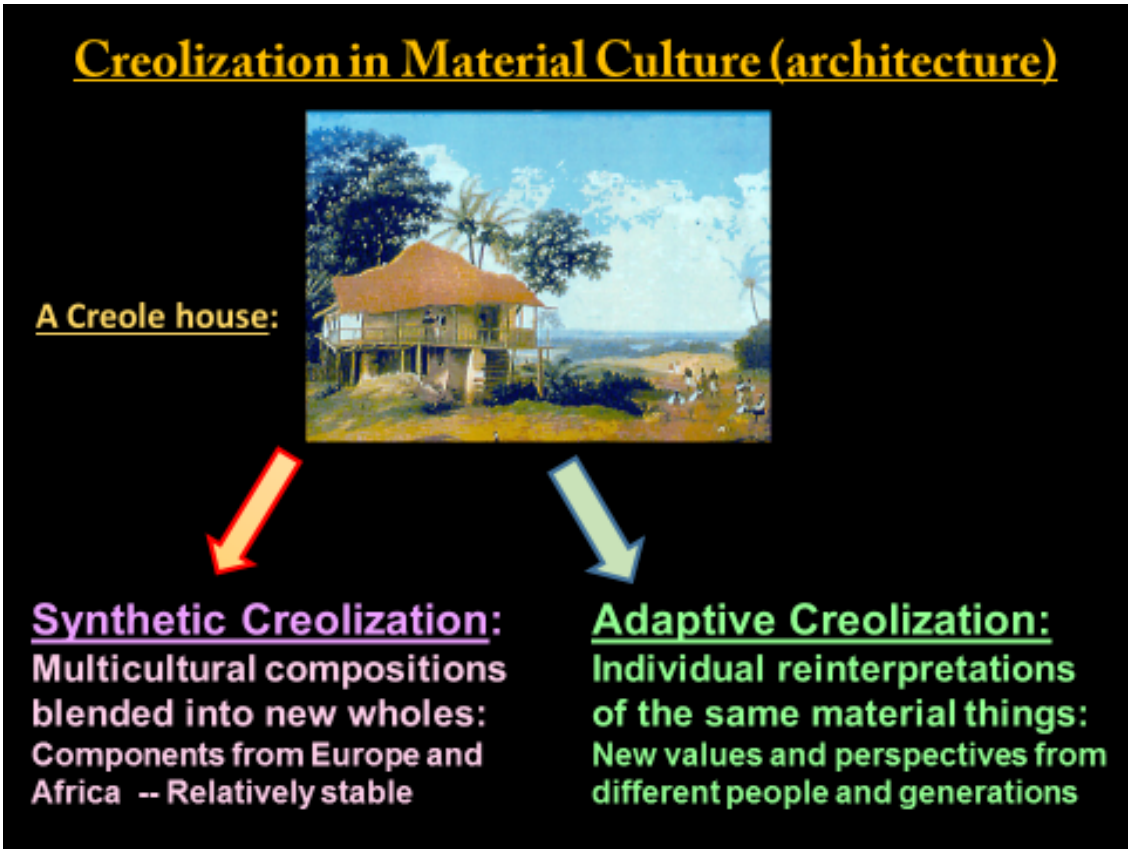



**Fig. 2.1. The principal creolization processes of material culture, such as vernacular architecture.**

**Synthetic creolization.** This refers to the "blending of cultural elements from putatively separate and distinct cultural wholes." [25] When the people of two or more, until recently alien, cultures are forced to work together to produce a new architecture, a process of negotiation occurs. Each culture contributes its own important ideas, and together, they create a formula from a large number of possibilities supplied by all cultures. These are filtered through the exigencies of local climate, environment, available materials and social needs, until a minimum number of elements drawn from the repertoires of each of the contributing cultures is established. Alien architectural components are each assigned a specific places in the organization of the new, hybrid, house type. Once established, if the result is transported to new locations by the movement of settlers, additional components may be added to the formula, until a fully adapted house is honed into general acceptability. The curious thing is that the resulting Creole house is so perfectly integrated and suited to its new environment that later generations would not guess that it has

such diverse parentage. The dominant classes of later generations generally take credit for creating the entire type. An excellent example of the synthetic creolization process is to be seen in the cultural make-up of Louisiana's eighteenth century Creole cottage (Fig. 2.2).

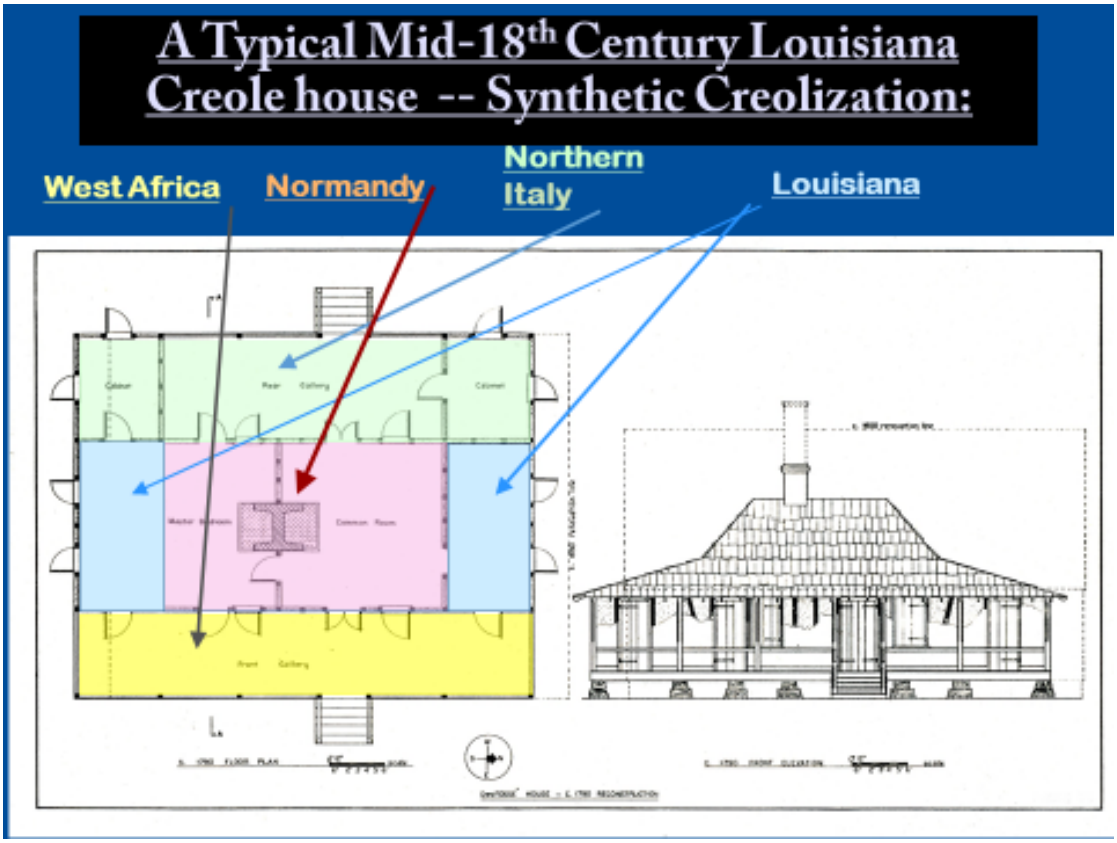



**Fig. 2.2. Sources of the cultural makeup of Louisiana's mid-18th century Creole house.**

Across the Atlantic World, numerous forms of Creole vernacular architecture were created during the centuries of European expansion into Africa and the Americas. Some of the components of the new architectures were European (Portuguese, Spanish, Dutch, French, English), while others were contributed by coastal West Africans and by enslaved populations in the Caribbean and Brazil, and later in the South. Many of these components were already old when Louisiana was first settled in 1699. Galleries, for example, appear on the vernacular houses of the very earliest French settlements along the Gulf Coast, such as Mobile and Dauphine Island. Travelers to these locations commented on the very un-

European natures of the houses that they saw there. Compare the observations of two French travelers to the Gulf Coast:

> Now for the manner in which the French build their houses in this country. All the houses [of Dauphine Island] are frame and one story high; there is only one house which has two stories. The dwellings are comfortable enough. The walls are made of mud and whitewashed outside in inside. The lime is made of oysters and other shells. Some of these houses have a solid brick foundation; all are two or three feet above the ground to protect the timber work from dampness; most have a gallery all around, and those which haven't are covered from top to bottom with lattices.[26]

Ninety-one years later, Charles Cesar Robin, another French visitor to the Gulf Coast, described the houses of New Orleans with the following words:

> These cleared banks [of Bayou St. John] disclose here and there pretty country houses, of the most varied types. Some are of wood, surrounded by galleries in Chinese style; others are built of brick, and are adorned with galleries in the Italian style, several have columns…. The general construction is of wooden framework with the spaces between posts filled with earth and the whole coated over with lime plaster. The principal body of the house consists ordinarily of only two very large rooms, but the heat of the climate makes galleries a necessity. All have them. Some are the kind which encircle the entire house, others are at either façade only. These galleries are formed by the elongation of the roof, which is twisted in all senses contrary to our [French] curved roofs [with a fringe of lower-pitched roof, rather than the Mansard style in which the edge of the roof is more steeply pitched.] These curved and elevated roofs are supported by colonnettes of wood in a symmetrical arrangement which is quite pretty. Ordinarily, the galleries are eight or nine feet deep. The depth of the galleries offers several advantages, such as preventing the rays of the sun from striking against the walls of the house, thus rendering them cooler, and serving as promenades during the day. While promenading, one walks on the side opposite to the sun. During the oppressive heat of summer, meals are served there, guests are entertained out there, and some families even use them as bedrooms where one may enjoy the cool night air. In a great number of houses, they enclose the two ends of [the rear gallery] in order to make… private cabinets at each end.[27]

Descriptions such as these reveal the curious and remarkably un-European nature of the architecture of Louisiana in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, as witnessed by visitors from France. They also indicate that the process of synthetic creolization was well under way when the very first generation of permanent houses was being built along the Gulf Coast. Later, we will see descriptions of the first generation of shotgun houses which are not as detailed as those above, but which also fit into this pattern of curiosity about unusual house types in Louisiana.

**Adaptive Creolization.** The second basic component of creolization is called "adaptive creolization." It refers, not so much to the physical building itself, as to the ways in which people adapt to and reinterpret the buildings that they create or inherit. While each building is relatively static and relatively permanent, the ideas and values which surround it may differ through time, or even between residents and users at the same time. People of the same community often harbor different interpretations about a house -- how it is to be used and what it means. Is the style appropriate? What behaviors are proper on the front gallery? At its heart, a house is an engine for separating people and their social behaviors into appropriate spaces. But not everyone agrees about these ground rules. People often come from different walks of life and different social backgrounds. Moreover, their attitudes and values change from one generation to the next, so their ideas about good architecture also change. Changing cultural habits soon exert new pressures on the established patterns of spatial geometry – houses evolve. To fully understand these changes, we need to reconstruct the salient shared patterns of domestic life: cooking and dining, entertaining, work, sleep, toilet habits, class differentiation, gender relationships, child raising, disease treatment and prevention, worship and the sacred, and the influence of architectural fads on local traditions. Ideally, in order to paint an accurate portrait of the changes in housetypes through time, we need to understand how people disagreed about their architecture and how they came to demand new forms and patterns in their houses. And, this needs to be done for each generation or each decade, as the patterns of vernacular architecture undergo transformation. In actual practice, this is a very tall order because the details of social life are seldom well-recorded, at least not in detail. The architectural historian must be flexible. He or she must

use every kind of available evidence to reconstruct the history of adaptive creolization in a community. New Orleans is a particularly difficult nut to crack. Up until almost the middle of the nineteenth century the vast majority of the citizens were non-literate. Few diaries in other sources of cultural self-reflection existed, particularly about the standards of local architecture. The historian's emphasis must remain focused upon both sides of the equation of creolization in order to reconstruct a balanced account, not only of how the architecture changed, but *why* it changed. Synthetic creolization and adaptive creolization are not only equally important, they help to explain each other.

## Stages in the Evolution of the Atlantic Linear Cottage

With these ideas in mind, we may now begin an overview of the historical creolization of the Atlantic Linear Cottage. Here, we will discuss West Africa and the Caribbean. In the following chapter we take up the story of New Orleans. The Linear Cottage is not a normal house-type. Square houses, rectangular houses and even round houses are fairly common in the world's vernacular architecture, but a house with a single front room which opens progressively into all of the other rooms of the house – that is quite unusual. Today, the Atlantic linear cottage is distributed very unevenly in West Africa. It is also to be found in Hispañola, in Cuba, and across the southern portions of the United States east of the Rockies. Why doesn't it occur on other West Indian islands, such as Martinique, Barbados or Jamaica? In what follows, we briefly summarize the stages in the development of this widely diffused family of architectural types. Each stage occurs in a different geographic theater, and each is characterized by a number of principal transformations resulting from changing social conditions:

**Stage number one: Upper Guinea from the sixteenth to the mid-eighteenth century.** In westernmost West Africa, Upper Guinea extends from the Senegal River in the north to the western border of the Ivory Coast in the southeast (Fig. 2.3). Summaries of the indigenous building traditions of this area do exist, but there has been very little historical analysis for the period of first contact between Europeans and the

indigenous populations. The profound global significance of this coastal contact zone remains under-appreciated in both the anthropological literature and that of architectural history. It is in these insular, coastal and riverine zones that the foundations of world colonial architecture were laid at the beginning of the sixteenth century. The area is ethnically and architecturally complex. No brief description can summarize the complexities of the indigenous architectures found there.[28] Yet, it is possible to identify certain widespread themes which are characteristic of large areas of Upper Guinea. A few of these forms and patterns contributed in varying strengths to the development of the Atlantic Linear Cottage in Saint-Domingue/Haiti, and in Louisiana.

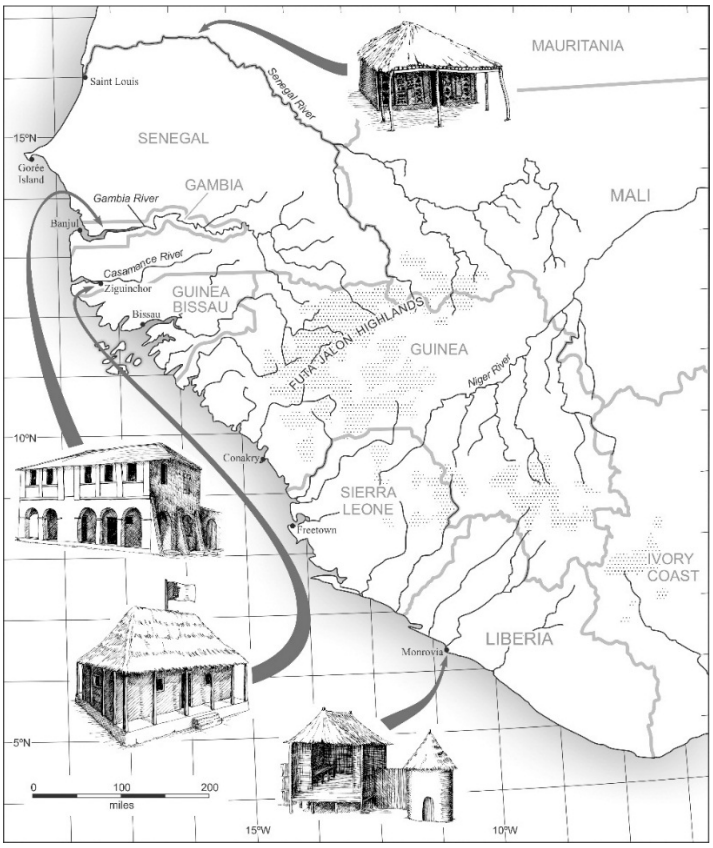



**Fig. 2.3. Upper Guinea and its architecture. MLE for the Kniffen Lab. The houses shown From top to bottom" 1) An indigenous house with a front gallery of the type found among Fula or Peule people, south of the Senegal River; 2) The 18th century French CFRO colonial trading post building with full-length gallery on the ground floor, Albreda, on the Gambia River; 3) An eighteenth century style Portuguese trading post at Ziguinchor on the Casamance River, as originally sketched in 1851 by Hyacinthe Hecquard; 4) A typical indigenous compound at Cape Merserado as sketched in 1725 by Labat. All of these buildings incorporate full front galleries into their forms, indicating that the early post buildings of both Creole traders and the Europeans borrowed extensively from local indigenous architecture.**

Indigenous culture patterns may contribute to creolized traditions in different ways. Sometimes, specific popular forms are remembered in a new pioneering setting. They function as specific models to be reproduced in the new environments. Other patterns are more abstract and, perhaps, because of that, more influential. Their underlying influences are general and harder to assess. An example of the latter is the distinction drawn by West Africans between two components of their typical vernacular houses.

Whether round or square, large or composed of only single room, indigenous houses are subdivided into interior and exterior zones of living. Each zone may receive distinctive interpretations in different cultures, but the basic idea appears to be ancient and widespread across Upper Guinea. During the period of initial European contact in West Africa, the “inside house” was generally characterized by relatively small interior rooms. Its walls contained few windows, if any. If the house was divided into separate free-standing pavilions, each separate unit (*kombet*, as they were called in the early days of European contact) carried a specific function – bedroom, children’s room, store room, kitchen (Fig. 2.4, left side). In cultures favoring circular structures, a typical “house” consisted of multiple kombets (Fig. 2.5). Because the African family was often polygynous, each co-wife had her own set of kombets, as did her husband and elderly males of the family. All of this was usually surrounded by a stockade or defensive wall (*tapanca*).




**Fig. 2.4. A sketch by Labat, 1725. An indigenous African compound near Cape Merserado. The caption reads: A. Houses of blacks of Cape Merserado, built in red clay; B. Kitchen; C. Granery for millet and rice, in red clay; D. Pavilion or men's assembly shed for political discussions during the day; E. The court; F. Public space.**



**Fig. 2.5. A round *kombet* near Fanaye village near the Senegal River. The *suudu* or Houses of house is 4 meters in diameter. The walls are banko (rammed earth) plastered over. The *čalli* or outside house is the shed roof surrounded by screens.**

Roofed exterior meeting areas were reserved for men. They were often elevated several feet above ground level. They might be attached directly to the front of a rectangular *kombet* as an exterior veranda, or they might be positioned as separate free-standing pavilion structures, often near the entrance to the compound (Fig. 2.4, right side). Generally, they were open on at least three sides. An open gallery or "outside house" functioned as a reception zone where men chatted, and as a zone of business where traders and foreigners were entertained and where they slept while staying over.[29] The English traveler Richard Jobson reported the following on the Gambia River: "I was treated to sit downe under their open shades, which are made by the better sort of people on the out-side of their houses, to take the ayre in." [30] The French traveler Labat described indigenous houses and compounds near Cape Merserado on the coast of present day Liberia: "Their chambers are raised three foot above the ground to avoid the inconvenience of the dews. These houses resemble, pretty much, our mountebanks stages in Europe. The front is open, and the floor has a jutting-out of five or six foot broad, where the Negroes, laid on mats, pass the day with their wives and family...." (Fig. 2.4, left center). [31]

As successful trade relations between Europeans and West Africans increased in Upper Guinea,

the “outside house” took on new importance. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries it evolved into a place of hospitality and commerce. Rectangular residences with full width or encircling galleries became increasingly popular symbols of social and commercial success, or at least the aspiration to such success. They were adopted specifically into the domestic architecture of the “Tangomaos” -- an important class of miscegenated and creolized traders and cultural brokers who self-identified as “Portuguese.” [30] Galleries also became a place of social elegance, evidenced by the wearing of one’s best robes and kaftans while entertaining there (Figs. 2.6 – 2.7). This legacy is, perhaps, remembered in the vernacular speech of Trinidad where the term “gallerying” refers to dressing with style and individuality.[32] By the time of the establishment of British and French-operated trading posts in seventeenth century Upper Guinea, the front gallery was firmly established as central to the canon of trading post architectural symbolism. In 1733, the “factor” Francis Moore left a detailed account of the construction of a British trading post building at Juffure on the north shore of the Gambia River, by contracted Mandingo builders (Fig. 2.8). “Their next work was to make a porch called an *alpainter* [Port. *alpendre* - porch on the outside of the wall of a building], by the natives, who pretend a right to have one at every factory, that they may have access and shelter.” Moore's account makes it clear that it was the Africans who were responsible for adding the gallery to the European-commissioned building.[33]



**Fig. 2.6. Maison Anna Colas on Gorée Island, near Dakar, Senegal. This elegant nineteenth century trading house was run by a *signare* or high-class African female trader. Storage and slaves awaiting transshipment to the New World were kept on the ground floor. The house is known today as the *maison d'esclaves*. Signares (free mulatto business class women) are distinguished by their elaborate pointed headdresses.**



**Fig. 2.7. A *signare* and attendant in their finery, Senegal, 19th century.**

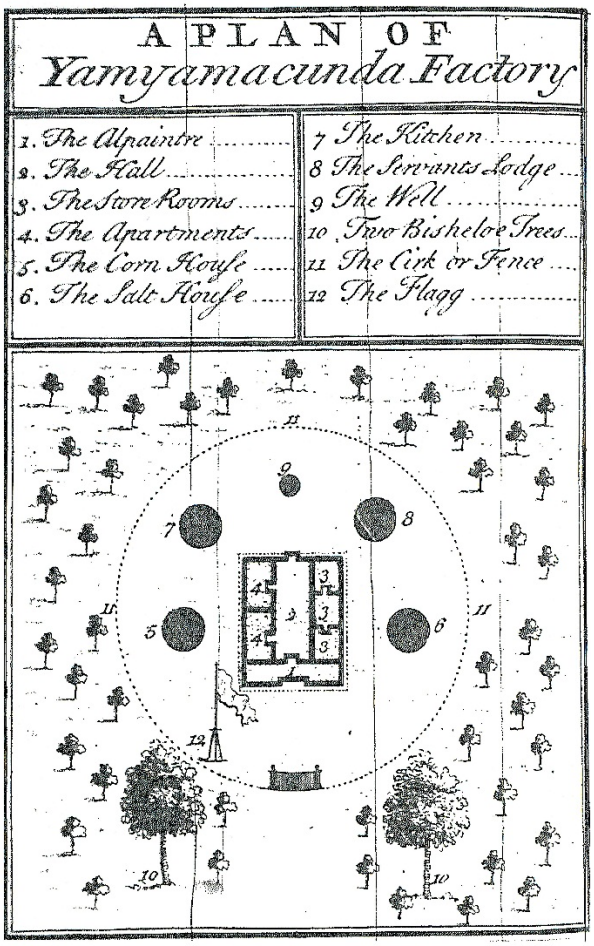



**Fig. 2.8. Plan of the Yamyamacunda Factory at Jaffure, near Albreda, on the Gambia River, as described in 1733 by Francis Moore, its factor. It was built by Mandingo builders who required that a front gallery (No. 1, *alpaintre*) be incorporated so that there would be a place of repose for visiting traders. The post building is surrounded by round service buildings in the fashion of the local indigenous vernacular, including a kitchen. The Gambia River is towards the bottom.**

Two general processes of creolization are inherent in the sequence of building traditions outlined in Upper Guinea: The first involves the abstraction of functional principles from previous widespread indigenous patterns – specifically the division of domestic structures into interior and exterior living zones.[33] The second finds the application of these principles to newly introduced local forms of architecture – the "Portuguese Style" (Fig. 2.9). This style was constructed first by the early Creole Tangomao traders, then for the Portuguese themselves, and by the early seventeenth century, by other

Europeans, particularly the French and the British.

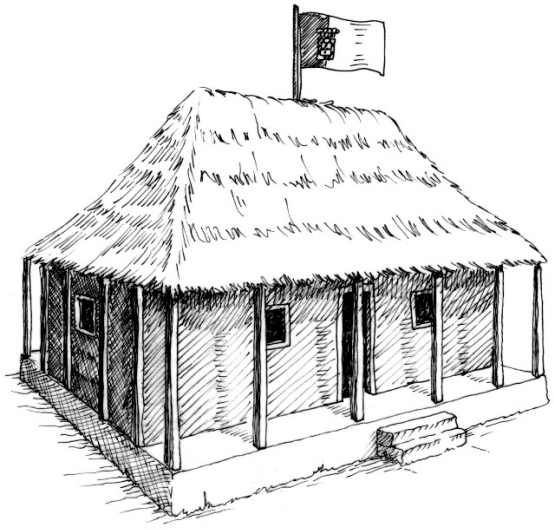


**Fig. 2.9. Portuguese Style. The Portuguese trading house at Ziguinchor On the Casamance River, as originally sketched by Hyacinthe Hecquard In 1850, as redrafted by MLE for the Kniffen Lab.**

**Stage number two: Hispañola, sixteenth century until the early nineteenth century.** African Creole trading-house style galleries were probably first introduced into the Portuguese and Spanish plantation colonies in the late-sixteenth century.[34] By the early seventeenth century the galleried plantation house was well-developed by the Dutch in Pernambuco (Fig. 2.12). In the Caribbean, the extended front gallery appears to have been at first largely limited to the Spanish Islands of Hispañola, Cuba and Jamaica. There, African slaves were introduced by the Spanish colonizers and traders. Between ca. 1550 and 1700, architectural ideas from the Creole trading posts of West Africa were influential. It appears that sometime before 1600 the full-façade-width open gallery was adopted by small scale Spanish Creole planters and farmers on their rural houses in all three islands. Perhaps it was these rural grandees, rather than wealthy aristocrats, who were most amenable to the environmental innovations of coastal West Africa? In this period African slaves newly transported to plantations and farms were required to build their own houses. Their "quarters" settlements were said to resemble African villages (Fig. 2.10). Many of these were in a generalized African vernacular style, and those may well have included full-width front galleries (Fig. 2.4). Because the Africans came from so many different cultures, no one indigenous pattern dominated. The focus was certainly more upon deep seated values and unconscious grammatical principles, and less upon specific African forms. Later, after ca. 1700, on the more successful agricultural estates of the Caribbean, European ideas of landscape architecture gradually replaced the antique forms of Africanized Creole architecture Fig. 2.11). Still, Linear Cottages were among the most popular forms of slave quarters in both periods.

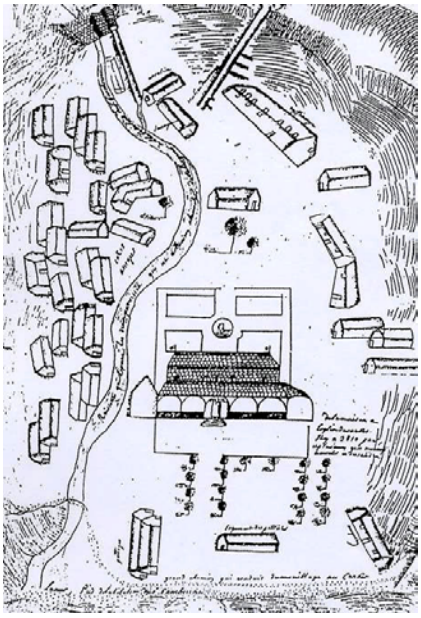


**Fig. 2.10. Martinique. An African style slave carbet, as sketched in c. 1725.**



**Fig. 2.11. Martinique. A new style Caribbean slave quarters with straight streets and similar houses, as sketched in 1828.**

As the industrial slave trade grew in the 1640s, the idea of the full-width open front gallery as a principal symbol of hospitality, social standing, and commerce, was increasingly adopted throughout the Atlantic World. This occurred in both Spanish colonies and those captured from the Spanish by the French, British and Dutch. The *alpendre* of Upper Guinea was recreated in the form of the *marquisina* (front porch) of the Dominican *bohio* (folk house; Fig. 2.15). In Jamaica (after 1655) and in western Hispañola (after ca. 1650) it was adopted by the British and the French, in both cases based upon earlier Spanish Creole colonial models.

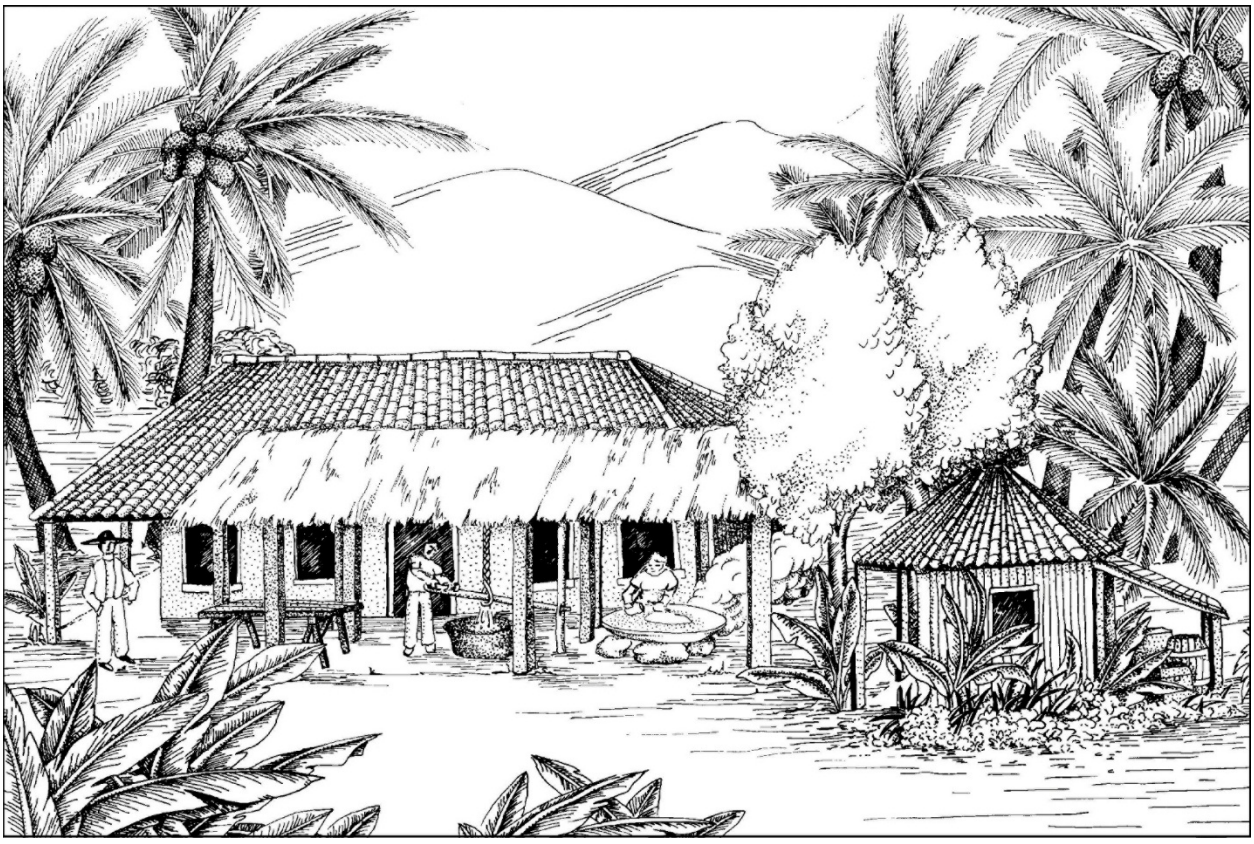


**Fig. 2.12. The house of the overseer (broad-brimmed hat) of a plantation in Pernambuco, Brazil, ca. 1640, as originally sketched by the Dutch artist, Franz Post. Note that the house is surrounded by an encircling gallery. Domestic workers on the thatched-roof kitchen shed in the foreground are squeezing manioc tuber meat with a *couleuvre* (basketry squeezer) and cooking manioc cakes on a large pottery grill. These techniques are still used in South America and the Caribbean, including Haiti. Post sketch 1647 redrafted by MLE for the Kniffen Lab.**

Even before the early seventeenth century, however, the Upper Guinea style "outside house" (front gallery) had been adopted into the folk architecture of independent folk populations in Hispañola. Perhaps as early as 1532 rectangular houses with open front porches were recorded by de Oviedo (Fig. 2.13).[35] Spanish-acculturated African (*Ladino*) slaves had begun to escape into the mountains as early as 1502. Shortly thereafter, West African vernacular house forms were being syncretized with those of the local Taino, even as their populations miscegenated.[36] The Linear Cottage became one of the standard house types of the isolated African *cimarrones* (maroons – literally "ridge runners") and their Taino partners in the mountains. It appears to be the Africans who added a front gallery to the single-room Taino house. An aboriginal Taino house could be as large as ten meters in diameter, but among the

maroons this was down-sized dramatically to a rectangle as little as three meters across (Fig. 2.13b). We recall that the inside houses of most Africans are quite small by European standards. This amalgamation created the first generation of Linear Cottages in Hispañola (Fig. 2.13a). By the late eighteenth century there were tens of thousands of these little wattled cottages. They were used by slaves and African peasants, but they were not popular with Spanish European Creole colonists.

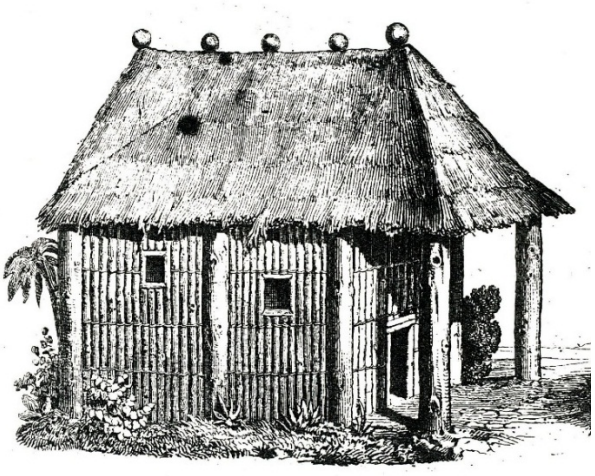


**Fig. 2.13a. Woodcut of a syncretized Arawak *Bohio* (house), as sketched for Fernandez de Oviedo y Valdez, 1516. Since aboriginal Arawak houses were circular or polygonal, this form appears to be creolized with an African gallery and Spanish or African rectangular ground plan. The style of construction is Arawak.**

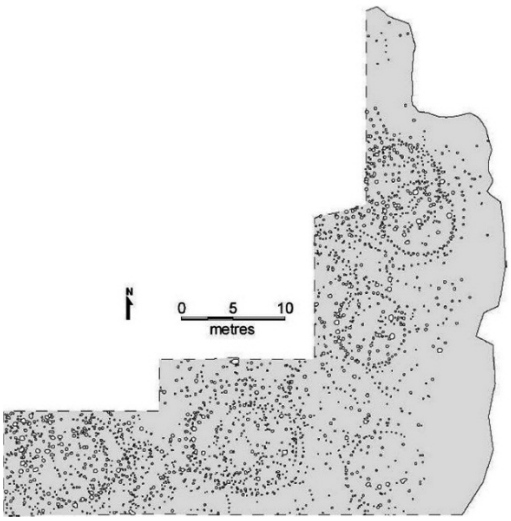



**Fig. 2.13b. Excavated ground-plans of pre-Columbian Taino houses. They average 7-10 meters in diameter and are built as circular earthfast palisades.**

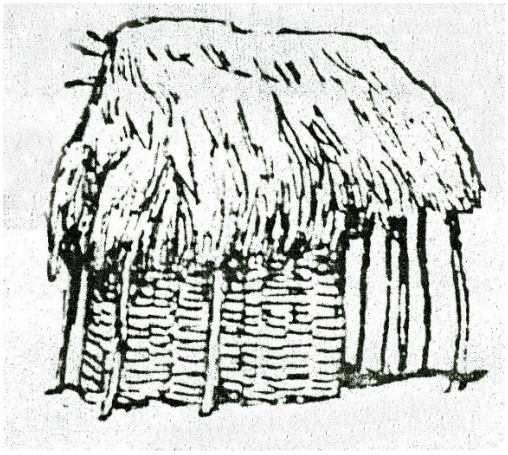


**Fig. 2.14 A wattled hut (bohio) in the style of 18th century Hispañola, but recorded in the Turks and Cacos by Jean Dollfus (1954).**



**Fig. 2.15. A wattled house in Villa Loba, Dominican Republic, as sketched by Samuel Hazard, 1871. Both The type of wattling and the inset gallery were employed by Portuguese Creoles in West African settlements.**

In 1975, Vlach observed that the geographical distribution of *ti-kay* (folk linear cottage) in Haiti was roughly equivalent with the distribution of the habitation zone of maroons in the colonial period (see mountainous (shaded) areas, Fig. 2.23). Vlach also argued that the *ti-kay* of Hispañola functioned very



**Fig. 2.16. A Haitian *ti-kay* at Dufort, Jacmel. The wattling is covered with clapboards. JDE photo, 1995.**



**Fig. 2.17. A wattled and plastered *ti-kay*, Southern Haiti, JDE photo, 1995.**

much like the traditional vernacular house of Upper Guinea. Both groups of vernacular houses shared small interior rooms with abundant open-air living and reception spaces. Interior rooms averaged roughly 100 square feet. The almost ubiquitous porch on the front of the *ti-kay* functioned much like the daytime house of the West African compound, and the *lacou* (family courtyard) functioned socially much like the African *tapanca* or enclosed family compound. The residence was largely a woman's preserve. Groups of *ti-kay* were often built together, recalling the close association between the multiple *kombets* of close relatives within a West African compound.[37]

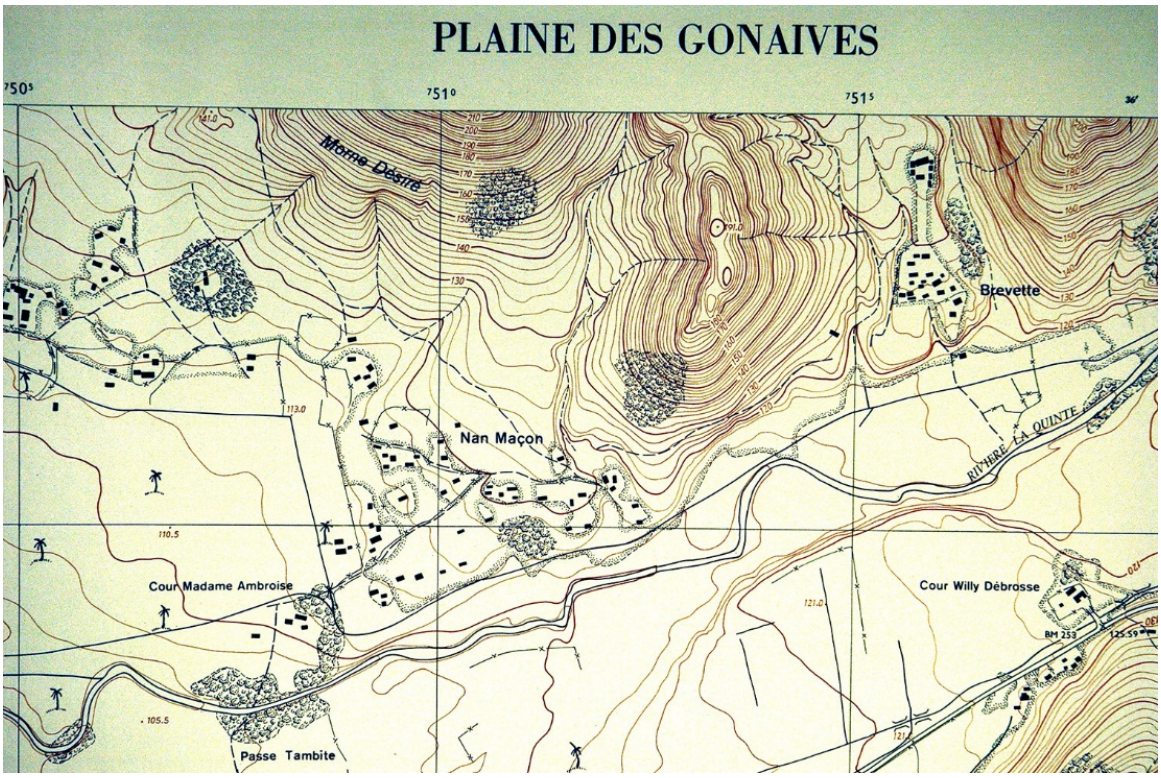



**Fig. 2.18. A 1/5000 scale map of a portion of the Plaine des Gonaïves, north central Haiti, showing multiple *cours* (family compounds), some of which are named. Many of the house shapes appear to be *ti-kays*. KLM topo sheet, courtesy the Geography and Maps Division, Library of Congress.**

French mariners and other "buccaneers" began to take over the western third of Hispañola in the early decades of the seventeenth century. From about 1650 they established permanent settlements in what is today Haiti. The city of Cap François was laid out about 1670. Soon a small folk house (*petite caille* or *ti-kay*) was widespread in the rural and mountainous areas of the Saint-Domingue colony. [1] It was generally characterized by one or two near square rooms fronted by a porch covered by an extension of the thatched roof, either gabled or hipped (Figs 2.16 - 2.17). Sometimes the porch was expanded into an open air reception and bedroom area, as in West Africa (Figs. 2.15 - 2.16). The walls were wattled (Figs. 2.14 – 2.15), and often plastered with clay (Fig. 2.17), or they were covered with wooden clapboards or with split palm coverings (*guanisnes des palmists;* Figs. 2.16 - 2.18). These houses had either one or two doors in the façade (Figs. 2.19 – 2.20). Tens of thousands of rural *ti-kay* Linear Cottages still exist in Haiti, and some in the Dominican Republic (Figs. 2.21 - 2.22).



**Fig. 2.19. The house of Revoiel Sylvin, on the Duclos Road near DeLamite, southern Haiti. The walls are sheathed with *guanisnes des palmists* (clapboards of palm). JDE photo, 1995.**

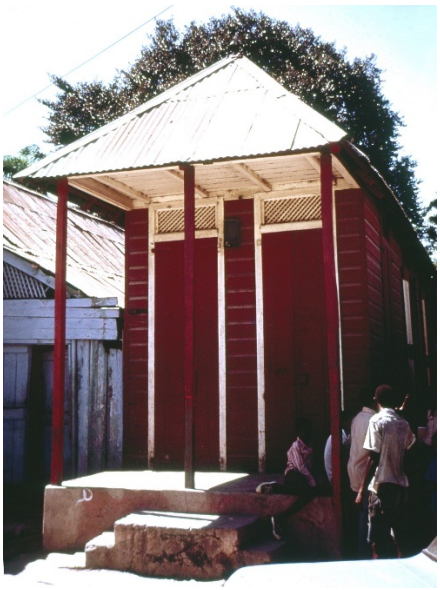


**Fig. 2.20. An urban style *maison basse* (low house) in Port-au-Prince. John Vlach photo, 1976.**



**Fig. 2.21. An 1872 sketch of a rural house in the Dominican Republic. It appears to be a two-part Linear Cottage with an inside house and an outside house, hung with hammocks. Sketch from Samuel Hazard, 1871.**

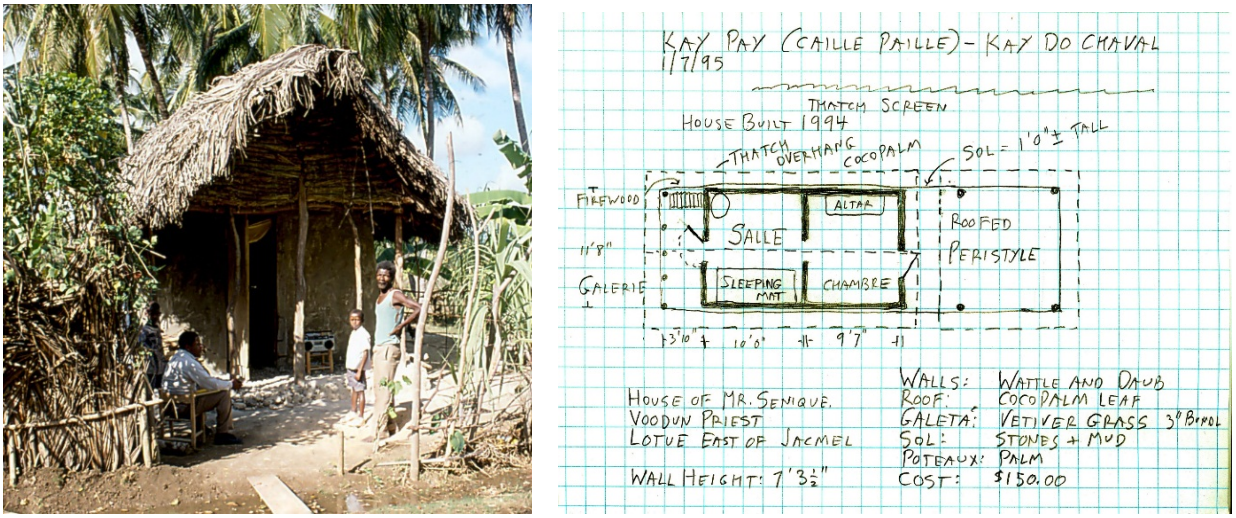



**Fig. 2.22a, 2.22b. Two-room *ti*-kay of Mr. Seneque, a Voodoo Priest, located at Lotue on the south coast of Haiti east of Jacmel. The thatched roof extends towards the rear over a peristyle for Voodoo services. JDE photo and field notes, 1995.**

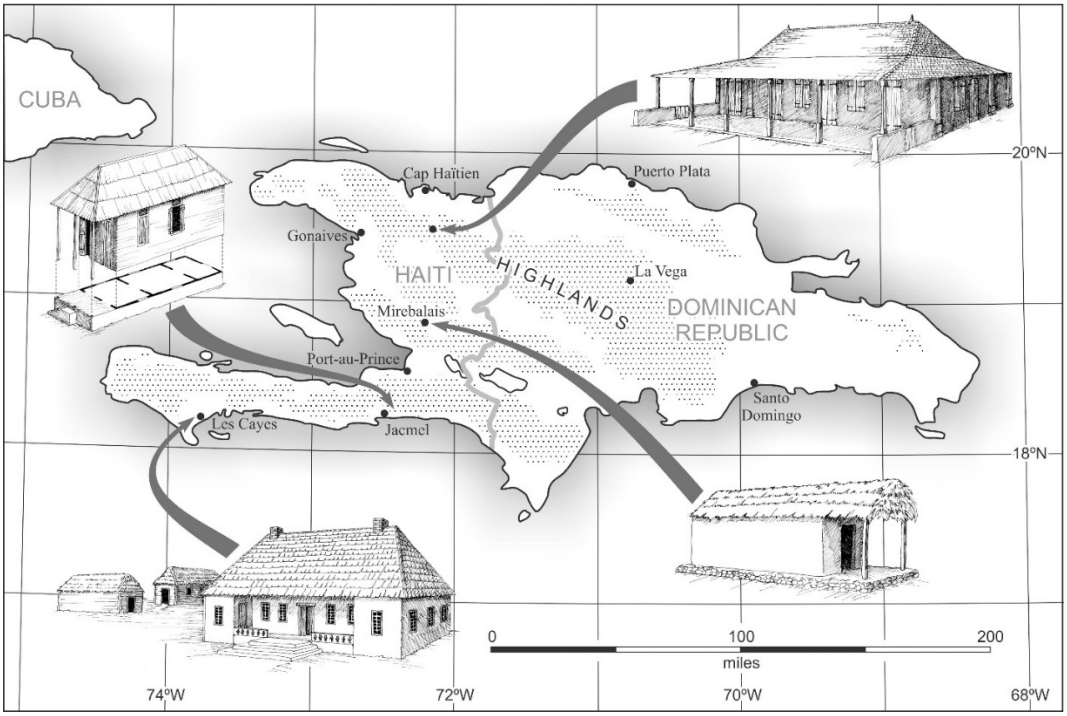
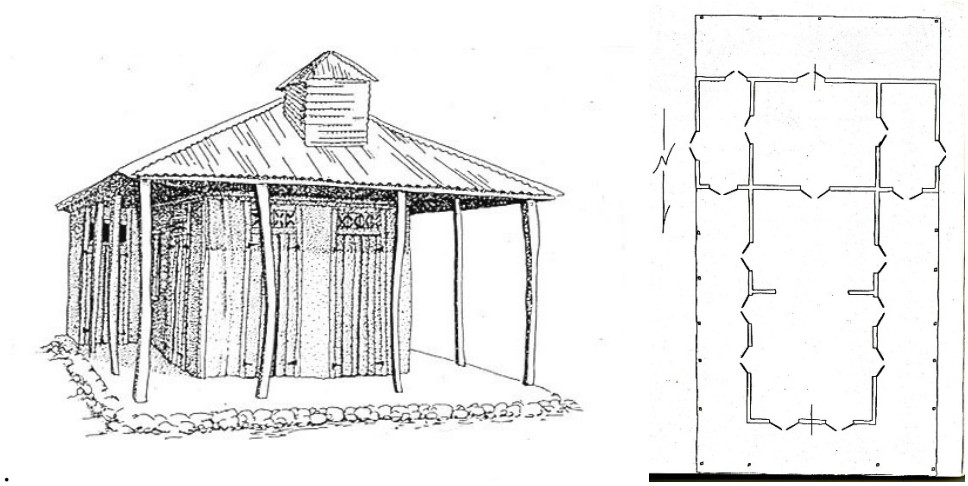



**Fig. 2.23. A map of Hispañola, showing some of the colonial house types of Haiti. Shaded areas are highlands Where the original *ti-kay* house was popular, mostly in the central and southern portions of Haiti. MLE for the Kniffen Lab.**

The *ti-kay* also served as a model for slave housing on French sugar plantations of the eighteenth century. "Today's rural… [*ti-kay*] may represent the architecture of the [colonial] plantations. The free

Negroes who were eventually to build their half-timbered shotguns became accustomed to the house form during their formative years in bondage. Their city dwellings were simply more elaborate variants of the plantation shotgun house constructed with the techniques of French carpentry" (Vlach 1975:107). In the towns of Hispañola in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the simple two-room urban *ti-kay* was expanded in numerous ways to accommodate to new environments. It was lengthened to three or four rooms (Figs. 2.20, 2.24); it was surrounded with galleries (Fig. 2.24); thatched roofs were replaced with shingles, tiles, and later, corrugated iron (Figs. 2.24a, 2.26); it was constructed in *colombage* and *briquette-entre-poteaux* carpentry methods (Figs. 2.25 - 2.26); it was built taller with amenities such as transom spaces over the doors (Fig. 2.20); it was built double-wide (Fig. 2.29); it was given an L or T shaped plan (Figs. 2.23a-b); and, finally, it was built two stories tall and given the designation *kay enchanmotte* (*caille en chambre haute* – (house with high rooms (Fig. 2.28).[38] In the towns, *ti-kay* were adopted particularly by members of the *affranchis* (freed people) class. Freed people of color *kay* was being constructed in concrete block soon dominated the trades and professions of the colony, including house building.



**Figs. 2.23a 2.23b. An elevation and plan of an expanded *ti-kay* surveyed by John Vlach in 1973. It is located on Ave. Jean-Claude Duvalier in Port-au-prince, Haiti.**



**Fig. 2.24. A *maison longue* in Port-au-Prince. JDE Photo, 1995.**



**Fig. 2.25. Colombage construction in Vieux Aquin, Southern Haiti. JDE photo, 1995.**



**Fig. 2.26. A *ti-kay* in *briquette-entre-poteaux* construction On Hwy. 1. Southern Haiti. JDE photo, 1995.**



**Fig. 2.27. An urban linear cottage in St. Marc, Haiti. The gallery is used as an open-air shop. JDE photo, 1995.**



**Fig. 2.28. A two story single *ti-kay* in Vieux Aquin, southern Haiti. The ground floor is used as an Adventist school. JDE photo, 1995.**



**Fig. 2.29. A 3-bay Linear Cottage used as a restaurant at 19 rue de la Reunion, at Government House Square Port-au-Prince. The brackets on the colonnettes are strongly reminiscent of those used on Madam John's legacy and other houses in colonial New Orleans. JDE photo, 1995.**

Some of the earliest hard evidence for the urbanization of the *ti*-kay in the colonial period comes from the town of Les Cayes. In 1729, the French sailor Pierre Caillot painted the town and a part of the coast. He depicts with reasonable accuracy about twelve Linear Cottage houses in Les Cayes (Fig. 2.30), and two more near a Creole-style big house on a coastal plantation (Fig. 2.31). None of the Gallified Linear Cottages shown by Caillot has a front gallery, but they all appear to be two to three rooms deep – what would be called "shotguns" in Louisiana.[39] Samual Hazard, a journalist, recorded Linear Cottages both in the towns and the rural countryside of the Dominican Republic in his 1871 travels throughout the island of Hispañola (1872). By the beginning of the 1791 slave uprising, the Linear Cottage was widespread in central and southern Haiti, both in both rural and urban settings and used as quarters houses on plantations (Fig. 2.31).



**Fig. 2.30. Caye Saint-Louis: a portion of a painting of the newly built French town of Les Cayes in 1729, drawn by Pierre Caillot. The artist was sailing from France to New Orleans to take up his post with the Company of the Indies. The illustration shows approximately a dozen linear cottages scattered about the town. The bell of the church was hung in the tree near its front door. Le Cayes is located on the south shore of the southwest peninsula of Haiti (HNOC 2005).**



**Fig. 2.31. A plantation—probably the plantation of the Company of the Indies -- on the coast, south of the town of Les Cayes, Saint-Domingue, as depicted by the French bureaucrat, Marc-Antoine Caillot in 1729. Note the two linear cottages used as slave quarters, near the manager's house. Detail of the same painting shown in Fig. 2.30. Courtesy HNOC (2005).**

In summary, we find several distinct processes of creolization are represented by the diffusion of the Linear Cottage into colonial Hispañola: Synthetic creolization is seen in the amalgamation of Upper Guinea *alpendre* (front gallery) with the Taino rectangular single room house as sketched by de Oviedo in the early years of the sixteenth century (Figs. 2.13a, 2.21). As newly imported West African slaves escaped to become maroons, there may well have been examples of modeling on remembered West African coastal examples (compare Fig. 2.4 with Figs. 2.16, 2.17, 2.22a). Other possible sources for West African models are certain Portuguese and French *feitoria* /*barracoon* (slave trading post) buildings (Figs. 2.30, 2.31), and indigenous vernacular forms. Encircling galleries were used in the eighteenth century, if not earlier in raised Portuguese and French trading houses and slaving posts.

This architecture seems to have been transported across the Atlantic into the plantation houses of the and eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries (Figs. 2.32 – 2.33).

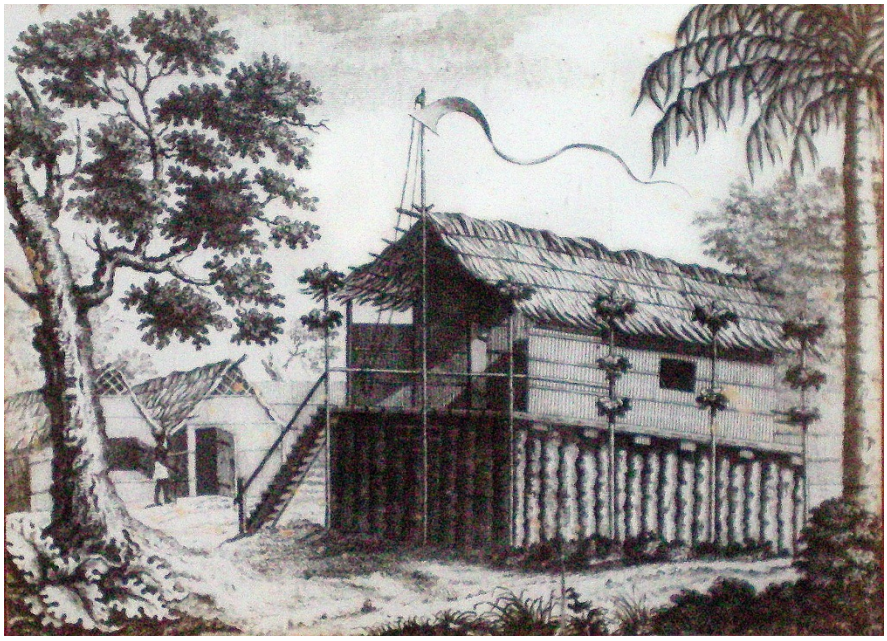


**Fig. 2.32. An 18th century sketch of a Portuguese *feitoria* or slave-trading post in the Congo. The building is a linear form which is elevated on a palisade of very stout posts. The basement functions as the slave-holding pen. The building is surrounded by open galleries, in the form of from of the early "Portuguese" trading posts of the Creole Tangomaos of Upper Guinea. Compare the buildings in the background with those in Fig. 2.11. Image courtesy the Museum of slavery, Gorée Island, Senegal.**

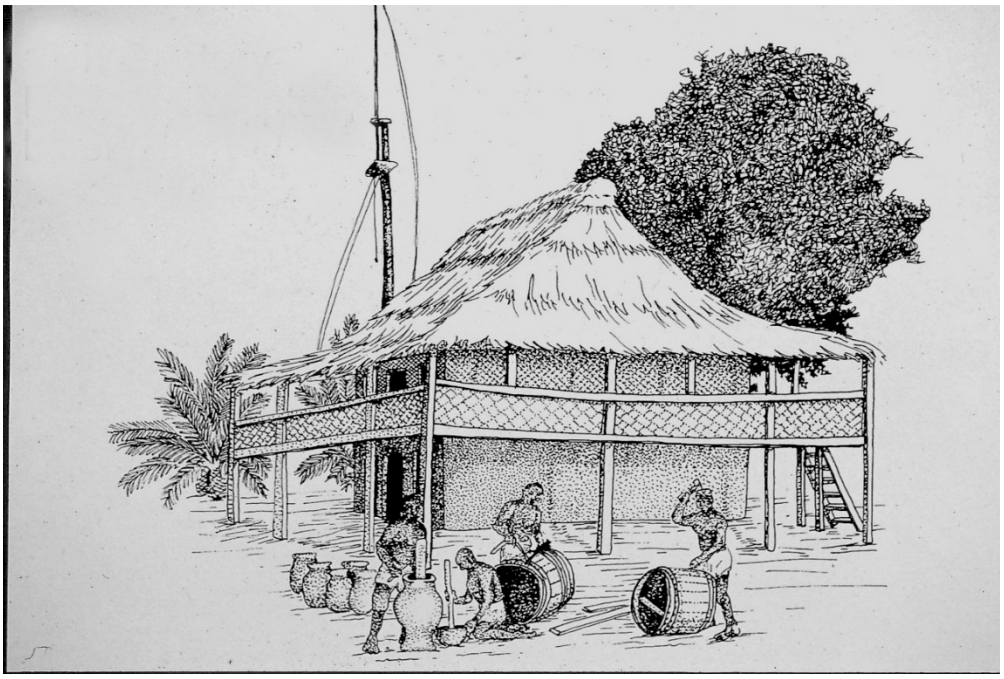


**Fig. 2.33. Sketch of an 18th century French *comptoir* (trading post) in Liberia. Sketch by MLE For the Kniffen Lab, after an old French illustration.**



**Fig. 2.34. Sketch of a raised 18th century colonial sugar plantation house in Saint-Domingue. Courtesy the Brown University Library.**

The earliest forms of *ti-kay* in colonial Hispañola were clearly modeled on African and European forms, as well as the *en-terre* construction methods of the indigenous Arawak (Figs. 2.13-2.15). Single-room rectangular houses with integrated front galleries extend back into the sixteenth century. This tiny Creole house was clearly suitable to the needs of planters, who adopted it as plantation quarters, particularly in those areas where sugar production with its huge demands for labor existed (Fig. 2.35).



**Fig. 2.35. An 18th century image of a French West Indian sugar plantation by Italian artist, F. Fumagalli.**

The maroons in Saint-Domingue often sought employment from French and Spanish free people of color living in the towns and villages. They supplied the products of the forests and countryside. The resulting patterns of contact were prerequisite to the creation of the urbanized Linear Cottage by the *affranchis* class of tradesman and artisans. This is clearly shown in nineteenth century sketches of towns and villages in Hispañola (Fig. 2.36). Without these cultural interminglings, the *ti-kay* would have remained a humble rural house type, rather than a nation-wide phenomenon adapted to both rural and urban environments.

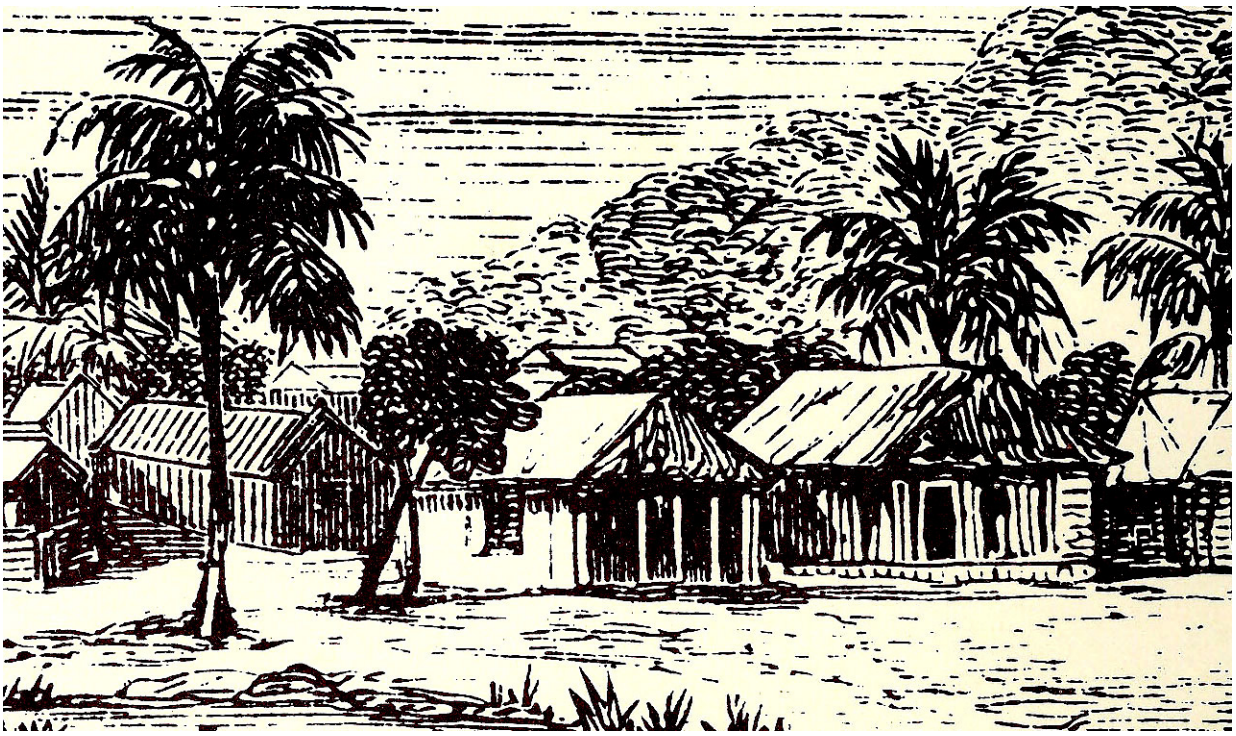


**Fig. 2.36. Linear cottages in the town of La Vega, D.R., as sketched by Samuel Hazard, 1871. Detail.**

It is in the towns and cities of central and southern Saint-Domingue that the *ti-kay* was reinterpreted as a "French" building type with Gallic construction and decorative features. It was enlarged to fit the needs of the commercial and business classes of the increasingly wealthy French colony. It became the "*maison longue*" and appeared in the very centers of pre-revolutionary towns such as Gonaïves and Les Cayes. The populations of the towns of Saint-Domingue, and particularly on the southwestern peninsula, were driven out in droves by the battles between the northern Blacks and the southern mulatto populations during the Haitian revolution. The Haitians won, under Christophe, while the mulattos and free people of color who escaped, carried their traditions, including architectural traditions, to other lands – Cuba and Louisiana.

# CHAPTER 3

## ARCHITECTURAL CREOLIZATION IN NEW ORLEANS: 1795 – 1835.

In the waning years of the Spanish colonial administration in Louisiana, two complex multi-year events were to cause a revolution in the culture of New Orleans and its architecture. The first was the rise of a three-caste social system in Louisiana, and its eventual location as a destination for waves of refugees from the West Indies. The second was a pair of devastating fires which destroyed the old colonial architecture of the city and set the cultural landscapes of New Orleans on a new trajectory.

Despite a rough start, the Spanish became relatively benign administrators of their new North American colony. It was in 1763 at the end of the Seven-Year's (French and Indian) War, that all territory east of the Mississippi River and north of Bayou Manchac, Lakes Maurepas and Pontchartrain, was turned over to the victorious British. As far as everyone in Louisiana knew, the "Isle of Orleans," remained French, but in October of the following year terrible news arrived. France. As part of the negotiations at the end of the Seven Year's War, France had agreed in 1762 to turn its failed colony, Louisiana, over to Spain. Leaders of the Creole colony objected, and when the new Spanish Governor Antonio de Ulloa arrived from Havana I March of 1766, the French Creoles began to organize resistance. Ulloa remained at the dilapidated Balize Post at the mouth of the Mississippi River, and the French flag still flew over New Orleans. When he eventually did move up-river, he arrived without benefit of Spanish troops, and, thus, with no basis of support. The Superior Council demanded his departure, and at the end of 1768, would-be Governor Ulloa left for Havana.

The Spanish responded quickly (for the times), sending a new governor, Alejandro O'Reilly and two thousand Spanish troops to New Orleans. In 1769 they quickly took control of the increasingly impoverished and dependent colony. O'Reilly ordered six of the top conspirators to be shot, and others jailed in Havana. French control of Louisiana was over. The new Governor, Louis de Unzaga y Amézaga, ruled with sympathy for the local Creoles. He relaxed some of the trading regulations and tariffs to which

the Creole rebels had objected. Gradually, Trade increased with the Caribbean and even with the British, and Louisiana prospered. Most of the old resentments engendered against Spain under the Ulloa administration gradually diminished. As the American Revolution was blazing to the north and east, Louisiana's economy advanced to its highest level ever. Unzaga permitted the sale of munitions to the American rebels. Support for the Americans was increased dramatically under Louisiana's new Governor, Bernardo de Gálvez, in 1777. Gálvez established a militia of local Creoles, Free People of Color, Acadians and Germans, including enslaved Africans. He attacked and drove the British from Baton Rouge, securing British West Florida (the Florida Parishes), and the town of Natchez. This effectively drove the British from the entire Mississippi River Valley. Gálvez then turned his army east. In 1780 he attacked and took Mobile and then Pensacola, driving the British from the entire Gulf Coast, and securing Spanish sovereignty from east Texas to the Atlantic coast. This, incidentally, dramatically increased the success of the American Rebels in the new southeastern states.

**Racial Demographics and Culture in Colonial New Orleans.** "Throughout the nearly forty years that Spain held it, New Orleans remained a colonial French city. It never became Spanish in a cultural sense, and it would still be a colonial French city when the United States took over in 1803." [40] Although the Spanish administrations had permitted local Creoles a dominant role in the Cabildo – the Spanish governing council -- there persisted certain unbridgeable differences of views of the Spanish and the local French Creoles. One of these dealt with slavery and race. Under the French *code noir* (black codes), manumission, or the freeing of slaves was theoretically possible. In practical terms, however, it was difficult, and few French slaves had been freed, except for meritorious military service. Black slaves who had fought and been wounded in the Natchez war of 1729-30 were promised manumission.

The Spanish introduced a more liberal slave law. It found its roots in Roman law, as recast in *Las Siete Partidas del (Ray) Don Alfonso X, El Sabio* (of Castile, 1252-1284), itself based on Justinian legal codes. Although slavery was an accepted condition of both the Holy Roman

Empire in the fourth century and Castile in the thirteenth century, the document provided a rather liberal foundation for the Spanish Law of the Indies governing slavery and the relationships between owner and slave.[41] The *partidas* (legal measures) outlined a number of specific rights to which slaves were entitled, including *coartación*, or the right to purchase one's freedom from one's owner. This was a protection incorporated in to Louisiana's Spanish slave laws under the O'Reilly Code in 1769.[42] Under the French in 1732, only six persons in New Orleans were listed as free – all were *mulâtre(se)*,or people of mixed race (Martin 2000:60). Later, all free persons of mixed race would be called *gens de couleur libres*. By 1771 there were still only 99 free persons of color in New Orleans, out of a total population of 3,190 (or only 3 percent of the total population of the city. Under the relative freedoms of the Spanish slave code, however, that number rose dramatically.

**Table 3.1.**

**Free People of Color as a Proportion of the Total Population of New Orleans**

**1771-1810 (figures approximate)**

| **Years:** | **Total pop. New Orleans:** | **Pop. Free People of Color:** | **Freed Slaves as % of total Population** |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1769-71 | 3,190 (3,127) | 99 | 3.0 (3.1) |
| 1777-78 | 3,202 (3,659) | 315 (353) | 9.8 |
| 1785-88 | 4,980 (5,028 - 5,321) | 820 (563) | 16.5 (15.4) |
| 1791 | 5,497 (4,516 – 4,816) | 1,462 (862 – 1,147) | 26.6 (17.1) |
| 1805 | 8,212 (8,222 – 8,475) | 1,556 | 19.0 |
| 1810 | 17,242 (24,552 in area) | 5,727 (4,950) | 33.2 (23.3) |

The census figures in Table 1 are based on estimates for New Orleans published in several sources.[43] Census figures for the same period disagree, sometimes significantly (in parentheses). However, the overall trends are clear. There was a dramatic rise in both the number and the proportion of Free People of Color during the Spanish colonial period, and again, following the arrival of so many refugees from the colony of Saint-Domingue, by way of Cuba in 1809. Most of the increase between the years 1805 and 1810 in Table 1 is due to the immigration of Haitian refugees from Cuba.[44] Even under a policy established by the French population's Spanish rulers (in force from 1769 to 1807), the most industrious and lucky slaves were able to buy their freedom backed up by authority. Masters also made ordinary, gratuitous manumissions of [mostly female] slaves…. A combination of the two phenomena made the town's free blacks a comparatively large urban population, constituting about one seventh of the parish at its height in 1810.[45]

One additional fact of demography proved to be important in the development of the New Orleans shotgun house. Even prior to the arrival of large numbers of Haitian refugees in 1804 and 1809, the sex ratios of the population of Free People of Color in New Orleans had been curiously skewed. In the countryside, the plantations employed far more males than females, but in the city of New Orleans the opposite was true, and particularly for Free People of Color. For every ten free colored women of marriageable age, there were only about six men of their own class. Unlike any other portion of the United States, Free People of Color were entitled to own land (and slaves) in Louisiana. Women of this class became very prominent land owners in New Orleans, particularly in those sections of the city populated by free Blacks.

**Table 3.2**

**Phenotype and Sex of Slave by Type of Manumission in New Orleans 1771 - 1803**

| Phenotype and Sex | | Gra-ciosa | Condi-tional | Self-Purchase | Third-Party Purchase | Tri-bunal | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Cuarterón | Female | 35 | 4 | 7 | 25 | 3 | 74 |
| | Male | 17 | 0 | 1 | 23 | 0 | 41 |
| Pardo | Female | 180 | 23 | 49 | 91 | 30 | 373 |
| | Male | 148 | 8 | 26 | 93 | 16 | 291 |
| Grifo | Female | 9 | 0 | 9 | 15 | 2 | 35 |
| | Male | 6 | 0 | 1 | 8 | 0 | 15 |
| Moreno | Female | 260 | 25 | 242 | 104 | 55 | 686 |
| | Male | 86 | 6 | 116 | 56 | 34 | 298 |
| Not given | | 57 | 6 | 1 | 30 | 14 | 108 |
| Total | | 798 | 72 | 452 | 445 | 154 | 1,921 |

*Source:* Notarial Records.

Table 2 is taken from Kimberly Hanger.[46]. It shows that in the late Spanish Colonial period, black-skinned slaves were freed most often – there were far more of them. Second came light-skinned females (who were often the children of slaves and masters). Technically, they were ¾ white, and were known as Quadroons (Pardos). Even lighter skinned slaves came next (there were even fewer of them) -- Octaroons (Cuarteróns), and finally mulattos (Morenos, half white and half black). About 1168 female slaves had been manumitted by their masters or their freedom was purchased by themselves or by another (usually a relative). Roughly 645 male slaves were manumitted, probably mostly through self-purchase or purchase by a third party. The ratio of manumissions was, thus about 65% female to 35% male. In New Orleans in the 1805 census Lachance reported that there were 2.2 adult free women of color for every free male of color.[47]

As the Spanish colonial period drew to a close, the populations of *affranches* or freed slaves remained very different in the city and the country. Far more freed females resided in New Orleans, while more freed males resided outside of the city. Thus, the availability of potential light-skinned male mates in New Orleans was extremely limited for freed females of color wishing to marry within their own caste. Because of the racial imbalances of the city, many female free women of color did not seek to marry free people of color. Instead, they sought out white male benefactors. By 1777 there were two white men in New Orleans for every white woman. It is about then that we may date the origins of as full-fledged three-caste society in Louisiana. Many white Creoles sought out the companionship of light-skinned free women of color. Already, by 1788, it was reported that 1,500 Quadroon women lived in homes supported by white men.[48] Under Spanish law, free people of all classes could marry, though it was reported that only three cases of white men officially marrying free women of color were reported.[49] Most white men formed long-term and life partnerships with free women of color. Later, this was referred to as plaçage, after the designation used in Saint-Domingue. Following the Louisiana Purchase, laws interdicting interracial marriage were established and white men were forbidden to marry free women of color. The Civil Code of 1808 not only forbade interracial marriage and concubinage, but it also forbade unlimited

inheritance by “natural” children conceived out of wedlock. They could receive only “what is strictly necessary to procure them sustenance, or an occupation or profession.”[50] There were many other legal restrictions on inheritance as well. This, however, did not change the popularity of *plaçage* arrangements, which persisted for many decades. Because *plaçées* received a “small house in the Ramparts,” a stipend, and other forms of support, they soon became a substantial property-owning class. By custom, the resided mostly in the “Quadroon Quarter” of the French Quarter, Faubourgs Tremé, and Marigny, and the Bayou Road (Fig. 3.1). It was here that the Quadroon ladies of New Orleans would make their impact on its vernacular architecture (see *The Landlady Effect*, below).

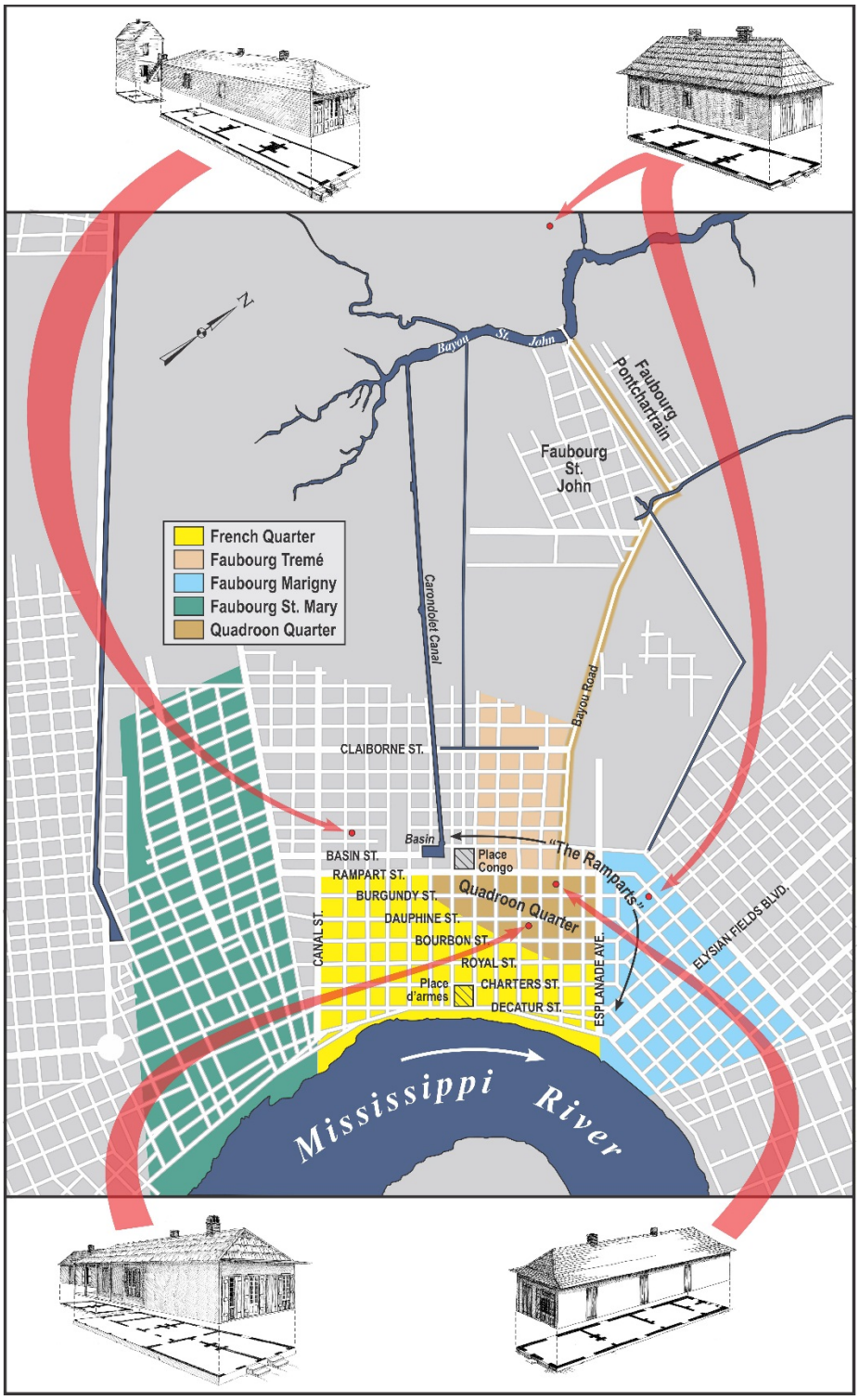



**Fig. 3.1 A map of New Orleans as it had developed by 1830, with typical Linear Cottages Illustrated. The names are those used at the time. MLE for the Kniffen Lab, LSU.**

As a preliminary exercise, we took a rough census of African-American land owners along the Bayou Road registered on maps and in the Succession Index of 1849. The list contains the names of




**Fig. 3.2. A rough list of Free People of Color landowners along the Bayou Road in New Orleans between 1797 and 1822. The list is not complete and does not include additional landowners on Rue de l'hôpital or Governor Nicholls Street in the French Quarter. The informal survey illustrates the very high proportion of female landowners.**

twenty-four landowners. The remarkable thing is that one half of them were female – an indication of the relative economic power of free women of color in the city at that time. The ratio of one-half female property owners also extended to the Quadroon Quarter in this period.

**Arrival of the Haitian Refugees**. In several waves, substantially more than twelve thousand refugees from the Haitian Revolution arrived in Louisiana between 1791 and 1809. They included roughly equal

proportions of colonial French, African slaves, and *affranchis* (free people of color--called *gens de couleur libres* in New Orleans). This latter, largely mulatto, population had become a *petit bourgeoisie* class in Saint-Domingue. Men worked as planters, as small businessmen and as artisans--carpenters, house builders, cabinet makers, carriage makers, masons, barbers, upholsterers, and real estate brokers. They were renowned tailors and shoe-makers. At the end of colonial rule (1803) the city of New Orleans had 1,335 free people of color out of a total population of 8,050 (the colony of Saint-Domingue had well over 28,000).

The refugees arrived in three separate but nearly continuous waves. The greatest exodus from Saint-Domingue occurred in the summer of 1793 when approximately 10,000 residents were driven out of the Capital city of Cap François as it was being besieged and burnt by the rebels. This wave of refugees from the north coast of Saint Domingue crowded onto ships which dispersed many of them to the cities of the American eastern seaboard from Boston to Charleston. Almost none came directly to Louisiana. Later, some who remained in the United States found Louisiana French culture more to their liking and moved to New Orleans. James Pitot, a future Mayor of New Orleans was one of these. Another was Louis Duclor, who came via New York City in 1794, and who established the first newspaper in New Orleans – *Le Moniteur de la Louisiane*.[51] In general, though, this group had a small but growing impact on the culture and society of New Orleans. Other Saint-Domingue refugees went to other West Indian islands, including Cuba and Jamaica, whence some later migrated to Louisiana. In 1798, following the departure of the British expeditionary force from the south of Saint-Domingue, another group arrived in the States. Records support a figure of several hundred arrivals in Louisiana between 1792 and 1803, but there were probably more.

The second wave of refugees left Saint-Domingue at the time of the final French evacuation of the colony, and its transformation into the second independent nation in the Americas – Haiti. This occurred in 1803, the year of the Louisiana Purchase. This group of refugees included many free people of color who had resided in the south and west of Saint-Domingue, and who were being massacred under orders of

Dessalines and his conquering black army. Cuba did not accept some of the Haitian refugees, so many came aboard ships which arrived in New Orleans. Others were expelled by the British in Jamaica and arrived at the same time. The total number of refugees in this period has not been calculated, partly due to the turmoil connected with the Louisiana Purchase which resulted in poor record keeping. Perhaps as many as three thousand could be counted in this period. Refugees continued to trickle in from the West Indies and other locations until 1809, when the last and largest influx of refugees occurred.

In 1809, Napoleon attempted to place his brother, Joseph, on the thrown of Spain. In retaliation, the Spanish expelled French citizens from their colonies. Most prominent among these was Cuba, which then held perhaps 25,000 or more French refugees from Saint-Domingue. Cuba declared that all French nationals who were not married to Spanish Cubans, and who had not requested naturalization and declared loyalty to the King of Spain, be expelled. It happened suddenly. Refugees who had made a new life in Cuba, particularly in and near the eastern towns of Santiago and Baracoa, were suddenly uprooted once again. Between May, 2009, and January, 2010, approximately ten thousand refugees arrived in the Mississippi delta via some thirty-five ships. The refugee population was approximately evenly divided into thirds. There were 2,731 whites, 3,102 free people of color, and 3,226 slaves.[52.]

This migration had profound impacts on New Orleans. It doubled the number of French speakers in the city. It more than doubled the number of free people of color who resided there (134%). In all, something between 12,000 and 15,000 refugees found new homes in Louisiana as a result of the Revolution. These refugees introduced to New Orleans a large number of cultural institutions which we now consider Creole. The refugees, and those who proceeded them from the West Indies, have not been given the credit they deserve for their profound contributions to Louisiana. Among these are many aspects of Louisiana's heritage, including literature, publishing, music, dance, education, medicine, agriculture (sugar refining), law, and the military, and also our folk culture, including zydeco and Afro-rhythms, cuisine, folk tales, street parades, and, of course the use of language in its widest sense. The refugees intensified the boundaries of the three caste social system by solidifying the identity of the Free People of Color caste, and by whitening it considerably from a previously more racially-mixed composition. Not

least of the influences coming from Saint-Domingue were our distinctive traditions of vernacular architecture. As we will see, the influence of the refugees made its greatest impact at just the time when New Orleans was being rebuilt and expanded under the pressure of excessive levels of immigration. New Orleans was ripe for new architectural solutions, and it was the numerous experienced West Indian builders and architects which supplied many of them.

**The Great Fires.** By 1788, New Orleans had grown to a city of over one-thousand buildings. It was still mostly confined to the boundaries of today's French Quarter. On Good Friday of that year, a fire began at the house of the Royal Treasurer, Joseph Vincent Nuñez, at 619 Chartres Street. The house was in the raised Creole style, elevated on a *rez-de-chaussée* (basement) eight feet tall, where bodegas or shops were located. The main portion of the house was three large rooms across the front with a gallery in front and cabinet rooms behind (Fig. 3.3). As part of his worship for the day, Joseph had lighted candles in one of the cabinets. That day there was a strong wind blowing from the south; a curtain caught fire from one of the candles. Before the flames could be extinguished, the house was afire. This was a time before roofing materials were made of slate or tile. Instead, most roofs were covered with cypress shingles, and these were rather loosely attached to lathing strips across the roofs. The intensity of the fire lifted burning shingles and deposited them on the roofs of neighboring houses and shops. Soon, much of the city was aflame. Within four hours most of the central portion of the city was in ruins. Some 856 buildings, including the Parish church, priests' house, jail, and Cabildo – all located on the Plaza de Armas.[53] The recovery was aided by the King of Spain, but it was slow in progressing.



**Fig. 3.3. A typical post 1788 Spanish colonial townhouse elevated on a *rex-de-chaussée* used for shops or for Storage and services. The top view (right) shows a plan of the courtyard flanked by two *appentis* or shed-roofed service dependencies. It is this kind of structure which will evolve into the appentis cottage following the second great fire in 1794. NONA 044.076**

In December of 1794 boys playing in a house in the 500 block of Royal Street started another fire. This fire, also spread rapidly down river until it had consumed the city jail at the location of the present Cabildo on Jackson Square. Suddenly, as it was about to consume the new parish church, the wind shifted to the north, and the fire shifted towards to line of undamaged colonial houses along the front of Decatur Street, consuming those in the 500, 400 and 300 blocks. In total, another 212 houses, stores and warehouses were destroyed. The monetary loss was as great as that of the first fire, though fewer houses were destroyed. Almost immediately, the Cabildo began to pass ordinances for the prevention of fires. The architecture of the city was to be profoundly affected. The relevant ordinances may be found in Appendix No. 1. All houses and their roofs were to be built in fireproof materials. Limits were placed on the construction of wooden buildings. Buildings were to be set right on the street.

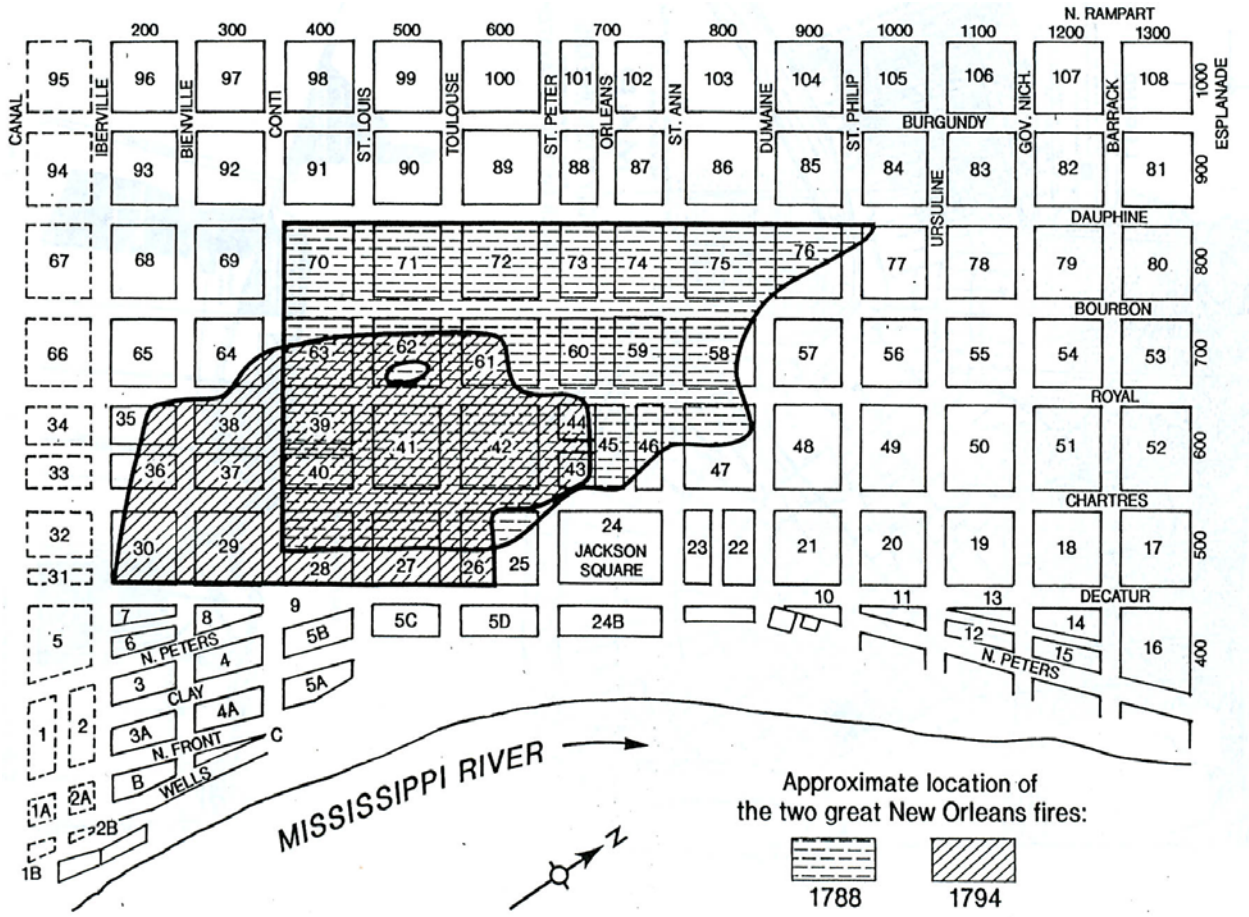



Fig. 3.4. A map of the approximate locations of the two great fires which destroyed the colonial heart of New Orleans in the late eighteenth century. MLE for the Kniffen La.

# CHAPTER 3

## ARCHITECTURAL CREOLIZATION IN NEW ORLEANS: 1795 – 1835.

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the Creole rebels had objected. Gradually, Trade increased with the Caribbean and even with the British, and Louisiana prospered. Most of the old resentments engendered against Spain under the Ulloa administration gradually diminished. As the American Revolution was blazing to the north and east, Louisiana's economy advanced to its highest level ever. Unzaga permitted the sale of munitions to the American rebels. Support for the Americans was increased dramatically under Louisiana's new Governor, Bernardo de Gálvez, in 1777. Gálvez established a militia of local Creoles, Free People of Color, Acadians and Germans, including enslaved Africans. He attacked and drove the British from Baton Rouge, securing British West Florida (the Florida Parishes), and the town of Natchez. This effectively drove the British from the entire Mississippi River Valley. Gálvez then turned his army east. In 1780 he attacked and took Mobile and then Pensacola, driving the British from the entire Gulf Coast, and securing Spanish sovereignty from east Texas to the Atlantic coast. This, incidentally, dramatically increased the success of the American Rebels in the new southeastern states.

**Racial Demographics and Culture in Colonial New Orleans.** "Throughout the nearly forty years that Spain held it, New Orleans remained a colonial French city. It never became Spanish in a cultural sense, and it would still be a colonial French city when the United States took over in 1803." [40] Although the Spanish administrations had permitted local Creoles a dominant role in the Cabildo – the Spanish governing council -- there persisted certain unbridgeable differences of views of the Spanish and the local French Creoles. One of these dealt with slavery and race. Under the French *code noir* (black codes), manumission, or the freeing of slaves was theoretically possible. In practical terms, however, it was difficult, and few French slaves had been freed, except for meritorious military service. Black slaves who had fought and been wounded in the Natchez war of 1729-30 were promised manumission.

The Spanish introduced a more liberal slave law. It found its roots in Roman law, as recast in *Las Siete Partidas del (Ray) Don Alfonso X, El Sabio* (of Castile, 1252-1284), itself based on Justinian legal codes. Although slavery was an accepted condition of both the Holy Roman

Empire in the fourth century and Castile in the thirteenth century, the document provided a rather liberal foundation for the Spanish Law of the Indies governing slavery and the relationships between owner and slave.[41] The *partidas* (legal measures) outlined a number of specific rights to which slaves were entitled, including *coartación*, or the right to purchase one's freedom from one's owner. This was a protection incorporated in to Louisiana's Spanish slave laws under the O'Reilly Code in 1769.[42] Under the French in 1732, only six persons in New Orleans were listed as free – all were *mulâtre(se)*,or people of mixed race (Martin 2000:60). Later, all free persons of mixed race would be called *gens de couleur libres*. By 1771 there were still only 99 free persons of color in New Orleans, out of a total population of 3,190 (or only 3 percent of the total population of the city. Under the relative freedoms of the Spanish slave code, however, that number rose dramatically.

**Table 3.1.**

**Free People of Color as a Proportion of the Total Population of New Orleans**

**1771-1810 (figures approximate)**

| **Years:** | **Total pop. New Orleans:** | **Pop. Free People of Color:** | **Freed Slaves as % of total Population** |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1769-71 | 3,190 (3,127) | 99 | 3.0 (3.1) |
| 1777-78 | 3,202 (3,659) | 315 (353) | 9.8 |
| 1785-88 | 4,980 (5,028 - 5,321) | 820 (563) | 16.5 (15.4) |
| 1791 | 5,497 (4,516 – 4,816) | 1,462 (862 – 1,147) | 26.6 (17.1) |
| 1805 | 8,212 (8,222 – 8,475) | 1,556 | 19.0 |
| 1810 | 17,242 (24,552 in area) | 5,727 (4,950) | 33.2 (23.3) |

The census figures in Table 3.1 are based on estimates for New Orleans published in several sources.[43] Census figures for the same period disagree, sometimes significantly (in parentheses). However, the overall trends are clear. There was a dramatic rise in both the number and the proportion of Free People of Color during the Spanish colonial period, and again, following the arrival of so many refugees from the colony of Saint-Domingue, by way of Cuba in 1809. Most of the increase between the years 1805 and 1810 in Table 3.1 is due to the immigration of Haitian refugees from Cuba.[44] Even under a policy established by the French population's Spanish rulers (in force from 1769 to 1807), the most industrious and lucky slaves were able to buy their freedom backed up by authority. Masters also made ordinary, gratuitous manumissions of [mostly female] slaves…. A combination of the two phenomena made the town's free blacks a comparatively large urban population, constituting about one seventh of the parish at its height in 1810.[45]

One additional fact of demography proved to be important in the development of the New Orleans shotgun house. Even prior to the arrival of large numbers of Haitian refugees in 1804 and 1809, the sex ratios of the population of Free People of Color in New Orleans had been curiously skewed. In the countryside, the plantations employed far more males than females, but in the city of New Orleans the opposite was true, and particularly for Free People of Color. For every ten free colored women of marriageable age, there were only about six men of their own class. Unlike any other portion of the United States, Free People of Color were entitled to own land (and slaves) in Louisiana. Women of this class became very prominent land owners in New Orleans, particularly in those sections of the city populated by free Blacks.

**Table 3.2**

**Phenotype and Sex of Slave by Type of Manumission in New Orleans 1771 - 1803**

| Phenotype and Sex | | Gra-ciosa | Condi-tional | Self-Purchase | Third-Party Purchase | Tri-bunal | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Cuarterón | Female | 35 | 4 | 7 | 25 | 3 | 74 |
| | Male | 17 | 0 | 1 | 23 | 0 | 41 |
| Pardo | Female | 180 | 23 | 49 | 91 | 30 | 373 |
| | Male | 148 | 8 | 26 | 93 | 16 | 291 |
| Grifo | Female | 9 | 0 | 9 | 15 | 2 | 35 |
| | Male | 6 | 0 | 1 | 8 | 0 | 15 |
| Moreno | Female | 260 | 25 | 242 | 104 | 55 | 686 |
| | Male | 86 | 6 | 116 | 56 | 34 | 298 |
| Not given | | 57 | 6 | 1 | 30 | 14 | 108 |
| Total | | 798 | 72 | 452 | 445 | 154 | 1,921 |

*Source:* Notarial Records.

Table 3.2 is taken from Kimberly Hanger.[46]. It shows that in the late Spanish Colonial period, black-skinned slaves were freed most often – there were far more of them. Second came light-skinned females (who were often the children of slaves and masters). Technically, they were ¾ white, and were known as Quadroons (Pardos). Even lighter skinned slaves came next (there were even fewer of them) -- Octaroons (Cuarteróns), and finally mulattos (Morenos, half white and half black). About 1168 female slaves had been manumitted by their masters or their freedom was purchased by themselves or by another (usually a relative). Roughly 645 male slaves were manumitted, probably mostly through self-purchase or purchase by a third party. The ratio of manumissions was, thus about 65% female to 35% male. In New Orleans in the 1805 census Lachance reported that there were 2.2 adult free women of color for every free male of color.[47]

As the Spanish colonial period drew to a close, the populations of *affranches* or freed slaves remained very different in the city and the country. Far more freed females resided in New Orleans, while more freed males resided outside of the city. Thus, the availability of potential light-skinned male mates in New Orleans was extremely limited for freed females of color wishing to marry within their own caste. Because of the racial imbalances of the city, many female free women of color did not seek to marry free people of color. Instead, they sought out white male benefactors. By 1777 there were two white men in New Orleans for every white woman. It is about then that we may date the origins of as full-fledged three-caste society in Louisiana. Many white Creoles sought out the companionship of light-skinned free women of color. Already, by 1788, it was reported that 1,500 Quadroon women lived in homes supported by white men.[48] Under Spanish law, free people of all classes could marry, though it was reported that only three cases of white men officially marrying free women of color were reported.[49] Most white men formed long-term and life partnerships with free women of color. Later, this was referred to as plaçage, after the designation used in Saint-Domingue. Following the Louisiana Purchase, laws interdicting interracial marriage were established and white men were forbidden to marry free women of color. The Civil Code of 1808 not only forbade interracial marriage and concubinage, but it also forbade unlimited

inheritance by “natural” children conceived out of wedlock. They could receive only “what is strictly necessary to procure them sustenance, or an occupation or profession.”[50] There were many other legal restrictions on inheritance as well. This, however, did not change the popularity of *plaçage* arrangements, which persisted for many decades. Because *plaçées* received a “small house in the Ramparts,” a stipend, and other forms of support, they soon became a substantial property-owning class. By custom, the resided mostly in the “Quadroon Quarter” of the French Quarter, Faubourgs Tremé, and Marigny, and the Bayou Road (Fig. 3.1). It was here that the Quadroon ladies of New Orleans would make their impact on its vernacular architecture (see *The Landlady Effect*, below).

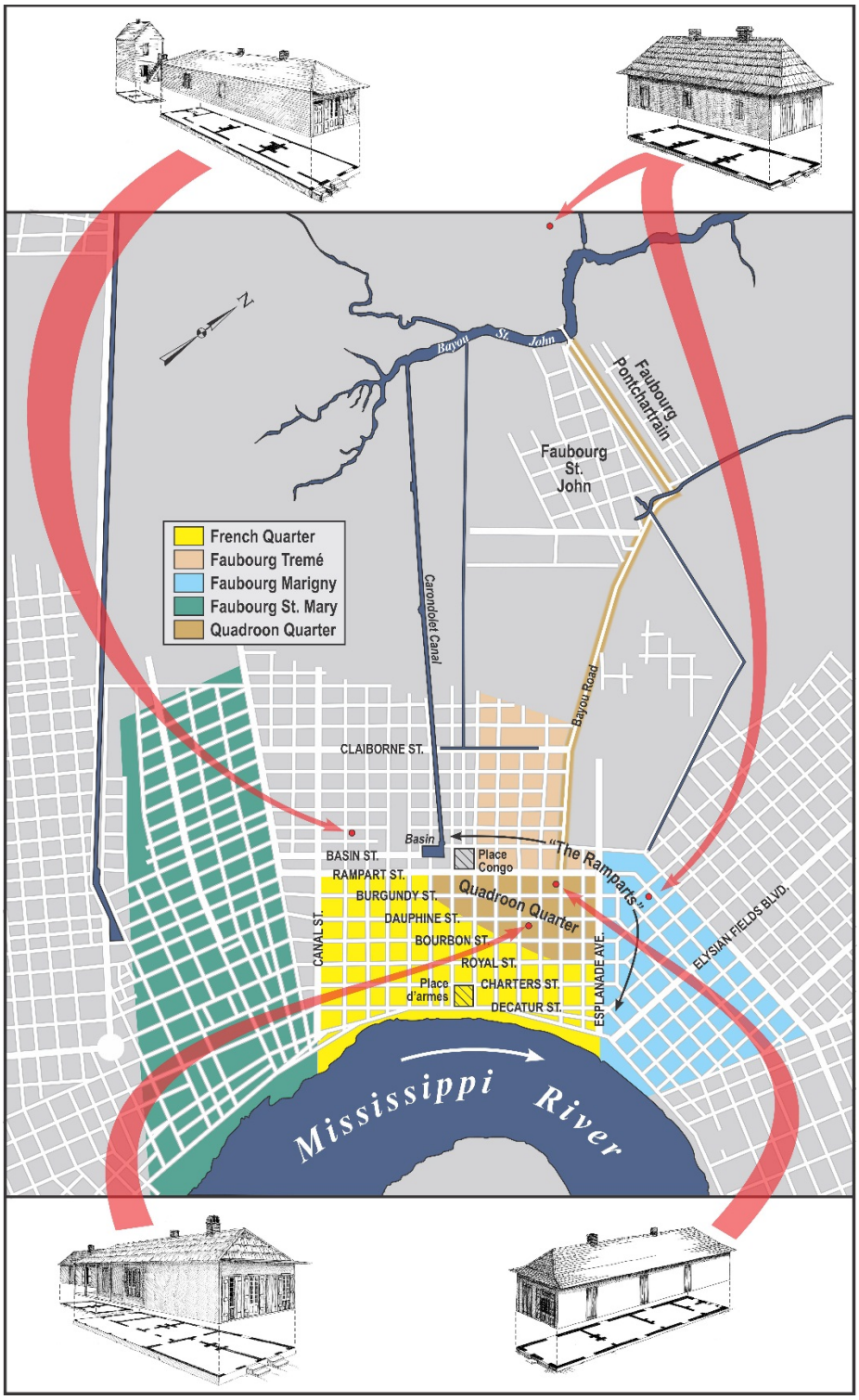



**Fig. 3.1 A map of New Orleans as it had developed by 1830, with typical Linear Cottages Illustrated. The names are those used at the time. MLE for the Kniffen Lab, LSU.**

As a preliminary exercise, we took a rough census of African-American land owners along the Bayou Road registered on maps and in the Succession Index of 1849. The list contains the names of




**Fig. 3.2. A rough list of Free People of Color landowners along the Bayou Road in New Orleans between 1797 and 1822. The list is not complete and does not include additional landowners on Rue de l'Hôpital or Governor Nicholls Street in the French Quarter. The informal survey illustrates the very high proportion of female landowners.**

twenty-four landowners. The remarkable thing is that one half of them were female – an indication of the relative economic power of free women of color in the city at that time. The ratio of one-half female property owners also extended to the Quadroon Quarter in this period.

**Arrival of the Haitian Refugees**. In several waves, substantially more than twelve thousand refugees from the Haitian Revolution arrived in Louisiana between 1791 and 1809. They included roughly equal

proportions of colonial French, African slaves, and *affranchis* (free people of color--called *gens de couleur libres* in New Orleans). This latter, largely mulatto, population had become a *petit bourgeoisie* class in Saint-Domingue. Men worked as planters, as small businessmen and as artisans--carpenters, house builders, cabinet makers, carriage makers, masons, barbers, upholsterers, and real estate brokers. They were renowned tailors and shoe-makers. At the end of colonial rule (1803) the city of New Orleans had 1,335 free people of color out of a total population of 8,050 (the colony of Saint-Domingue had well over 28,000).

The refugees arrived in three separate but nearly continuous waves. The greatest exodus from Saint-Domingue occurred in the summer of 1793 when approximately 10,000 residents were driven out of the Capital city of Cap François as it was being besieged and burnt by the rebels. This wave of refugees from the north coast of Saint Domingue crowded onto ships which dispersed many of them to the cities of the American eastern seaboard from Boston to Charleston. Almost none came directly to Louisiana. Later, some who remained in the United States found Louisiana French culture more to their liking and moved to New Orleans. James Pitot, a future Mayor of New Orleans was one of these. Another was Louis Duclor, who came via New York City in 1794, and who established the first newspaper in New Orleans – *Le Moniteur de la Louisiane*.[51] In general, though, this group had a small but growing impact on the culture and society of New Orleans. Other Saint-Domingue refugees went to other West Indian islands, including Cuba and Jamaica, whence some later migrated to Louisiana. In 1798, following the departure of the British expeditionary force from the south of Saint-Domingue, another group arrived in the States. Records support a figure of several hundred arrivals in Louisiana between 1792 and 1803, but there were probably more.

The second wave of refugees left Saint-Domingue at the time of the final French evacuation of the colony, and its transformation into the second independent nation in the Americas – Haiti. This occurred in 1803, the year of the Louisiana Purchase. This group of refugees included many free people of color who had resided in the south and west of Saint-Domingue, and who were being massacred under orders of

Dessalines and his conquering black army. Cuba did not accept some of the Haitian refugees, so many came aboard ships which arrived in New Orleans. Others were expelled by the British in Jamaica and arrived at the same time. The total number of refugees in this period has not been calculated, partly due to the turmoil connected with the Louisiana Purchase which resulted in poor record keeping. Perhaps as many as three thousand could be counted in this period. Refugees continued to trickle in from the West Indies and other locations until 1809, when the last and largest influx of refugees occurred.

In 1809, Napoleon attempted to place his brother, Joseph, on the thrown of Spain. In retaliation, the Spanish expelled French citizens from their colonies. Most prominent among these was Cuba, which then held perhaps 25,000 or more French refugees from Saint-Domingue. Cuba declared that all French nationals who were not married to Spanish Cubans, and who had not requested naturalization and declared loyalty to the King of Spain, be expelled. It happened suddenly. Refugees who had made a new life in Cuba, particularly in and near the eastern towns of Santiago and Baracoa, were suddenly uprooted once again. Between May, 2009, and January, 2010, approximately ten thousand refugees arrived in the Mississippi delta via some thirty-five ships. The refugee population was approximately evenly divided into thirds. There were 2,731 whites, 3,102 free people of color, and 3,226 slaves.[52.]

This migration had profound impacts on New Orleans. It doubled the number of French speakers in the city. It more than doubled the number of free people of color who resided there (134%). In all, something between 12,000 and 15,000 refugees found new homes in Louisiana as a result of the Revolution. These refugees introduced to New Orleans a large number of cultural institutions which we now consider Creole. The refugees, and those who proceeded them from the West Indies, have not been given the credit they deserve for their profound contributions to Louisiana. Among these are many aspects of Louisiana's heritage, including literature, publishing, music, dance, education, medicine, agriculture (sugar refining), law, and the military, and also our folk culture, including zydeco and Afro-rhythms, cuisine, folk tales, street parades, and, of course the use of language in its widest sense. The refugees intensified the boundaries of the three caste social system by solidifying the identity of the Free People of Color caste, and by whitening it considerably from a previously more racially-mixed composition. Not

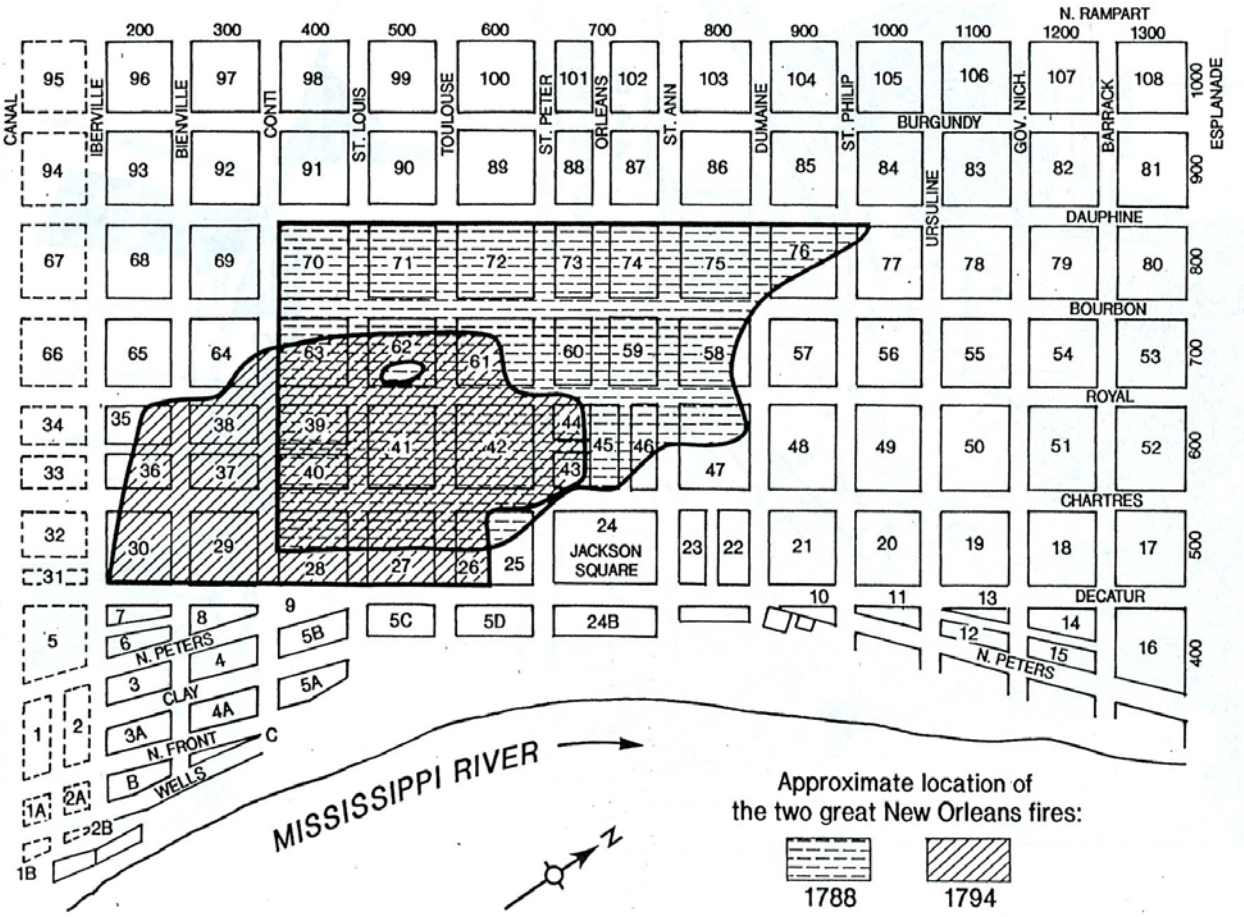
least of the influences coming from Saint-Domingue were our distinctive traditions of vernacular architecture. As we will see, the influence of the refugees made its greatest impact at just the time when New Orleans was being rebuilt and expanded under the pressure of excessive levels of immigration. New Orleans was ripe for new architectural solutions, and it was the numerous experienced West Indian builders and architects which supplied many of them.

**The Great Fires.** By 1788, New Orleans had grown to a city of over one-thousand buildings. It was still mostly confined to the boundaries of today's French Quarter. On Good Friday of that year, a fire began at the house of the Royal Treasurer, Joseph Vincent Nuñez, at 619 Chartres Street. The house was in the raised Creole style, elevated on a *rez-de-chaussée* (basement) eight feet tall, where bodegas or shops were located. The main portion of the house was three large rooms across the front with a gallery in front and cabinet rooms behind (Fig. 3.3). As part of his worship for the day, Joseph had lighted candles in one of the cabinets. That day there was a strong wind blowing from the south; a curtain caught fire from one of the candles. Before the flames could be extinguished, the house was afire. This was a time before roofing materials were made of slate or tile. Instead, most roofs were covered with cypress shingles, and these were rather loosely attached to lathing strips across the roofs. The intensity of the fire lifted burning shingles and deposited them on the roofs of neighboring houses and shops. Soon, much of the city was aflame. Within four hours most of the central portion of the city was in ruins. Some 856 buildings, including the Parish church, priests' house, jail, and Cabildo – all located on the Plaza de Armas.[53] The recovery was aided by the King of Spain, but it was slow in progressing.



**Fig. 3.3. A typical post 1788 Spanish colonial townhouse elevated on a *rex-de-chaussée* used for shops or for Storage and services. The top view (right) shows a plan of the courtyard flanked by two *appentis* or shed-roofed service dependencies. It is this kind of structure which will evolve into the appentis cottage following the second great fire in 1794. NONA 044.076**

In December of 1794 boys playing in a house in the 500 block of Royal Street started another fire. This fire, also spread rapidly down river until it had consumed the city jail at the location of the present Cabildo on Jackson Square. Suddenly, as it was about to consume the new parish church, the wind shifted to the north, and the fire shifted towards to line of undamaged colonial houses along the front of Decatur Street, consuming those in the 500, 400 and 300 blocks. In total, another 212 houses, stores and warehouses were destroyed. The monetary loss was as great as that of the first fire, though fewer houses were destroyed. Almost immediately, the Cabildo began to pass ordinances for the prevention of fires. The architecture of the city was to be profoundly affected. The relevant ordinances may be found in Appendix No. 1. All houses and their roofs were to be built in fireproof materials. Limits were placed on the construction of wooden buildings. Buildings were to be set right on the street.


N. RAMPART
CANAL
IBERVILLE
BIENVILLE
CONTI
ST. LOUIS
TOULOUSE
ST. PETER
ORLEANS
ST. ANN
DUMAINE
ST. PHILIP
BURGUNDY
GOV. NICH.
BARRACK
ESPLANADE
URSULINE
DAUPHINE
BOURBON
ROYAL
CHARTRES
DECATUR
N. PETERS
CLAY
N. FRONT
WELLS
JACKSON SQUARE
MISSISSIPPI RIVER
Approximate location of
the two great New Orleans fires:
1788
1794

## The Origins of the Linear Cottage in New Orleans.

**The Surveys of New Orleans, 1795 - 1820.** There is no evidence that shotgun style houses existed in New Orleans until after the second great fire of 1794. A few houses were turned with their narrow ends towards the street, for example the "House of the Engineer" at what is today 419 Decatur Street.[54] The Spanish administrators did not produce detailed survey maps of New Orleans in the same way that had been done under the French. They only appointed official surveyors late in the Colonial period. Carlos Trudeau was appointed Surveyor General of the colony about 1785. Another prominent map maker was Vincente Pintado, a cartographer and military engineer, who was born in the Canary Islands. He was posted to Louisiana in 1793, and became the Assistant Surveyor in Spanish Louisiana in 1796. Both Spanish surveyors resigned their positions in 1805. In that year, Trudeau and Pintado divided the Spanish colonial inventory of maps, plats and documents pertaining to land measurements in Louisiana and West Florida. Pintado's portion of the collection eventually went to the Division of Manuscripts at the Library of Congress. Trudeau's portion of the collection remained in private hands until it was recovered by the State of Louisiana. Through a purchase agreement, it is currently curated by the Historic New Orleans Collection.

In 1795-97, Pintado surveyed New Orleans and the surrounding lands. The resulting map was entered into official government records in 1804. It shows property lines and ownership between the city and that portion of Bayou St. John at the end of the Bayou Road. The properties are shown as they stood at the end of the Spanish colonial period. The survey became a kind of official base map for the city.[55]

It was copied and re-used with additional information inserted over the next thirty years or so. The problem with the maps produced by Trudeau and Pintado is that they did not include indications of architecture.

An even more important surveyor of this period was Barthelemy Lafon. Lafon was a kind of universal man – a genius and man of many talents. These included architecture, engineering, geography, surveying, cartography, and land speculation. Lafon arrived in New Orleans as a young man, probably in 1784 (some say 1787). He began work on public projects such as levee repair and replacement of houses lost in the 1794 fire. Immediately following the Louisiana Purchase In 1804, Lafon was appointed Deputy

Surveyor for the Southern District of the Louisiana Territory. In this capacity, he conducted numerous land surveys both within and outside of New Orleans. As Lafon was an architect, he made sure to record the location and nature of the buildings set upon the lots and plantations which he surveyed. He also recorded the dimensions and owners of the lands and those of adjacent properties. Lafon amassed a collection of many hundreds of detailed property surveys between 1804, and 1808. Others were added or resurveyed later. After he retired from the survey business, his personal collection of surveys was organized and placed into three bound volumes. These appear to have become the property of the Perfect Union Masonic Lodge, at the time of his death in 1820. It appears that when that Lodge closed, its archives were transferred to that of the Grand Masonic Lodge of Louisiana, which was located in New Orleans at the time. Later, in the early twentieth century, the archive of the Grand Lodge was, in part, distributed or given away. Two of the volumes of surveys ended in private hands. They were eventually acquired separately by the Historic New Orleans Collection. Although these volumes are numbered No 1, and No. 2, they are, in fact the second part of Lafon's surveys, dating from 1806 through 1808. The earliest volume, dating from January 1804 through 1806 is titled No. 3. It contains about 230 pages of surveys and index material, and is still in possession of the Grand Masonic Lodge of Louisiana, which is today located in Alexandria, Louisiana. The Grand Lodge has kindly permitted us access to the material, which has never before been published or used as documentation for the study of the historic cultural landscapes of New Orleans at the time of the Louisiana Purchase. This document provides the very best look at New Orleans and its architecture at the beginning of the Territorial Period.

Lafon's surveys of the French Quarter and its surroundings reveal that the history of the Linear Cottage in New Orleans is more complex than previously described. For example, the layout of buildings on lots often does not seem to conform to the ordinances of the Spanish Cabildo. In addition, there are building types indicated which are not even described in the documents of the time. It is clear, however, that predecessors of the shotgun house are in existence by 1804. There are at least three different building types which are relevant to our story:

**1. Creole Cottages, rotated**. On Oct. 9, 1795, the Spanish Cabildo passed an ordinance dealing with wooden houses in the Quarter. Houses made of wood were forbidden along the streets, but small houses of wood could be built in the rear of domestic lots. The regulation reads as follows:

> 1796/01/01. In order to prevent fires in the future, equaling those which have occurred in the past, and in an effort to beautify the city by the erection of future buildings; not to include persons of small means who might erect houses at a small cost… that from now on, the construction of wooden houses fronting on the street be prohibited, and all those to be constructed on the street, must be of brick or timber frame, which must be covered with a stucco or lime coating at least one inch thick, and the roofs to be of tile, or of square brick, or any other fire-proof material. And those who lack means, to build in the rear of their lots, one story wooden houses, with the expressed understanding that their homes will not be more than 30 feet [wide] in front by 25 feet deep to include the porches…

This regulation, and the one of the previous October 9, would appear to outlaw most buildings of the shotgun type. Buildings were required to have their long facades facing the street. Only people with lots less than a half a standard 60 foot lot could rotate the house so that only a single room faced on the street. However, as the Lafon surveys of 1804 reveal, many houses in New Orleans had been set back from the banquette (sidewalks) and many larger cottages had been rotated with their narrow ends converted into the principal façade and opening towards the street. These were not only converted dependencies, but also complete residences, occasionally the only structures on the lot. We must remember that in 1804, no house surveyed was more than ten years old – all had been built under the new fire-prevention ordinances.

The survey of the Adelaide and Felicité Caselard lots in the 800 block of Dauphine Street illustrates these points. In one side of Vieux Carré, square 86, we find five separate structures with their narrow ends turned towards the street (Fig. 3.4). The two houses on the Caselard lots are the only structures indicated on the lots, so they are surely residences. Since the twin lots are each 31 French feet wide, (about 32’ 8” wide in English measure), they constrain the orientation of houses which are thirty feet deep and fifteen and twenty-two feet wide – their narrow ends towards the street. The uptown house (left side) is wide enough to

contain a side gallery or cabinet-gallery range of rooms. Neither of these structures has the configuration of an early shotgun house. They are, rather, typical New Orleans Creole houses which have been turned sideways on their lots to provide more space. If they had remained with their long sides towards the street, as the building codes required, they would have extended from one property line to the other, leaving no room for passage to the rear of the lot.

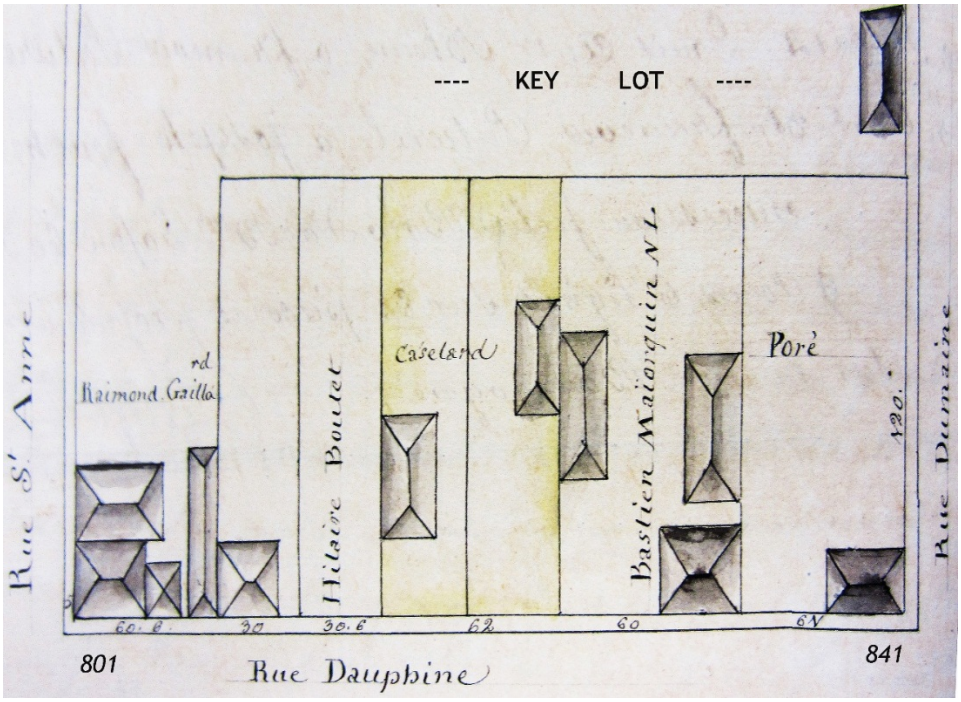



**Fig. 3.4. A survey on Sept. 14, 1804, of the Adelaide and Felicité Caselard lots in the 800 block of Dauphine Street. Barthelemy Lafon Survey Book No. 3, 1804, pp. 45-50, courtesy the Grand Masonic Lodge, Alexandria, LA. The long, slender shotgun-like structure on the corner lot of Mr. Raimond Gaillard is probably a service structure. The notation following the name of Bastien Mayorquin (N.L.) indicates, "Negre Libre," or Free Man of Color. Note that the single undeveloped lot is owned by Mr. Hilaire Boutet (Boutté), the famous architect who was active in New Orleans at this time. JDE Photo DSC-7898.**

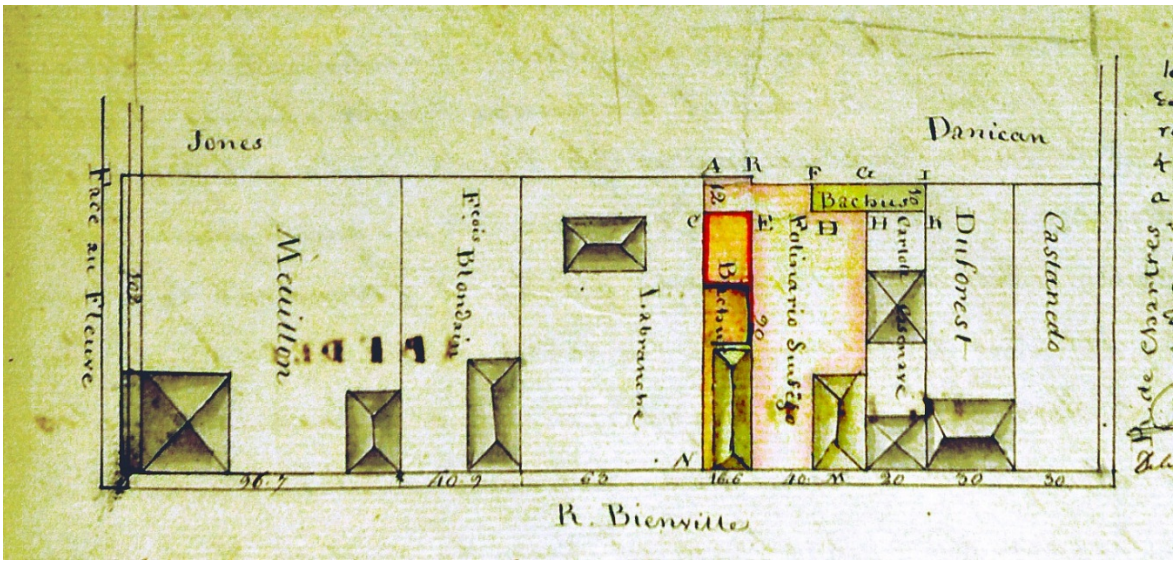



**Fig. 3.5. Survey of the downtown side of Vieux Carré, Square 30, the 500 block of Bienville. This survey is a 1718 update of an original Lafon survey of 28th of September, 1804. It shows the property of Palinario Sinfuego, between the house of Bachus, a free black residing in a linear cottage to the left, and Charlotte Casenare, a *quarterone libre* (Free Octaroon), living on the right side. JDE Photo, DSC_7732, courtesy the Grand Masonic Lodge of Alexandria, LA.**

In the 500 block of Bienville Street, we see four cottages with their narrow ends opening on the banquette, or sidewalk of Bienville Street (Fig. 3.5). Three of the cottages, including that of Mr. Sinfuego, are typical New Orleans Creole houses rotated 90 degrees. The fourth house appears to be a genuine near Linear Cottage (shotgun house) three rooms deep. This is the cottage of Bachus, a free man of color. The Creole cottages are sufficiently wide that they could have three bays opening on the street, while Mr. Bachus's house of about 14.5 feet in width would normally have two bays. His house has all of the appearance of having Saint-Domingue ancestry.

**Appentis Cottages, readapted.** At the end of the Spanish Colonial period, a new and curious form of abode appears in the streets of New Orleans. This is the *appentis* cottage, or shed-roofed linear cottage. Appentis are documented prior to the Louisiana Purchase in 1803. The cottage at 631 Bourbon Street is an excellent surviving example dating from 1801. It is built with early French construction techniques. The walls are *briquette-entre-poteaux.* Its "Norman" roof truss exposed to view from the interior [Fig.3.6].



**Fig. 3.6. The François Languille *appentis* cottage, 1801, at 631 Bourbon Street. JDE Photo 2014.**

The term *appentis* refers to a shed roof in French. In colonial times, shed-roofed buildings were often used as service structures set in courtyards behind the main house. They served as storage "*magazins*," as stables, as detached kitchens, as quarters for enslaved servants, and as bedroom *garçonnières* for the teenage men of the family. Their roofs consisted of a single shed with its high side abutted against the brick party wall, and the lower side covering the wall facing the courtyard (Fig. 3.7). The doors of *appentis* buildings opened from the long side directly onto the courtyard. Following the Louisiana Purchase, their roofs were generally hipped, with their (half) hip sheds facing the front and the rear. Curiously, in New Orleans, such "half" buildings were often built as free-standing houses, without the mirror image structure or any other structure being present or even anticipated on the opposite side of the party wall [Figs. 3.9 – 3.10]. Many survive.



**Fig. 3.7. Twin two-story mirror image back-to-back *appentis* dependencies at the Hermann-Grima house, 800 block of St. Louis Street. JDE Photo, 2014. Curiously, this arrangement is rarely seen in New Orleans.**



**Fig. 3.8. The cottages at 1118 Burgundy Street. Here an *appentis* cottage is set against the side wall of a Creole cottage. Vieux Carré Survey photo, ca. 1937. This is a more typical arrangement for the *appentis* cottage in New Orleans. Note that the Creole cottages of the period are substantially taller than the linear cottages.**

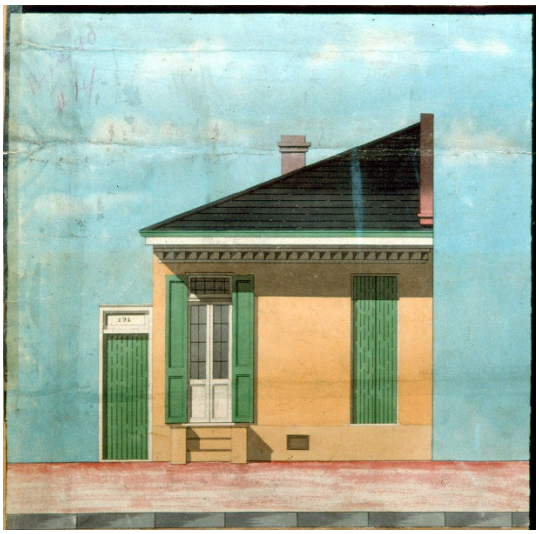


**Fig. 3.9. A free-standing *appentis* cottage in the 1300 block of St. Philip, in Tremé. The cottage Dates from 1835 to 1840. NONA 090.014.**



**Fig. 3.10. The 3-bay side-hall *appentis* cottage at 915 St. Phillip Street. The building dates from about 1820. An R. Hertzberg photo, courtesy the HNOC 1937.2.084.025.**

For some unknown reason in the 1794-1810 period, New Orleans residents began moving their courtyard *appentis* service structures up to the front of the lots, and treating them as if they were shotgun houses. They were converted from service buildings into residences. The Spanish colonial *appentis* often had gabled front walls, but very soon, these were converted into hip roofs even before the beginning of American sovereignty (Figs. 3.9, 3.10). Appentis became quite popular. Often, they were the only structures on the lot with the exception of a detached kitchen and a privy in the rear (Fig. 3.11). Front doors opened directly onto the *banquette* or sidewalk. This building type remained in vogue and continued to be built in both brick and frame through the 1840s.



**Fig. 3.11. Madame Delphine's cottage 1216 Royal Street. The *appentis c*ottage next door, at 1214 Royal, is in the fashion of Spanish Colonial times. This cottage is still entered through the courtyard, though a late 19th century photo by Mugnier shows a door opening onto the street (LSM). This image by Wm. Allen Rogers, Jan. 1887, courtesy the HNOC (1974.25.3.665).**

Appentis cottages came in many forms. They could be two bay Singles, three bay Side-Halls, or occasionally even four-bay Doubles. Appentis were often built two stories tall, and they could have galleries wrapped around them (Figs. 3.13 - 3.14). They could be free-standing (Figs. 3.9 - 3.10) or combined with other buildings, as in Fig. 3.8. In 1831, Samuel Hermann or Henry Hummerich who purchased the property that year, built two mirror-image appentis cottages with a courtyard between them (Fig. 3.15). These cottages may have been intended to house *plaçées* for wealthy white gentlemen.

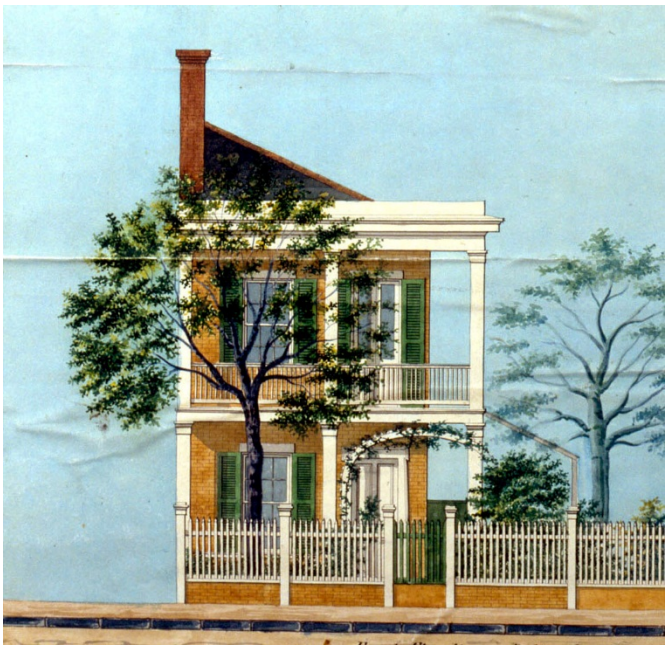


**Fig. 3.13. A two-story *appentis* Single on Euterpe Street. NONA 006.035.**




**Fig. 3.14. An illustration from Harper's Magazine that depicts 923-29 Dauphine Street. A 1-bay, two story 19th century *appentis* Duplex. Courtesy HNOC.**




**Fig. 3.15. The twin Hummerich *appentis* at 928 and 932 Governor Nicholls Street. These twin cottages were Built in 1831. This is a type of cottage popular with Free Women of Color in the Quadroon Quarter and along the Bayou Road. Painting by Boyd Cruise, 1947. Image courtesy the Louisiana State Museum.**

The curious thing about the rotated Creole cottage and the appentis cottage is that their floorplans were not familiar to people of European background. To Creoles of European background, these would have seemed uncomfortable and restricting places to raise a family. Linear floorplans were alien spatial arrangements, popular with black peasants and free people of color from the French West Indies. Why did they become so popular in New Orleans in this period? We do not know the answer to this question. It may have had something to do with the Spanish zoning regulations which permitted only very small cottages to be built with their narrow ends opening onto the banquette. It may have had to do with the fact that land values in New Orleans were increasing due to the enormous levels of immigration being experienced from both West Indians and Anglos from the Eastern seaboard. These were house types previously familiar to the local builders. It was relatively easy to readapt them to the needs of a space-hungry population of immigrants in emergencies, such as the great fires and the sudden immigration of thousands of new residents (Figs. 3.16 – 3.17). What we do know is that we see a rapid increase in the number of appentis following 1809. The survey plans of Lafon permit us to follow the rise of the *appentis* cottage in New Orleans. Compare the two following plans of the same location.

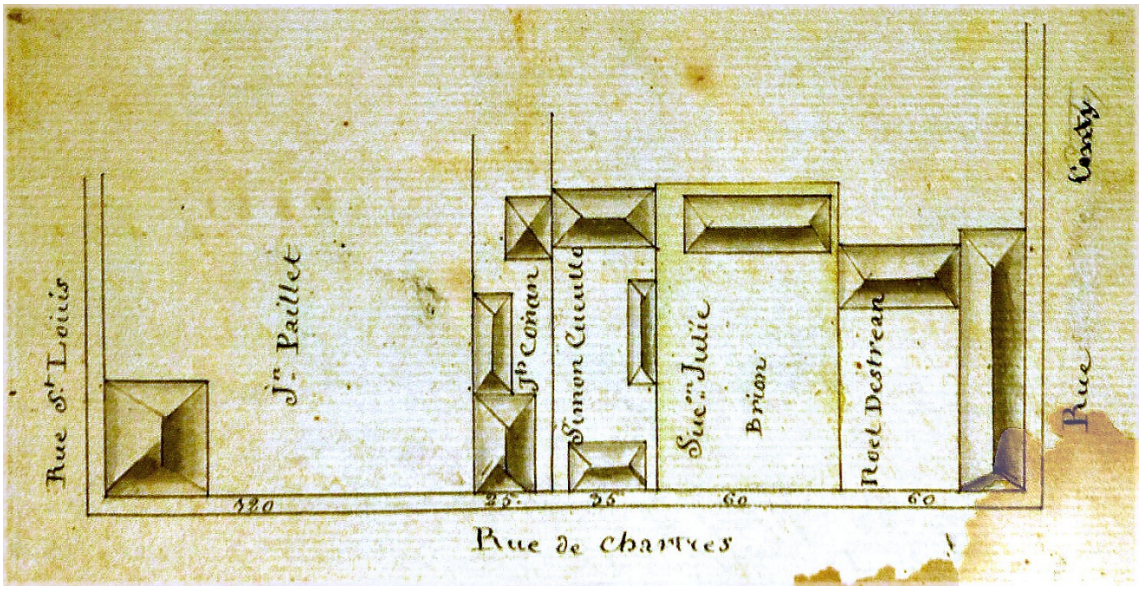



**Fig. 3.16. An 1804 Lafon survey of the 400 block of Chartres Street, Square 28, where Maspero's restaurant and the Williams Research Center are located today. JDE Image DSC_7730. Lafon P. 52, courtesy the Grand Masonic Lodge of Alexandria, LA. In this image no *appentis* cottages are present.**

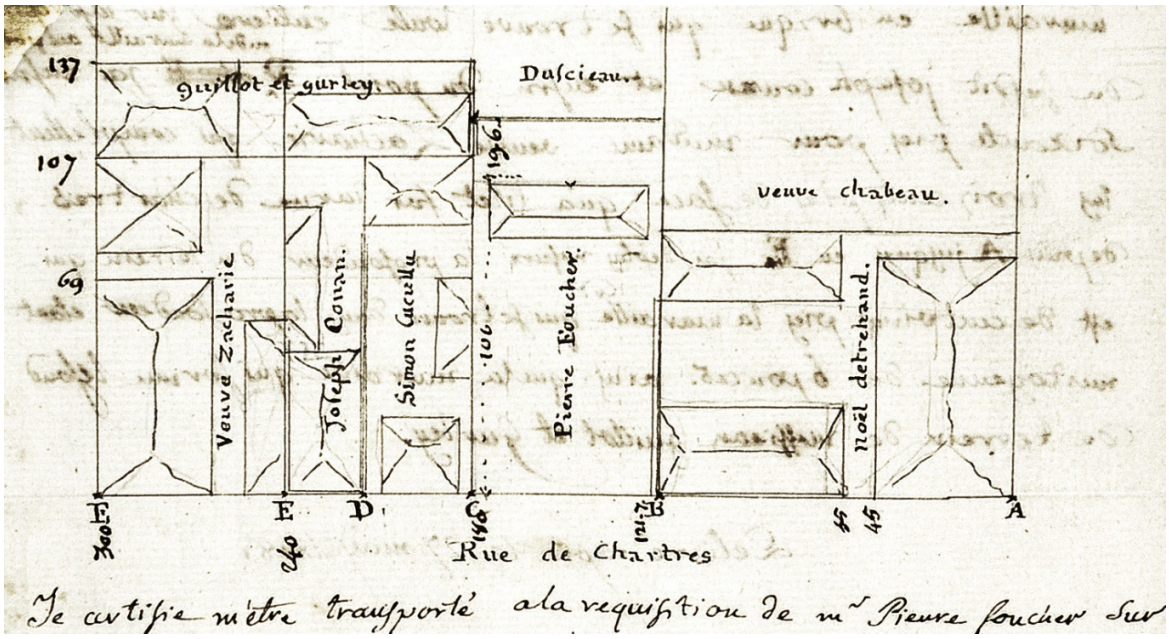



**Fig. 3.17. An 1818 Lafon Survey Bk. No. 3, p. 52. A resurvey of the 400 block of Chartres Street, Square 28. This is the same location as that seen in the above figure. It is a very busy commercial part of the city at this time. Three *appentis* buildings are now present. That of the Widow Zacharie on the corner of St. Louis Street has an *appentis c*ottage opening onto Chartres Street. While the two *appentis* belonging to Conan and Cueullo appear to function as service structures, Zacharie's seems to be a residence. Here, several large Creole style residences are set as much as 100 feet back from the street. JDE photo DSC_7732. Images courtesy the Grand Masonic Lodge, Alexandria, LA.**

**3. Introduction of the *Ti-Kay* from Saint-Domingue.** During the period of the Haitian Revolution, and particularly in the period between 1803 and 1815, temporary housing was thrown up for the thousands of refugees pouring into the city of New Orleans. Linear free-standing settlers' shacks were referred to as "*cabannes"* in New Orleans something less substantial than a frame house or one with *murs en dur* (masonry walls). In the local English, the term "shanties" was used, while the Spanish colonial word "*brigadores*" was sometimes applied to the small residences of blacks. Evidence is not abundant for this particular house-type in New Orleans

Temporary vernacular architecture was ignored as huts and hovels by most record makers. Because these were not considered permanent buildings there was little official government interest, except when houses were constructed on "borrowed" property (see below). No building contracts were drawn up and notarized, nor did surveyors even bother to record these structures. No fancy sales posters by professional artists were hung in the coffee houses, advertising property sales at public auction. Many, being cheaply and

quickly constructed, did not survive a sufficient number of decades to be recorded. In short, this was an historically invisible fringe architecture. The first accurate depiction of such a shotgun building in the U.S. known to me was drawn in 1803 on what was at that time the edge of urban New Orleans (Fig. 3.18). It bears a striking resemblance in size and form to the *ti kay* linear cottages which survive in abundance in Haiti, today.

But if official record-keepers were disinterested, who would bother to record such refugee architecture, equivalent to the FEMA trailers of their day? (We didn't record them either). Because New Orleans was expanding out of its earlier boundaries so rapidly in these years, recordation would be left to land speculators and private surveyors. It would not be unreasonable to assume that these may have been poorly educated opportunists of low record-keeping ability. No doubt some were but, luckily, others proved to be among the most well-trained and important visionaries in the history of the city. They included cartographers and land developers, some of whom would become wealthy entrepreneurs in the new American territory.



**Fig. 3.18 Detail of the commemorative painting, "Under My Wings, Every Thing Prospers." By Bouqueto de Woiseri, December, 1803. The image shows a guard house for a saw-mill (in background). The canal which powers the waterwheel of the mill is today at Elisian Fields Ave., near River Road. The house is in the form of a Haitian *ti-kay*, or "small House." Image courtesy the Historic New Orleans Collection.**



**Fig. 3.19. A *ti-kay* on the south coast of Haiti near Les Cayes. JDE photo, 1995.**

Since so few of the 1803 – 1815 *ti-kays* were recorded in New Orleans, comparative evidence such as that use by John Vlach, and that seen above, is merely anecdotal and not in itself convincing of the origins and importance of the Haitian *ti-kay* as a refugee style of house in early American New Orleans. Though it is clear that small dwellings in the two places shared the same dimensional and geometric patterns, additional evidence is essential. One useful exercise is to attempt to put ourselves in the place of New Orleans residents at the time of the 1809 influx of Saint-Domingue immigrants from Haiti. Folks in New Orleans don't have to go far to imagine what happens to a city when the housing stock is suddenly found to be inadequate – by about 50 percent! Drastic measures are called for whether the number of houses is suddenly reduced by that amount – as it was following Hurricane Katrina in September of 2005 -- or whether the population of the city is suddenly and unexpectedly multiplied by an amount almost equal to the existing population, as it was in May – September of 1809. And, recall that the Haitian immigrants were almost entirely French speaking, which meant that it was mostly in the Francophone areas of the city that the impact of the immigration fell. Whichever the problem, huge amounts of housing must be quickly found. Once all available attics and spare bedrooms have been filled, new housing must be created – and quickly. In 1809, temporary housing filled vacant lots and the open spaces around the fringes of the city. But exactly what was the nature of this housing?

Small amounts of evidence survive. There are both contemporary and later hints at the lost types of New Orleans temporary housing. Again, we turn to the work of Bartholomy Lafon and his land surveys. The architectural "indications" on his surveys permit us to differentiate between Creole cottages and linear cottages (though not in every case). The quality of the architectural indications is apparent in these sketches from the period 1806 - 1810 (Figs. 3.20 – 3.21). It is clear from these and his other surveys in and beyond the French Quarter that many smaller shotgun-like houses existed even before 1810. One example follows.

Our story begins on March 14, 1805, when Lafon assigns his assistant surveyor, Jean Bet Péne, to make a survey of the lands of one Charlotte Roux, free Negresse and sister to Espirit, a free black living in Metairie. The piece of land in question measured three arpents wide and crossed Bayou Metairie and the Metairie road not far uptown from the present location of the New Orleans Museum of Art in what is today, City Park. As was customary, Péne staked out the concession and recorded the boundaries in the presence of the adjoining neighbors. Three years later, on April 18 of 1808, Lafon is called again to survey this piece of land. Charlotte Grenoble (Roux) has died and her testamentary executor, Jean Angelini was in the process of overseeing the sale of one arpent of her property (northwest or downstream side) to Charlotte's brother, Espirit. It was clearly Charlotte's wish that a one-arpent strip be sold to Esprit, while the other two arpents on the uptown side of the original concession be sold to the highest bidder. The funds from the sale would probably be used to support Esprit's purchase of the one-arpent downtown side concession where he now lived. The two arpents section had been sold to Didillet and Peyrellade, who, in turn, had recently sold the land at (private) auction to one Valerie Boisdoré. In his survey, Lafon set the boundaries between the two thirds and the one-third sections of Charlotte's concession with cypress boundary stakes.

By the spring of 1808, the neighbors Esprit and Boisdoré both lived in small *ti-kay* type houses with their narrow ends facing the Metairie Road. Sitting athwart the new property line between their properties stood Esprit's kitchen building. Kitchens were inevitably detached -- free-standing structures in the early nineteenth century. It appears that Mr. Boisdoré had complained that Esprit's kitchen encroached upon his new property.

So, six days later, on April 24, 1808, Lafon returned to the Metairie properties to conduct yet a third survey. Now, he ignores his own boundary markers of less than one week previous and "adjusts" Boisdoré's property lines by one whole arpent so that they encompass the property of Espirit (1 arpent = 30 *toises* or about 294 feet; Fig. 3.21). In other words, Lafon disclaims the previous official survey and moves Boisdoré's concession one entire arpent in a downtown direction, thus encompassing the total size of Esprit's property. It also separated Boisdoré′s two-arpent claim from his former uptown neighbor, Aususte Savane. This, presumably, rendered the boundary dispute between the two in favor of the Boisdoré. It is not known of Esprit was now supposed to abandon his house and kitchen and move onto the remaining one-arpent uptown strip adjacent to Auguste Savane (Old New Orleans hands might be forgiven for assuming that some exchange of wealth may have occurred in the interim).[26] The houses of both are clearly smaller *ti-kay* type houses set on open long lots. That of Espirit is labeled a "cabane neuve" (new cabin) -- the somewhat larger house of Boisdoré, a "*maison*" (house).

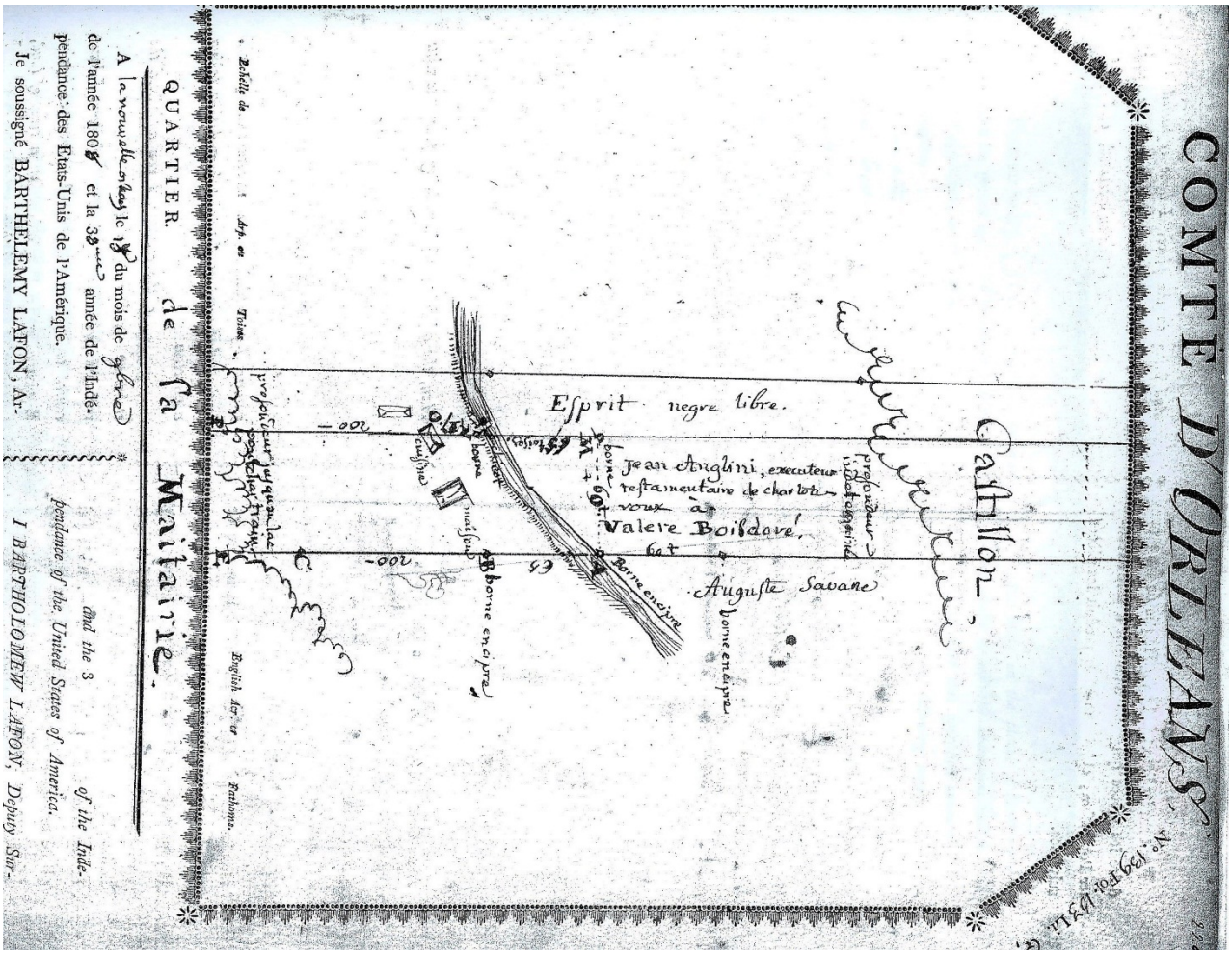



**Fig. 3.20. Lafon's April 18, 1808 survey of the Metairie Road concessions of Esprit, brother to the deceased Charlotte Roux, and Valere Boisdoré, a new land owner. In this orientation of the official survey, north is to the left, and downtown orientation is towards the top. Borne refers to a boundary stake. The title, "Comté d'Orleans" refers to the "County of Orleans." After 1803, Louisiana was divided into counties during the Territorial Period. Esprit's *ti-kay* type house is towards the top, in the narrow section. His section is one arpent wide, which equals 30 *toise* or about 191.835 English Feet. His kitchen building sits athwart the boundary between the two properties. Image courtesy the Historic New Orleans Collection, Lafon Survey Book No. 2. MSS 408, Nos 92-51L.**

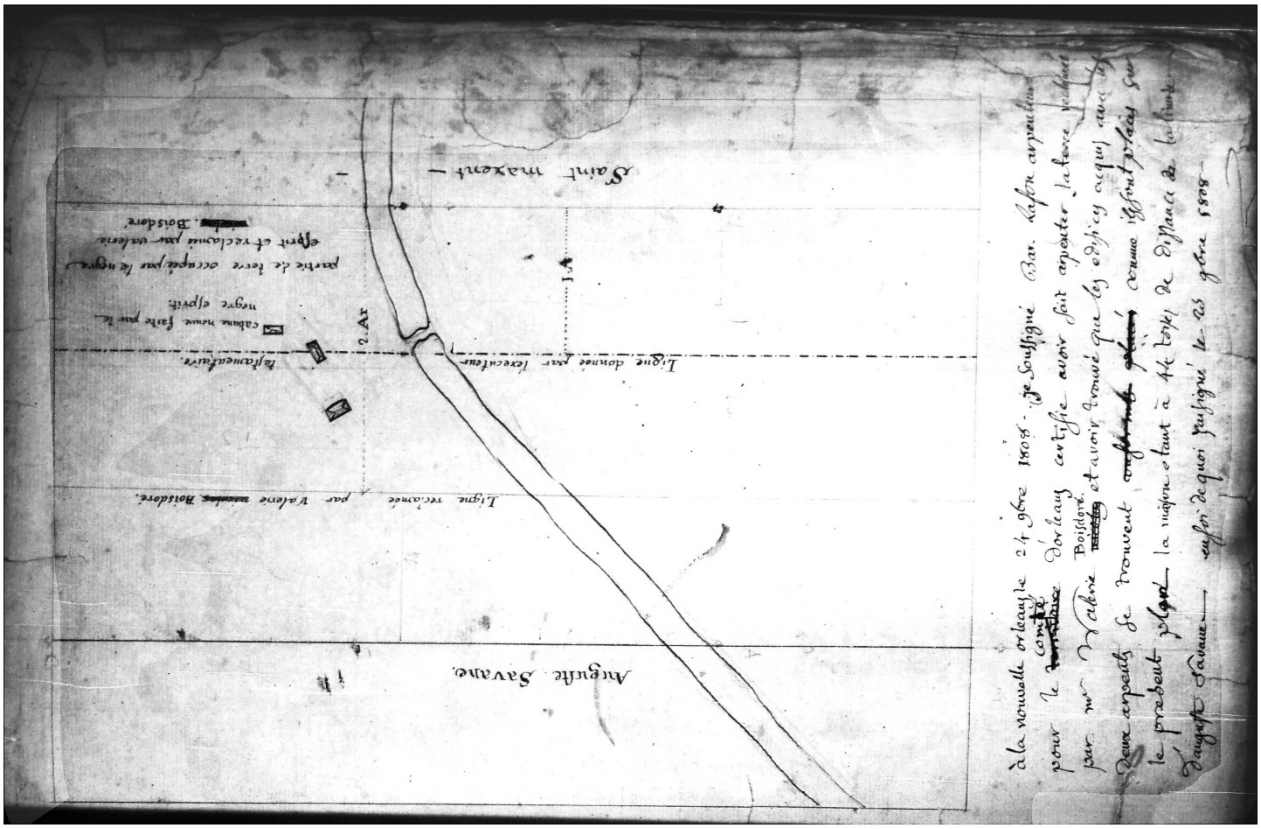


**Fig. 3.21. Lafon's April 24, 1808 survey of the Charlotte Roux concession. In this, apparently unofficial survey Lafon moves Boisdoré's property one full arpent toward the downtown side of the original 3 arpent concession. It now encompasses all of Esprit's property, including his house and kitchen. The two *ti-kay* type houses and the kitchen are reproduced, as in the previous survey. This survey was meant to be read from the downtown side, reversing the view of the previous survey. Image courtesy the Historic New Orleans Collection, Lafon Survey Book No. 2. pp. 220-222.**

Yet more evidence of small *ti-kay* type "shanties," may be found in the first detailed housing maps of New Orleans. These are the 1876 Sanborn Fire Insurance Company maps. They provide a great deal of information on the architecture of the decades, beginning in 1875. In several places in the French Quarter and in Faubourg Marigny, small shotgun houses are identified as "Old Shanties." The English word "shanty" probably entered American slang in New Orleans. In French, the term *chantier* refers specifically to a temporary abode which is constructed to provide shelter for a limited time, usually part of a working season. Charcoal burners' hurts in the woods are, for example, designated by this term. It appears that it was also used for the *ti-kay* type of temporary shotgun houses which were thrown up quickly in 1809, and probably during the Battle of New Orleans in 1815, in the War of 1812 (Figs. 3.22, 3.23).

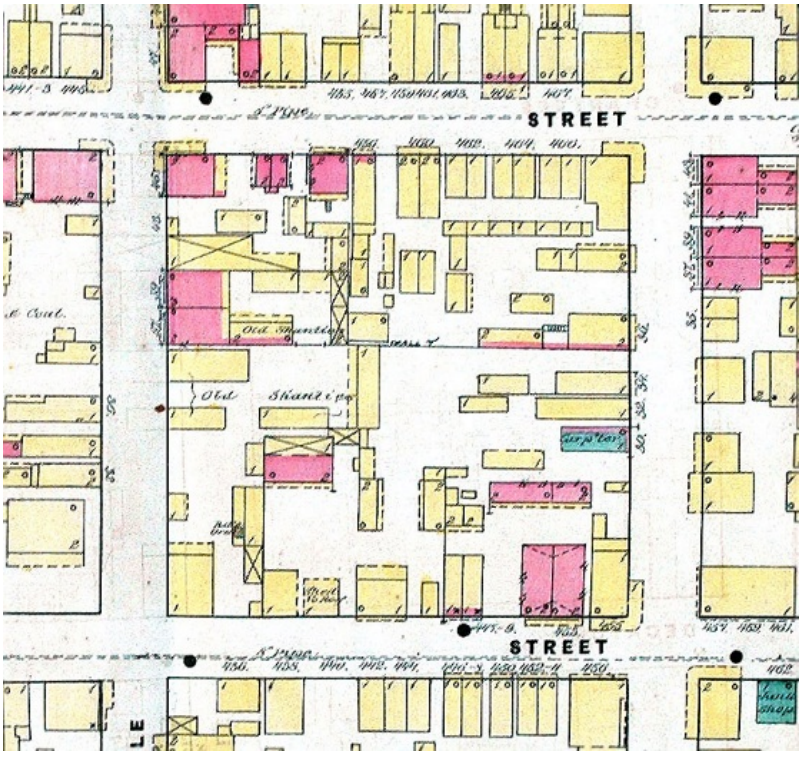



**Fig. 3.22. A Sanborn map of the square in Marigny bounded by Mandeville, Spain, Chartres and Decatur Streets, 1876. Note three structures labeled "old shanties." Map image courtesy the Southeastern Architectural Archive, Tulane University.**

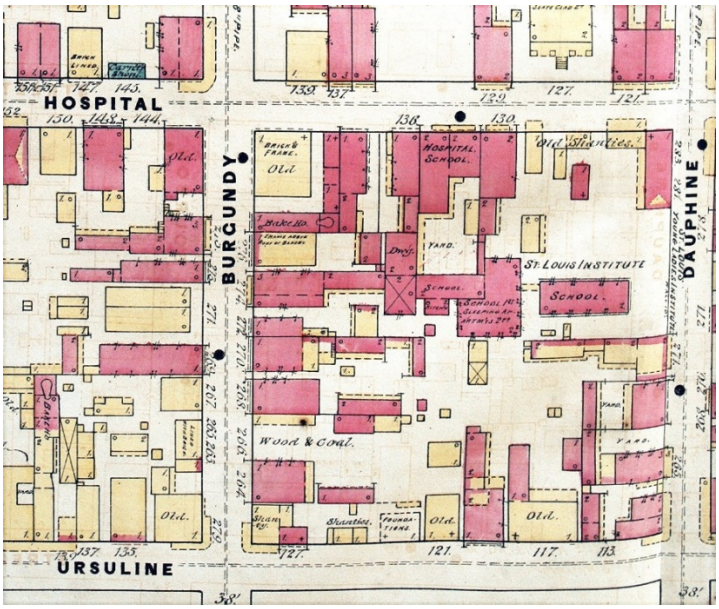



**Fig. 3.23. An 1876 Sanborn map of Square 106 in the French Quarter. "Old Shanties on Governor Nicholls (Hospital) Street are labeled in the properties Of the St. Louis Institute.**

If these temporary structures survived from the immigration of 1809, they had lasted seventy-five years – far beyond their expected life expectancy or the intent of their builders. Their dimensions and proportions are precisely what we would expect to find when looking for *ti-kay* temporary houses from that period. They are constructed in wood frame, rather than in brick. No specific mention or description of this house type appears to survive in the legal records of the parish.

**The importance of the early Linear Cottages.** The principal feature which the rotated Creole Cottage, the Appentis Cottage, and the Ti-Kay shared, was their linear floor plans. One entered the house through the principal reception room and moved progressively through every room towards the last room, where one might exit into a rear patio or garden area. Attached rear kitchens were unknown as yet. Such a floorplan placed many new restrictions on domestic life, not experienced by people coming from a background of Euro-American vernacular architecture. None of the three kinds of proto-linear cottages survived for very long. After 1820, one seldom sees a rotated Creole Cottage. The *appentis* cottages had a longer run. They were still being built around 1840, and quite a few are in existence today. No *ti-kay* survived the nineteenth century, or even 1885. Yet, together, the proto-linear cottages played a significant role in the development trends of the vernacular architecture of New Orleans. They had the effect of teaching Euro-Americans how to live in a one-room wide house with a linear floorplan. They initiated a kind of popular revolution which was to have profound implications for the future. After the War of 1812, no long-time resident of New Orleans would consider a linear cottage so alien that could not claim its rightful place in the natural compendium of New Orleans architectural types. Though still considered “funny,” or “strange,” by visitors to the city into the 1830s, the linear cottage had staked its claim on New Orleans -- a rightful place that would not be given up, even after Hurricane Katrina. However, after 1815, it would be left to new generations of linear cottages to fill the residential needs of tens of thousands of home-owners to follow.

**The Landlady Effect. New Linear Cottages of the 1815 – 1835 period.**

**Linear Maisonettes:** Beginning soon after the Battle of New Orleans, if not before, new forms of Linear Cottage began to appear. These are not shoddy or temporary structures, but rather well built houses in the form of the *maison longue* of Saint-Domingue. Their walls were *en-dur* -- in brick or brick between posts -- and their roofs were framed with trusses and covered with slates or pamtiles in many cases. Their frames were mortised and pegged in the style called *bonne charpente* or "fine carpentry" in Normandy. These linear cottages are sometimes referred to as *maisonettes* by local architectural historians, though that term can refer to any small house. Most interesting is the style in which they are decorated. Their roofs are always hipped. They have an *abat vent* or roof extension out over the banquette. These can be seen on the "old shanties" in Fig. 3.23. These *maisons longues* nearly always have double front doors opening onto the street if they are Singles. They were also built in 3-bay Side-Hall and even 4-bay Double forms. A popular decorative feature was the *platibanda* or façade banding. This feature was generally coupled with a decorative frieze molding called a cymantia, or a *corniche* in French (Figs. 3.24 – 2-28). The platibanda quickly became a symbol of Creole identity in those areas of New Orleans settled by French Creoles and by Saint-Domingue refugees. The form probably derives most specifically from the vernacular architecture of Cap François, as reinforced by the vernacular architecture of Cuba. Basically, the *maison longue* is a single shotgun house. However, in the post War of 1812 period, it had begun to take on new functions. This was a period when thousands of unattached English-speaking males were arriving in Louisiana yearly. They swarmed the city looking to make their fortunes in the cotton and sugar brokerage businesses, and other professions. In response, local free women of color began to turn their linear *maisonettes* into rental forms. This occurred in several stages, which can be seen the organization of specific surviving historic houses.

**The Michel Fortier Cottage, 819 Burgundy Street, 1827.** Michel Fortier built his cottage on Burgundy Street in the fashion of the day. It is a typical *maisonette*, three main rooms deep with a double cabinet range at the rear. The house had all of the features described above.



**Fig. 3.24a. A 1930s photo of the Michel Fortier linear cottage at 819 Burgundy Street. The cottage was built about 1827. Image courtesy the New Orleans Vieux Carré Commission.**

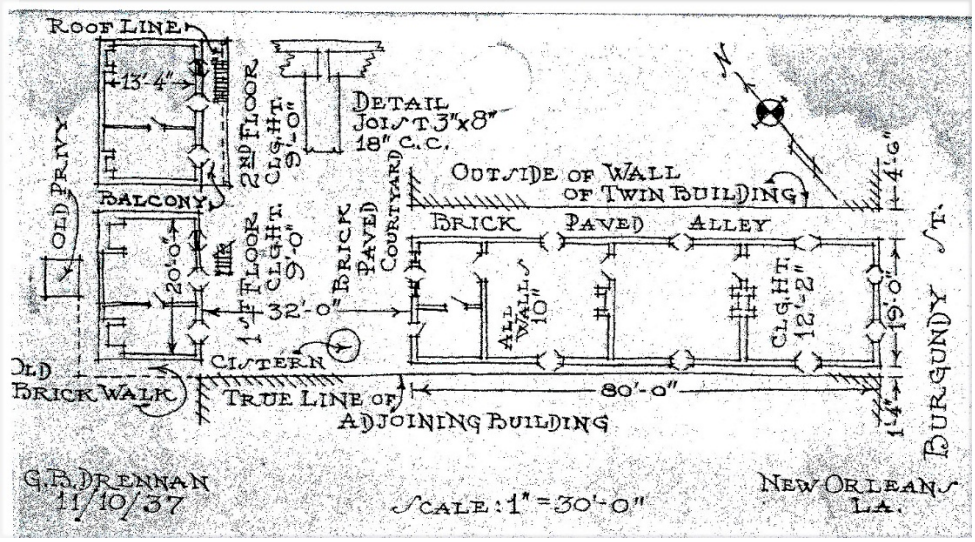



**Fig. 3.24b. A HABS survey sketch of the Michel Fortier cottage, drawn in 1937. The house had A two story brick kitchen building behind, with accommodation for the enslaved cook or for Room renters, above. Sketch courtesy the Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress.**

**The Helen Lepage Linear Cottage, 1024 Governor Nicholls Street. 1823.** Helen Lepage was a free woman of color (f.c.l.). She purchased a lot of ground from the Haitian immigrant builder Pierre Roup (h.c.l.) in 1823. Roup constructed a five-room linear cottage for Lepage on her lot. This beautifully

renovated house is, to my knowledge, the oldest standing example of a linear cottage of the type which used to be known as a *maison longue* in Saint-Domingue and in New Orleans.



**Fig. 3.25a. Street view, photograph by Richard Koch, courtesy the N.O. Vieux Carré Commission. Reference: Felix de Armas (N.P.), March 17, 1836. NONA 104:35. The floor the maisonette is raised about a foot above grade and is ventelated with oval *soupiraux* or "sighers."**

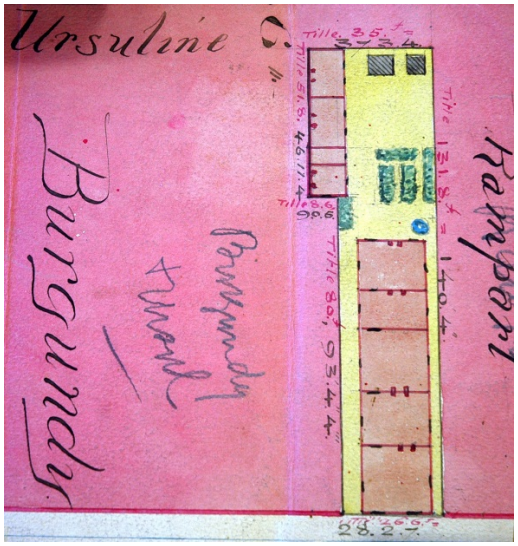



**Fig. 3.25b. Plan of the Helen Lepage house ca. 1891. Guy Seghers office records, courtesy of SEAA, Tulane University, Box 19, Folder 2, Square 106.**

This form of linear cottage is strongly influenced by the urban form of the *ti kay* or small house of the urban areas of central and southern Saint-Domingue (Haiti). Like them, it has paired front doors. The façade is decorated by a *platibanda* capped by a cymantia (*corniche*), topped with a broad *abat vent*. This popular vernacular tropical Neoclassical design is typical of New Orleans between ca. 1815 and 1830. It was a strong symbol of French Creole identity in that period.

The plan is strictly linear. The front roof is hipped. The construction was of brick, with a timber frame roof support system. The original rear wall of the house had a double brick arch facing the patio in the pattern of the colonial houses of Santo Domingo City, and later Saint-Domingue.



**Fig. 3.25c Rear brick arch openings which originally opened onto the rear patio. JDE Photo, 2/16.**



**Fig. 3.25d. Roof support system. Collar beams stiffen rafter pairs. There is no roof ridge.**

In 1808, Pierre Roup had purchased a 30 foot by 120 foot lot at 1020-22 Governor Nicholls Street. It was in the position of a key lot in Square 106. He built what appears from the survey (see below) to be a hip-roofed double shotgun style house. Lakeside of his *terrain*, Charles Jumonville de Villiers owned a quarter lot at the corner of Gov. Nicholls and Rampart Streets. This he sold off in sections. One 70 foot wide portion of the Jumonville Villiers lot had a *maison principale* set back 110 feet from the street. The house was built of "*colombage* with two chimneys and a *galerie*." It measured about 20 feet in depth by about 44 feet, or three rooms in width, with the gallery spanning the entire front façade. Nearby, there was also an *appentis*-roofed shed almost 100 feet in length by about 8 feet in width. It backed up against the Roup property line.[56]. It was probably in 1816 that Pierre Roup arranged to purchase the 70 foot wide lot adjoining his own from Charles Jumonville de Villiers. In 1823 Jumonville sold a portion of this lot, 35 feet wide, to Helen Lepage and to Pierre Roup, who held a mortgage on the property. Roup razed the existing structures and constructed the present linear cottage in 1823.

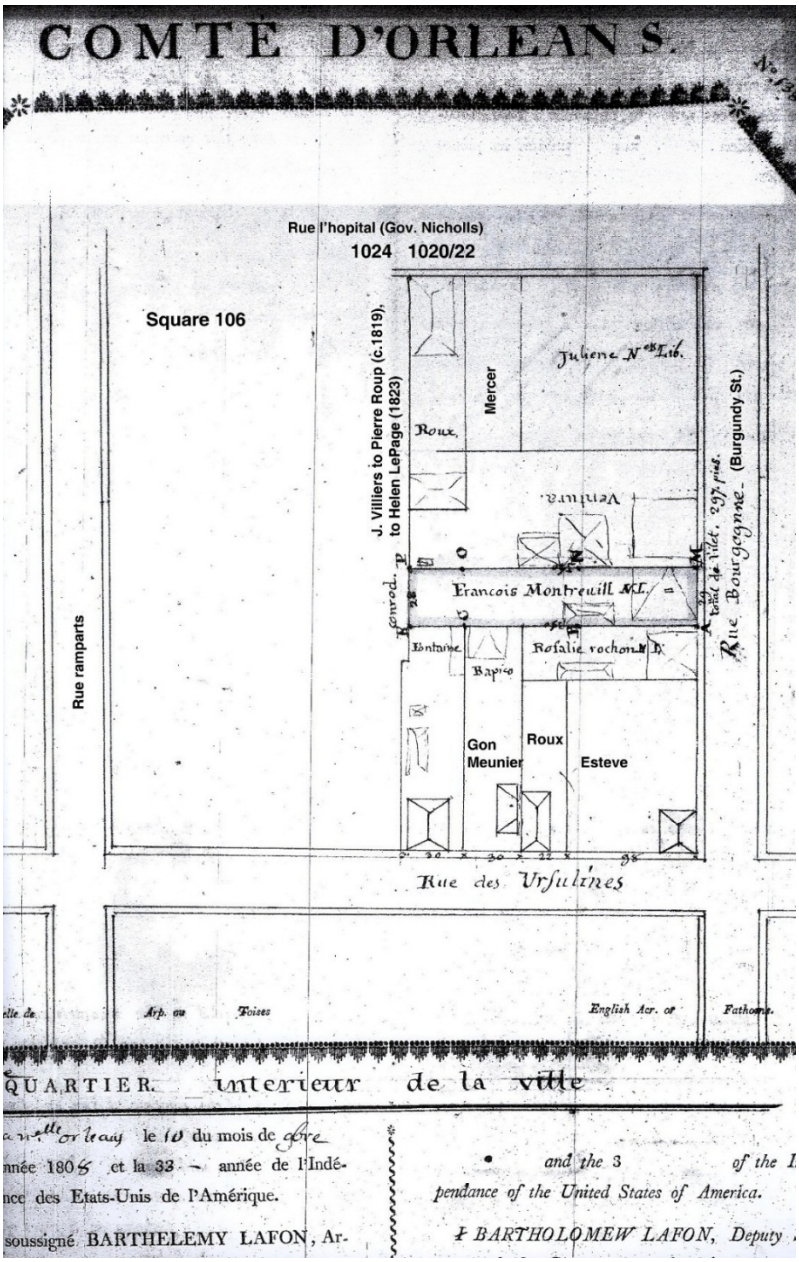



**Fig. 3.25e. A survey of the riverside of Square 106, bounded by Gov. Nicholls, Burgundy and Ursulines Streets, drafted by Barthelemy Lafon, April 10, 1808, courtesy of the HNOC. The future position of the Helen Le Page property is indicated by an added note. The survey title reads "County of Orleans."**

One unusual aspect of the sale by Roup to Lepage is the fact that Roup, whose lot adjoined that of Lepage, cut a 9 foot wide section from the rear of his own property to expand her lot. Why was this done? The period of 1815 through 1840 was one in which free women of color, who were property owners, specialized in room rental to foreign white men who were poring into the city to make their fortunes. Helen Lepage's lot was only 35 feet in width on the street. She wished to construct detached rear brick kitchen

building “with four rooms...” including rental accommodations. Roup built the *appentis* shed structure, providing Lepage with two rental apartments in addition to the kitchen and sleeping room for her enslaved cook. Access to the rear patio area with its rental rooms was via a renter’s door and narrow passageway along the left side of the house, as viewed from the street. Although the original kitchen building has been replaced by a two-story structure, the original footprint is much the same as seen in Fig. 3.25b. When the current owners renovated this house, they closed the two front doors. Now, the renter’s passage provides access to the interior rooms of this most historic New Orleans linear cottage.

**Variations on the Linear *maisonette*.** The second decade of the nineteenth century was a period of considerable experimentation and adaptation for the linear cottage. It saw the first of the Doubles. Four-bay double wide linear cottages appear in the decade beginning in 1810 [Fig. 3.26]. In the French Quarter today, the majority of surviving early linear cottages are “doubles” -- double-wide shotgun houses -- set on lots sufficiently wide to accommodate a two-room-wide Creole house if the owner had so desired. Though shotgun-like houses are not yet dominant in the Creole faubourgs in the first decades of the nineteenth century, they are sufficiently commonplace to be recognized as a recurring type.




**Fig. 3.26. An elevation and plan of the Phillippon Cottage, ca 1810, at 1016 Dauphine Street in the French Quarter. The image was made by Pietro Gualdo, Jan 3, 1855. Courtesy NONA 044.035.**

The Phillippon cottage is a 4-bay half Creole cottage, one room deep which has had rooms added to its back. Three rectangular rooms are attached to one side of the house, leaving space for an open gallery behind the main rooms. The last of the three back rooms is a rental room. Access is by the renter's door on the left side of the façade. The renter walks down the alley way, up onto the open side gallery, and then enters his room which is not otherwise connected to the owner's portion of the house. One of the two dependencies in the rear courtyard may also be devoted to rental rooms. The cottage is estimated to have been built in the decade of the 1810s, perhaps before the regulations for fireproof roofing material were enforced.

The rise of the linear cottage in the period following 1810 becomes more fully understandable when set against the background of racial demography and the sociology of the Early Republican period in New Orleans. Under the more liberal manumission laws and protections for the rights of enslaved workers of the previous Spanish administration (1759-1803), Louisiana had developed a society with three legally defined castes or strata: free citizens (white Creoles and Europeans), free people of color (manumitted Creoles or those born of free *mulattas*), and the enslaved (a few *mulattos* but mostly Creole *negres,* and *bozales*—"salt water" slaves).

The demographic patterns of free people of color in New Orleans in the first decades of the American period are worthy of note: Among the *gens de colour libres* caste in 1820, the sex ratio was only 63.88. The sex ratios were reversed on rural plantations, but in the city there were only sixty-four males for every one hundred females of marriageable age (14 - 45 years). This remarkable imbalance meant that many free females of color would not find a mate within their class, even if they had wanted one, which many did not. Within French Creole society the institution of *plaçage*—extra-legal formalized hypergamy--arose to fill the gap. Young *quadroon* ("quarter-blooded") women were described as "highly educated externally [outside of Louisiana], and probably as beautiful and accomplished a set of women as can be found."[57] In their late teens, light-skinned free women of color were introduced and, after background research on the part of their mothers or family members, eventually contracted to well-to-do free white males. The institution was neither equivalent to marriage nor to concubinage. The men entailed

considerable financial and other formal obligation to their *placées*. Men typically provided their mates with a small house on or near *rue de Rampart* and a stipend, and they publically acknowledged the parentage of the children who bore the name of the father and received the sacraments of the Catholic Church. Many *placées* claimed family inheritance on the death of their "husband/lovers." For the white male there were several kinds of benefits. Contemporary observer Frederick Law Olmsted is quoted as saying that for many young men, the life of *plaçage* was simply "much cheaper than living at hotels and boarding houses," but he clearly underestimated the power of the attractiveness of the quadroon lady.

The upside of the arrangement was that it left many young free women of color in a better financial position than they might otherwise have been. The downside was that, for most, the arrangement was impermanent. After several years many of the white men married women of their own class and either then or later, terminated the arrangement. The result was a large number of abandoned *plaçage* divorcees who were financially comfortable and property owners. Land values were increasing almost exponentially in these decades in New Orleans. The streets of the quarter were being paved in the 1820s. Many free women of color became successful business women, specializing in rental property and rooming houses in the rapidly expanding city. "Later in life these women were renowned for their successful businesses: rooming houses accommodating white gentlemen." As historian, Gayarré described them, "those furnished rooms were models of Dutch cleanliness." They served hot coffee in the mornings and had a tub of hot water drawn on the tenant's return in the evening. "They were intent on guessing at your wants, on anticipating your wishes...." "The female quadroons may be said to have monopolized the renting, at high prices, of furnished rooms to the whites of the male sex. This they easily did, for it was difficult to equal them in attention to their tenants, and those tenants would indeed have been very hard to please if they had not been satisfied."

In the Spanish slang of New Orleans, the *plaçée* herself was known as the *casa chica* or "little house" (presumably, the white wife lived in the *casa grande* or big house). One of the most interesting of the un-researched questions about this period concerns the relationship between the free women of color and their little houses. Many lived in what was called the "Quadroon Quarter"--the northernmost sector of the Quarter, bounded roughly by Rampart Street, Esplanade Ave., St. Peter, and Bourbon streets. They commissioned both their own houses and rental properties on narrow lots in this area, and created an atmosphere in which narrow houses, including particularly the linear cottage, came to be associated with a certain excellence of lifestyle. "There are, in some streets, long blocks of one-story houses, with one or two rooms built purposely to be let out to bachelors. Indeed, there are neither hotels nor boarding-houses enough to accommodate one-tenth part of this class of male."

Was it, perhaps, this association with pampered living which was remembered by their increasingly wealthy and influential tenants in future years when shotgun houses began to be built as the primary residences of successful businessmen all over the growing city? Perhaps, a shared architectonic *jouissance* helped to turn the lowly shotgun into a favored form of New Orleans residence. It was certainly the most historically obvious mechanism by which Anglo men were introduced to the unique linear cottage of New Orleans. But who originally designed and built these houses for the quadroon landladies?

Refugee free men of color who had been carpenters, masons, plasterers and cabinet makers in Saint-Domingue, picked up their professions once again in New Orleans. Among free men of color the profession of carpenter is listed as the most common by far. Take the example of Pierre Roup, *h.c.l.* (free man of color). Roup was a builder and contractor who arrived in New Orleans in 1805. By 1808 he is listed as a property owner in the Quadroon Quarter, owning four lots [Fig. 3.25]. He appears to have been comfortable building a localized form of the *maison longue* with which he was previously familiar in Saint Domingue, and his native Gonaïves. Over the next two decades, he and his wife, Coralie Fafitte (*f.c.l.* and niece of Jean Lafitte), bought and sold properties in the Quarter, Marigny, and along the Bayou Road. Roup died in 1836 in a house almost certainly of his design--a four-room deep Single Shotgun style house

at 374 Rue d'amour (1744 N. Rampart Street in Marigny) [Fig. 3.27]. He and several of his free colored contemporaries, such as Bartholemew Bacas and Jacques Tinchant, specialized in building both Creole cottages and shotgun houses.

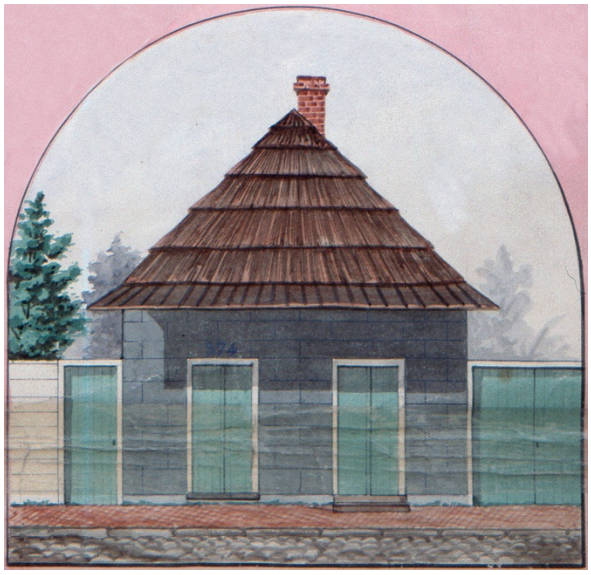


**Fig. 3.27. A 1829 Single on Rampart, built by Pierre Roup, a Haitian Free Man of Color and builder. NONA 089.024.**

Contemporary observers make special mention of the houses of the "quadroon" women: "Those pretty and peculiar houses, whole rows of which may be seen in the Ramparts," and "Those peculiar little dwellings near the Ramparts." [41] Creole cottages had been commonplace in the French Quarter since early colonial times. They were found throughout the Quarter, not confined to "the Ramparts," so observations of the 1830s about the peculiarity of the local houses almost certainly refer to the more recently popular linear cottages. Conceivably, they may also have referred to the unusual single room wide, two and three bay Creole cottages which were also fairly popular in the Ramparts area, except that other commentators refer to the new houses as "low." Creole cottages in this era are one and one-half stories tall [Fig. 3.8].

By the 1830s and 1840s, the shotgun form was becoming accepted as a basic housetype throughout the Creole faubourgs and beyond, not only among free people of color and their renters but, increasingly, among both white and black businesspeople. Many of these new linear cottages were built only two rooms deep. Each residence was served with a detached kitchen, servants' quarters and privies in the rear yard. Also during this period, the clapboard or board-and-batten cladded shotgun became increasingly popular. An example of an 1830s shotgun presumed to be prototypical is the Greek Revival style frame house at 1031 Clouet (in Bywater).

An important innovation resulting from the sizable number of rental linear cottages being built was the Side-Hall and Side-Gallery Shotgun. The evolution is clearly seen in the floorplans of linear cottages, so carefully documented by the artists of the sales affiches archived in the NONA. Whether single or double wide, they share two distinctive features. Rental rooms were always set at the rear of the main house; they are distinguished by not having direct access into the front portion of the residence where the landladies lived. Rather, the renter had to pass outside to get to and from the street. In order to further the passage of renters to their rooms, side-hall and side-gallery linear cottages provided access under a roof to the rear rental rooms [Figs. 3.28 – 3.29]. The same passageways permitted landladies to service the rooms in all kinds of weather when the renters were absent. An early approximation of the side hall and side gallery accommodation may be seen in certain early linear cottages which have extended roofs running down one side of the building only.



**Fig. 3.28 and 3.29. Images of two 3-bay side gallery Linear Cottages. These are designed to accommodate renters, whose rooms are placed at the back of the buildings. JDE image 2010, and HDLC Survey image, 2010.**

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## CHAPTER 4

## AMERICANIZATION OF THE LINEAR COTTAGE: 1835 – 1865.

### Greek Revival Architecture and its Impact on the Shotgun House in New Orleans

Beginning about the middle of the 1830s, new styles of decorative treatment began to appear on vernacular dwellings in New Orleans. By 1834 a truly remarkable transformation was underway in New Orleans vernacular architecture. The hugely popular pattern books of Asher Benjamin and Minard Lafever were being used as guides by builders across the country.[58] Architects formally trained in classical "Greek Revival" forms such as those depicted in these pattern books had begun to arrive in New Orleans. As Greek Revival fever swept over the increasingly prosperous Crescent City, those who built even humble traditional vernacular dwellings began to add elegant new forms of decoration to the facades of their otherwise commonplace cottages. Brick and wooden facades were plastered and decorated to appear like ashlar or cut stone. Dental frieze moldings began to outcrop immediately below the eaves of the roof. Doorways sometimes receded behind open vestibules in imitation of the Greek *prothyron* or domestic entrance hall. Fancy decorative treatments of doors of even small houses came to include any combination of transom lights, side-lights, Classical columns, entablatures and occasionally, pediments—all considered "Greek Revival" elements. They were, in fact, a new reworking of the Classical Revival which had been popular since the days of Thomas Jefferson.

This architectonic transformation was part of a broad humanistic revolution which brought to America a new ▪aesthetic and libertarian spirit.• The rigidities of the earlier enlightenment were being tested by a new romanticism. An increased value placed on freedom of thought, a demand for general public education, a new exuberance in American fine arts, an emphasis on professionalism, and a search for a philosophically relevant architecture swept across the nation.

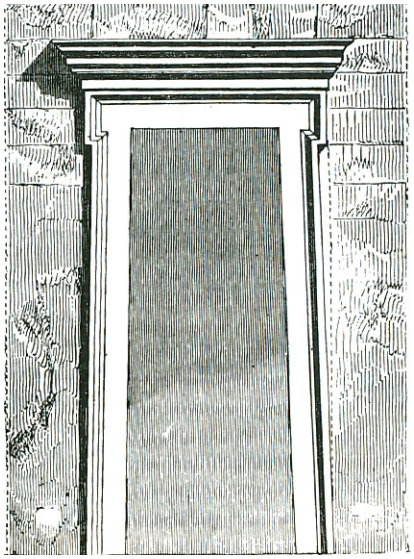


**Fig. 4.1. A Doric atticurge temple doorway, 5th century B.C. (Harris 1977:167).**

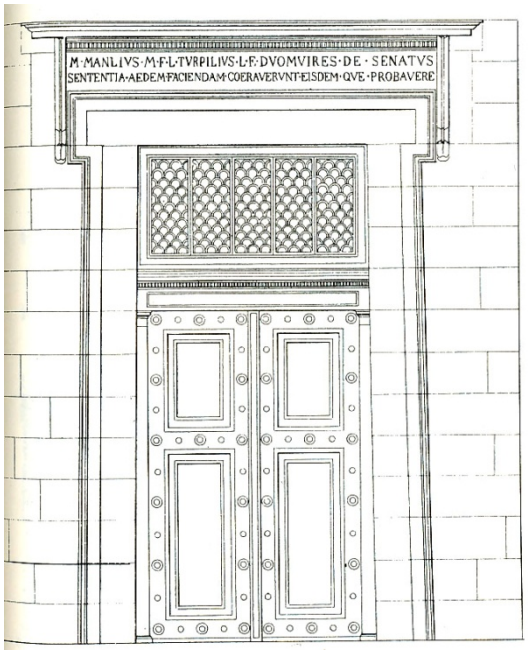



**Fig. 4.2 A Roman demi-atticurge doorway (Harris 1977:291).**

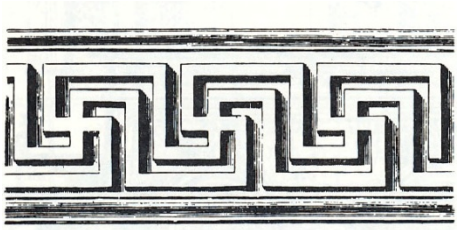


**Fig. 4.3. A Greek Key Fret design (Harris 1977).**

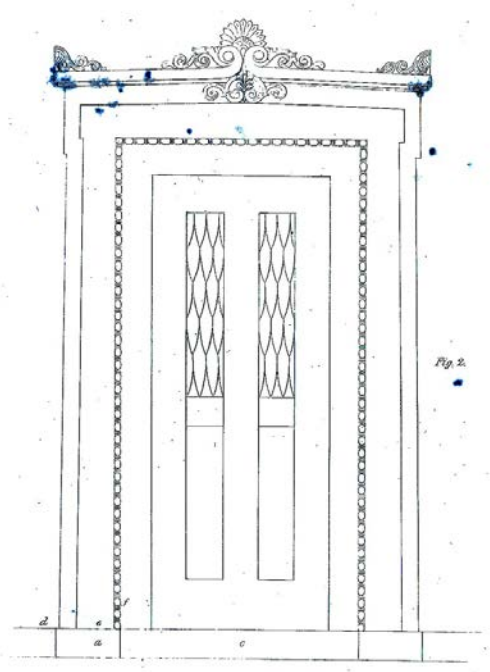


**Fig. 4.4. A modern (recessed) Front Door (Lafever 1855: Plate 1).**

In New Orleans, a distinctive form of door-surround borrowed from Classical sources was suddenly popular. It was adopted both by architects and by vernacular builders across the city, appearing in a wide variety of variants (Figs. 4.1 - 4.4). Many hundreds of cottages and town houses were decorated with these new surrounds, but there remains no accepted technical term for it. Architectural historians use the term ▪architrave• to refer to, not only the lowest of the three bands of a Classical entablature, but also to the decorative surround of a door or window.[59] The architrave surround is composed of wide, flat vertical jambs and a horizontal lintel. Surrounds in which the jambs are ▪inclined slightly inward• are

referred to as *Atticurge* surrounds, presumably reflecting an origin, or at least a recognized source, in Greek Attica, the district of Athens. In the ▪classic• Ionic Atticurge doorway, the lintel is shouldered, i.e., it extends slightly beyond the outside edges of the jambs, and they are canted slightly inward from the vertical.[60] The jambs do not taper. This produces a slightly trapezoid-shaped door opening rather than a rectangle (Fig. 4.1). It must be corrected by inserting tapered elements beside the door itself. The form is to be seen on the Doric Temple of Zeus Olympius at Agrigentum (c.460 B.C.E.), and on the door of the north porch of the Ionic Erechtheion temple on the Acropolis in Athens (421 - 406 B.C.E).

There is, however, another form of *atticurge* doorway, and it was this one that was to become most popular in the vernacular architecture of New Orleans. In a Roman-inspired version, the door jambs are tapered slightly inward on their outer edges only--the inner faces are rigidly vertical, permitting the door space itself to remain a rectangle while the faces of the jambs taper as they rise to the lintel (Fig. 4.2). This produces the overall effect of a very steeply inclined pyramid, truncated by a broad overhanging cap or "crossette." Technically, we might term this kind of frame the ▪demi-atticurge architrave, • but that would be an awful name! In the vocabulary of the building contracts of the 1830s, it is referred to as "a moulding with diminshed architraves" – also unacceptably wordy.[61]

The local New Orleans vernacular name for both kinds of shouldered door surrounds--when there is a name at all--is the misnomer: the ▪Greek Key• surround.[62] A Greek Key is, of course, a set of running fretwork patterns popularized by the Greeks in Classic times (Fig. 4.3). Because this designation became established among the architectural history community and particularly the "Friends of the Cabildo" group who were producing the New Orleans Architecture series, we shall follow their convention and refer to both the ▪demi-atticurge• and the atticurge surrounds as ▪Greek Key architraves.•



**Fig. 4.5. The Saint Charles Hotel, designed by James Gallier and Charles Dakin, 1837-1851. Image courtesy the Historic New Orleans Collection.**

Door surrounds with inward-canted jambs and crossette "ears" were fairly common in the ancient Classical world. They were used by the Etruscans, the Romans and others, as well as the Greeks. Even the stone Lion Gate at Mycenae, ca. 1250 B.C., is roughly in this form, as are the Egyptian *propylon* gateways. In Greece, tapered jambs and extended lintels appear to go back to a time when temples were constructed with structurally weak brick or rubble walls, and when heavy canted and tapered wooden door surrounds were structurally required for the support of the lintels. This was a form which better resisted lateral movements, such as might occur in earthquakes. Later, when temple walls could be constructed using heavy cut stones, the necessity for this distinctive tapered surround disappeared. The form, however, survived as a functionless icon—in art history terms, a "kenning" (simplified stylization of), sacred doorways, transposed from structural necessity into decorative symbol. In this way it

continued to mark the essential boundary between the sacred and secular worlds through the centuries. But how could such an ancient monumental form ever become popular in the domestic vernacular architecture of New Orleans?

Though the shouldered door surround was used in the Neoclassical architecture of Great Britain and other European countries in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, in the United States it appears to have been popularized by a single architect. The most successful popularizers of Greek Revival were the pattern book writers of the 1830s and 1840s. They were Asher Benjamin and Minard Lafever.[58] Their works were ▪used by designers and craftsmen the country over.• [63] Each of these architects modified the traditional Classical styles to better suit smaller American buildings. Scholars consider the products of their art to be both imaginative and sophisticated. Curiously, their creations are unique and unlike one-another. Benjamin emphasized rectangular door surrounds with corner blocks and fluted architrave jambs and lintels. He also popularized a number of transom light designs, such as those with the criss-cross pattern and others with narrow margin lights (Fig. 4.6). The latter, used for transoms and French style doors in New Orleans became so popular so quickly that it may be taken as a nearly infallible identifier of the mid 1830s-1840s decade.

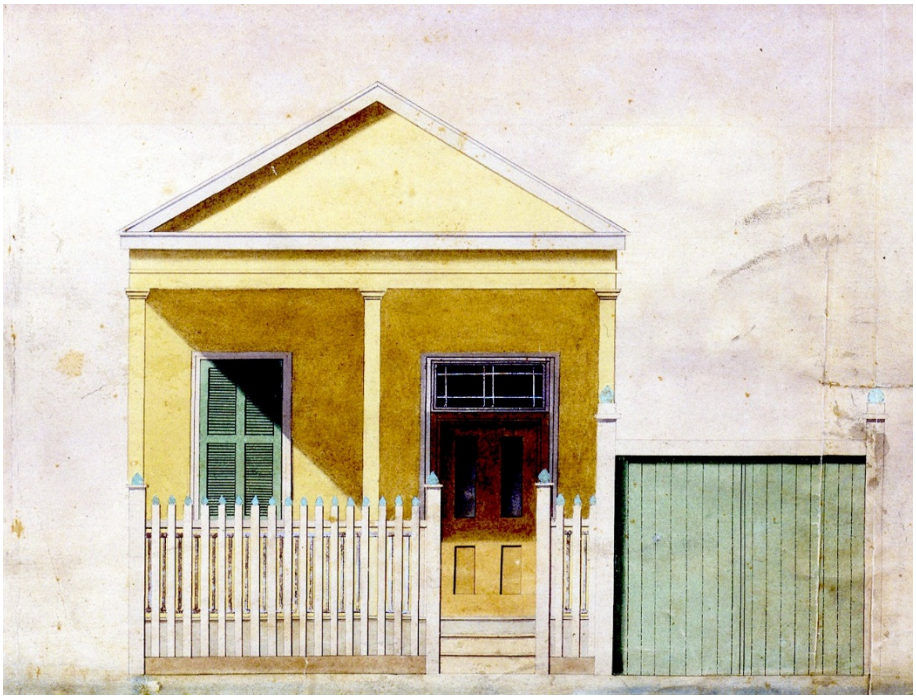


**Fig. 4.6. A pedimented Greek Revival style Single on Robertson in Tremé, Ca. 1840. NONA 019.001. Note the transom light with narrow margin lights over the door. This is a style popular in the 1830s.**

Of the two architects, though, only Lafever was interested in the crossette-capped door surround. It appears so extensively in his pattern books that Greek Revival scholar Talbot Hamlin has referred to it as the ■Lafever-type door• (1944:plate XCII). Hamlin extolled Lafever•s subtle variations on Greek Revival decorative forms. For example, the flat jambs of the large scale architrave in his ■Modern Front Door,• ■widen... from the top downward, from a width of 1 foot 11 inches at the top to 2 feet, 1▪ inches at the bottom• (Fig. 4.7).[64] That adds up to a change in width of only 2▪ inches in a two-foot wide band eleven feet tall! The length of the overhang of the "ears" precisely measures the extent of expansion of the door molding, 2½ inches wider at the foot than it is at the head. Viewed casually from the street, such subtle geometries are almost invisible, yet their combined overall effect is a series of compositions of the most carefully regimented proportions and sophistication in design.

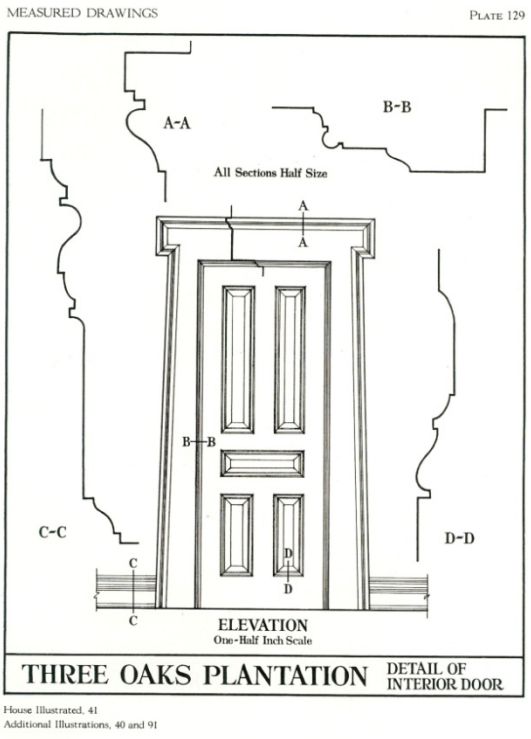



**Fig. 4.7. A measured drawing of the front door of Three Oaks Plantation, c. 1840 (Ricciuti 1938 Plate 129).**



**Fig. 4.8. A Boyd Cruise painting of the Norbert Soulié cottage. This may well be an example of a double Creole cottage turned sideways. It was built between 1929 and 1931, and its Greek Revival facade was probably added by Charles Roman about 1860. The cottage is located at 509-11 Burgundy Street. Image courtesy Louisiana State Museum, HABS EL 2007.1.260.**

The Irish born architect, James Gallier Sr. (1798-1866), was one of the quartet of skilled and creative architects who dominated the New Orleans scene between ca. 1830 and 1850. The others were the Irish born Henry Howard (1818-1884) and James Dakin (1806-1852), and the Frenchman, Jacques Nicholas Bussiere dePouilly (1804-1875). Benjamin Latrobe had been perhaps an even more talented architect, but he had died of yellow fever only two years after his arrival in New Orleans in 1818.

Early in 1832, Gallier disembarked in New York City. He soon went into business with James Dakin, a partner at that time in a prominent New York firm specializing in Neo-Classical architecture (Scully 1973). After working with Dakin for several months ■Gallier formed a partnership with the Neo-Classical architect Minard Lafever (1797 - 1854." [65] A year later in October of 1834, Gallier dissolved the

partnership and sailed for the Gulf Coast with Dakin's younger brother, Charles Bingley Dakin (1811 - 1859). Lured by rumors of fabulous opportunities in the rapidly expanding city, they arrived in New Orleans in December and set up an office on Canal Street. Owing to the paucity of trained architects in the city at that time in combination with the high levels of demand for architectural skills, they quickly obtained commissions for houses, churches and public buildings. One of their most important commissions was the magnificent, 350 room St. Charles Hotel, located just off Canal Street (1837 - 1851). When completed, it was the largest and most sumptuous hotel in the nation (Fig. 4.5).

James Dakin left New York and joined his brother in New Orleans in November of 1835. At that time Gallier left the Gallier-Dakin firm to strike out on his own. In this, Gallier prospered, eventually to be called "the greatest architect this city ever knew." He designed buildings in the French Quarter, but according to his autobiography, his special clientele seems to have been successful Irish merchants who were pouring into the city and erecting mansions in the American suburbs.

Both Gallier and Dakin had had close working relationships with Lafever and his shouldered door surrounds. Dakin had provided many of the engravings for Minard Lafever's architectural books (Fig. 4.9). Shouldered doors began appearing on new buildings in New Orleans almost immediately: in plantation houses (Fig. 4.7), in the grand houses of the Garden District (Figs. 4.9 – 4.10), and in the town houses of the French Quarter and Creole faubourgs (Fig. 4.8). The Greek Key was not limited to doors and windows. They used it extensively for fireplace surrounds and for framing mirrors and book cases. Furniture makers even borrowed it for armoires.[66]



**Fig. 4.9 The Logan House in the Garden District This is a Lefever style Greek Key door surround. The house is attributed to James Gallier (Ricciuti 1938: Plate 76).**



**Fig. 4.10. Interior door in the Forsyth House, Garden District, ca. 1848. (Ricciuti 1938 Plate 101.**

This was all the work of high-style architects--Gallier and Dakin--or of other architects imitating their work. Another interesting aspect of the Greek Key motif in New Orleans is the extent and speed with which the style spread to builders and craftsmen, both white and black, who were not formally educated. The Lafever style, for example, is prominent throughout the Sindos-Latorre-Boucvalt townhouse at 1025 St. Louis Street. It was constructed about 1840 by Sevrin Latorre (a builder) and Leon Pierre Sindos (store owner), both free men of color, in what was then being called the ▪Quadroon Quarter• of the Vieux Carré (Fig. 4.11; HABS 1993).[67] Indeed, in the 1835-1855 period it was in the two-, three- and four-bay townhouse that the Greek Key style found its greatest expression (Figs. 4.12).[68] Even more amazing is the expansion of the style by the end of the 1830s to modest kinds of vernacular houses. Small cottages and shotgun houses only two rooms deep adopted it (Figs. 4.6, 4.13 - 4.14). Many of these smaller houses were built by free people of color, for example the J.B. Bordenave house at 920 Spain St.[69]. After ca. 1840 shotgun doubles would adopt the style as well (Fig. 4.8, 4.15).[70]

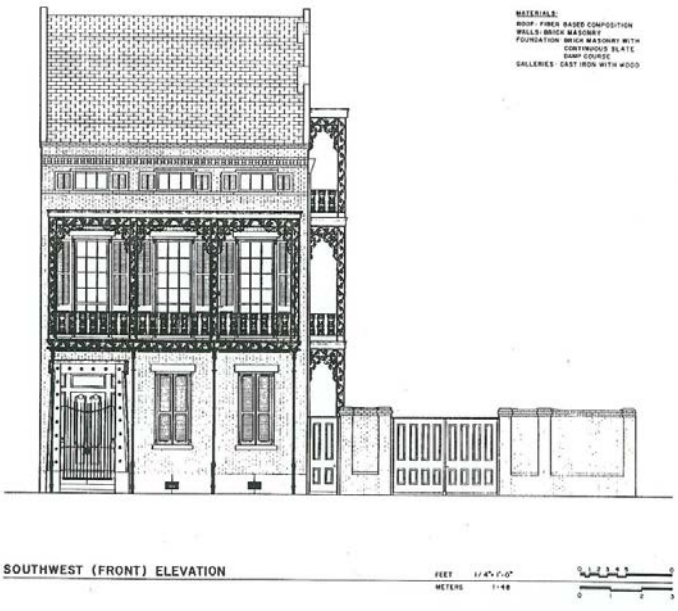



**Fig. 4. 11. Street elevation of the Sindos-Latorre-Boucvalt House, 1025 St. Louis Street, ca. 1840. HABS 1993.**

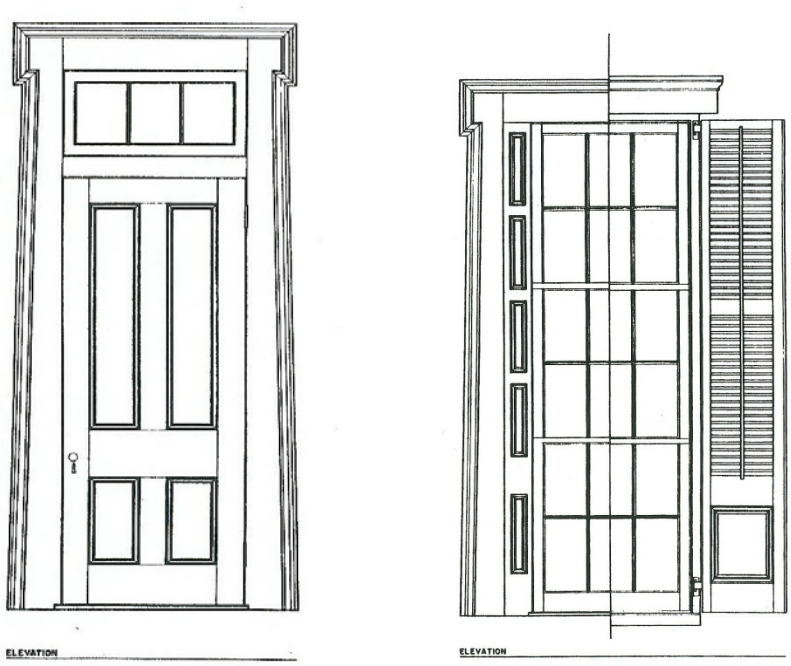



**Fig. 4.12. Door and window treatment from the Sindos-Latorre-Boucvalt House. HABS 1993.**



**Fig. 4.13. A small linear cottage. HABS 002.008.**




**Fig. 4.14. The Baure House, 1426 Burgundy in Marigny the 3-bay Linear Cottage has a recessed door, typical of Greek Revival styling. JDE Photo 2007.**



**Fig. 4.15. A Double with Greek Revival/Italianate façade, 1200 block of Harmony, ca. 1865. JDE photo 2010.**

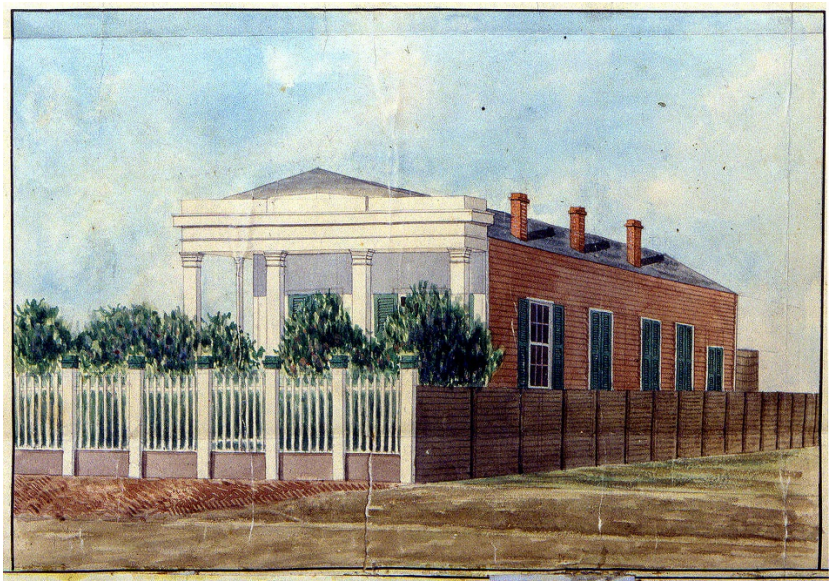


**Fig. 4.16. A Greek Revival Double in the 2100 block of Gov. Nicholls, ca. 1850. NONA 044.083.**

Greek Revival styling also became particularly popular on the Duplex style of linear cottage. These are two-story tall shotgun houses, either 2 or 3 bays in width (Figs. 4.16 – 4.17).

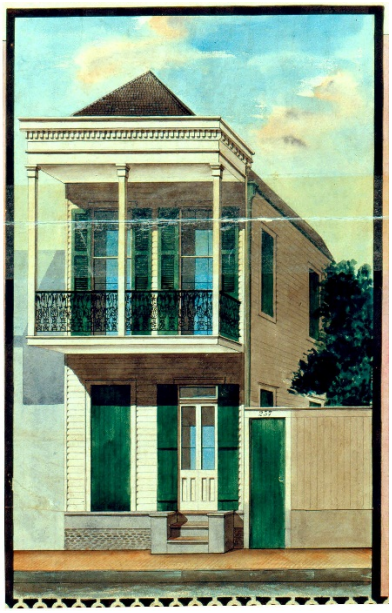


**Fig. 4.16. A ca. 1840 Duplex on Ursuline Street. NONA 002.014.**

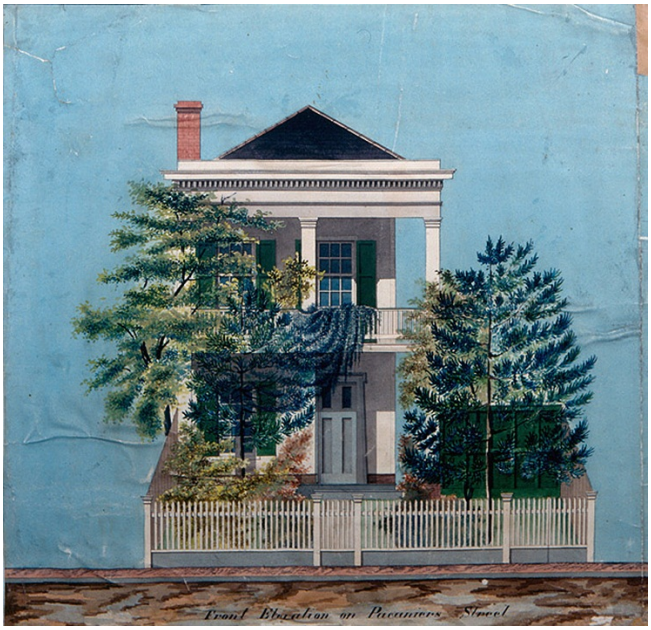



**Fig. 4.17. A ca. 1840 Duplex on Pacannier Street. NONA 063.009.**

To review then: the ancient Greeks had created the original design for practical reasons. The Greek Key door surround evolved from a structural element used on religious structures into a stylized marker of the boundary between the secular and the sacred worlds. It was not meant to be used on houses. The Romans then modified Greek designs to suit their own aesthetic needs. Lafever was as skilled and sensitive to pleasing form and regimented proportion as any of the original Classical builders of Greece and Rome. He established a new variant of Greek Revival art style, adapting a complex genre to new American needs in much the way that the Greeks and Romans had adapted their earlier Classicism to local tastes in Ionia, Attica or Tuscany. His was no boiled-down simplification of ancient and sophisticated high style classicism. American expression as rendered by Lafever was as true to Greco-Roman architectural spirit as any of the ancient forms that inspired it.

In New Orleans, it was the educated practitioners, Gallier and Dakin, who first translated Lafever's conceptions into a wide variety of concrete expressions. As Greek Revival mania swept through New Orleans in the mid-1830s, the Greek Key style spread rapidly throughout the business and upper classes. An architectural curiosity expanded quickly into a full-fledged epidemic, one that ravished the old Creole architecture of the city as extensively as yellow fever ravished the human population.

But absent the remarkable army of vernacular builders of the city, enthusiasm for the new Greek Revival style would have remained an upper class phenomenon--something that might have symbolically elevated the well-to-do above the common working person and his family. The real lesson of the Greek Key surround and the dramatic growth of popularity of the Greek Revival in New Orleans is to be found in the surprisingly elevated style-consciousness and high levels of craftsmanship of innumerable small builders and crafts■mechanics.• It was they who created a vernacular landscape in the new popular style and transformed an elite movement into a groundswell. Through their aesthetic skills they democratized an entire phase of American architectural expression. These tradesmen remain, for the most part, unrecognized and nameless. Many learned the new style through their work on professionally designed mansions. The surprising aspect of this on-the-job education is just how quickly they extended its lessons to the vernacular of the entire city.

History has not dealt kindly with contributions of the professional architects (Vlach 2002). Many of their commissions have now been demolished. In terms of the large-scale urban transformation of these antebellum decades, the volume of work of carpenters, plasterers and masons dwarfs the imprint of the professional architects. A majority of the commissions of Dakin and Gallier have disappeared, but those of the craftsmen remain in large numbers across a swath of New Orleans extending from the the Irish Channel and the Garden District to Bywater and Holy Cross. In the Ante-bellum decades, thousands of Greek Revival-decorated vernacular buildings were built▪a testament to the breadth and skill of the humble New Orleans builder and the style-consciousness of the working class. In the period immediately preceding the impact of mechanically-shaped wooden decoration, it was the artful hand and the observant eye of the tradesman and the artisan that reshaped the stylistic atmosphere of New Orleans. In this, Lafever▪s Greek Key surround played a prominent role, announcing modernity and style-consciousness to every passer-by.

## CHAPTER 5

## THE RISE TO DOMINANCE OF THE LINEAR COTTAGE: 1865 – 1900

### Part 1: The Camelback House and New Forms of Linear Cottage

**Gabriele Richardson and Jay Edwards**

On first moving to New Orleans, the newcomer is struck by the unfamiliar -- even alien -- appearance of the urban cultural landscape. Housetypes strangely unfamiliar to folks from most parts of the United States crowd shoulder to shoulder along the streets of the "faubourgs," or suburbs, which surround the Central Business District. "Its architecture is like the miles-long fresco of a big party that will never end." [71] Single-story wooden cottages abound: Shotguns and Creole cottages, Singles, Doubles, Side Halls, Slave quarters, and Bungalows are decorated in ornate Victorian trim and painted in multi-colored pastels.[72] Many stand on pillars two to three feet above the ground. Some are mounted upon full story-high masonry ground floors called "basements" by everyone, even though these basements stand fully eight to ten feet *above* the damp earth. Common nineteenth and early twentieth popular American domestic house styles such as Neoclassical, Greek revival, Italianate, and Craftsman, are somehow refracted into novel configurations through the lens of the Creole builder. Eclecticism abounds. One comes away with the impression of having experienced a kind of architectonic dreamscape where everything is transformed, through all still somehow vaguely familiar. The epitome of curiosity, however, is achieved by a house type which remains almost totally *unfamiliar* to outsiders.[73] This is the Camelback House.

One purpose of this chapter is to explore the origins and evolution of this architectural curiosity. We also take up the larger question of the changing interrelationships between the people of New Orleans and their unusual architecture. Ultimately, we hope to contribute to that division of material cultural history which holds that causation in architectural history is complex and largely shaped by the needs and perceptions of common people. We assume that historic material legacies are less strongly wrought by great innovators and more profoundly molded into widespread popular building forms by common people in an environment of coincidental co-occurring opportunities. These are particularly effective when they are mutually reinforcing. Ruth Cowan calls the innovating environment "a temporal association between heterogeneous and interacting elements. Steven

Johnson refers to it as "the adjacent possible." [74] In a new social environment, extant traditions are reimagined, redefined, and reassembled into novel material forms. Desirable innovations arise out of the shared needs and perceptions of working class and middle class people, as well by specialists and the elite. Innovators and consumers come from everywhere: men, women, children and even servants.

The post-Civil War period in New Orleans witnessed the rise of the linear cottage into complete dominance in the cultural landscapes. Shotgun houses experienced a kind of adaptive radiation in which the simpler houses of the past diversified into numerous forms which satisfied people of all walks of life, from the impoverished to the moderately wealthy. Only the wealthiest elite eschewed the linear cottage form. New Orleans is, we believe, unique in this respect. It is the only American city in which a once lowly form of temporary housing evolved into the dominant house type of the entire city, with tens of thousands of standing examples. In this chapter we explore this phenomenon. We attack the problem through the lens of one popular and unique New Orleans housetype. If we can understand the reasons which underlay the growth in popularity of this one unusual form of house, we will have gone a long way towards understanding the phenomenon of the shotgun house.

## Defining the Camelback House

So exactly what, then, is a Camelback house and what do we learn by studying it? To begin, it is not as easy to define concisely as one might hope. A survey of recent web sites and classic studies of New Orleans historic architecture reveals that no architectural historian has attempted to provide a formal definition of this house type. This may be partially because the Camelback is one variant of a much larger family of vernacular houses – the Atlantic Linear Cottage Family.[75] In order to define the Camelback, one must begin with a clear definition of this large and geographically diverse family of vernacular houses. Any simple definition of the Camelback which omits an understanding of its historical development is in danger of misidentification or mischaracterization.

The Camelback is one variant of the New Orleans Linear Cottage architectonic family, usually referred to as "shotgun houses."[76] The Linear Cottage tradition entered New Orleans in the final decades of the eighteenth century and spread throughout the eastern United States in the second half of the nineteenth century. In the United States there are many kinds of long, narrow cottages, for example railroad houses" from New York, and

pediment-fronted Greek revival style cottages found almost everywhere. To be a Shotgun, a building must have evolved directly out of an earlier form of the Atlantic Linear Cottage tradition. Vernacular types and families of houses are defined by a combination of their genealogies and their geometries. In the case of the shotgun, the ground plan is based around a series of similar rooms -- near-square or rectangular -- which are set precisely in line with one another running back from the façade. The several rooms are generally duplicates of one-another. The plan is, therefore, *en filade* (in a line) and *en suite* in that each linear series of rooms comprises a unit and a matching set (running from, say, living room, to bedrooms, to kitchen). There may also be a gallery on the front and an added room at the rear, usually a shed. Sets of ensuite rooms may be laid out as a single line, or in a double parallel line. Double cottages are based on mirror-image plans. They are, as the name implies, two dwellings under a common roof. Doubles appeared beginning in the second decade of the nineteenth century and rose to become the most popular of the roughly dozen or so major Linear Cottage variants. Even today, there are substantially more Doubles than Singles in New Orleans (Chap. 4).

The web sites of the official New Orleans government commissions responsible for regulation and preservation of historic buildings do not provide very useful definitions for the Camelback house, nor do non-governmental preservation organizations or university programs in architectural history. A typical example might be stated as: "The Camelback Shotgun is essentially a Shotgun single or a Shotgun double, with a second story rising at the rear portion of the building" (Fig. 5.1).[77]

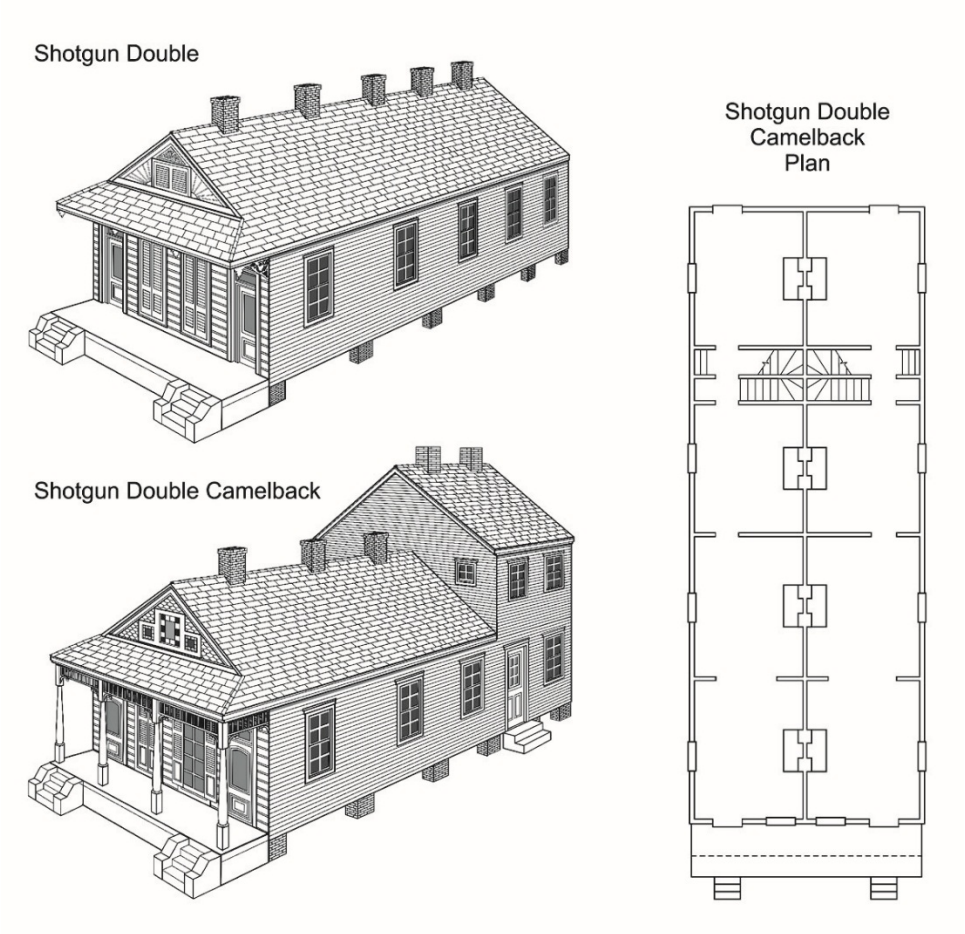



**Fig. 5.1 Elevation of a Double Shotgun house, and a plan and elevation of a Camelback House. Except for the stair bay, the plans would be identical. MLE for the Kniffen Lab, LSU.**

## Why the Camelback?

A search for additional rental space was probably not the primary motivation for the development of Camelback house. Its form is, in its own way, as unusual as the *appentis* linear cottage. The Camelback house was a late-bloomer, evolving many decades after the first Linear Cottages. It came to be defined by a rear second story composed of one, two, or four rooms mounted above the kitchen and other back rooms of a house. The floorplan exhibits the geometry of a typical New Orleans Linear cottage, described above. It is clearly an augmented linear cottage. One novelty is that the traditional shotgun house floorplan layout of a sequence of same-sized rooms is interrupted near the rear of the building with the insertion of a narrow stair bay which provides access to the

rooms of the second story. In the camelback, the stairways are always internal. On the ground floor, one or more rooms are typically positioned behind this stair well. The kitchen is at the rear. Like a shotgun, a camelback may be either single or double width, or it may be a Single with a side hall (Figs. 5.2 – 5.3).

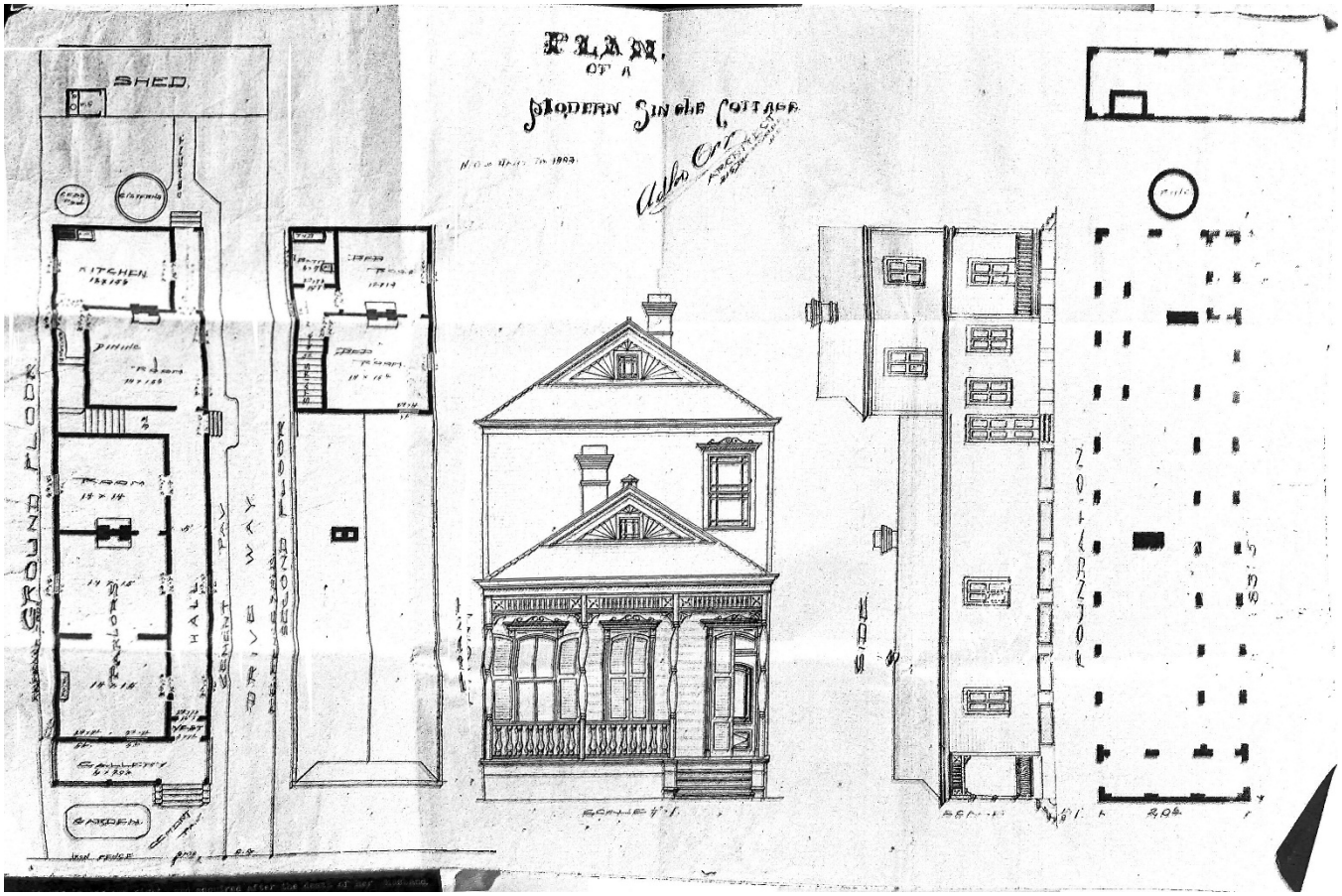



**Fig. 5.2. Plan of a Side-Hall Camelback on Dryades Street, built in 1903. From a building contract A. Peters, N.P.**

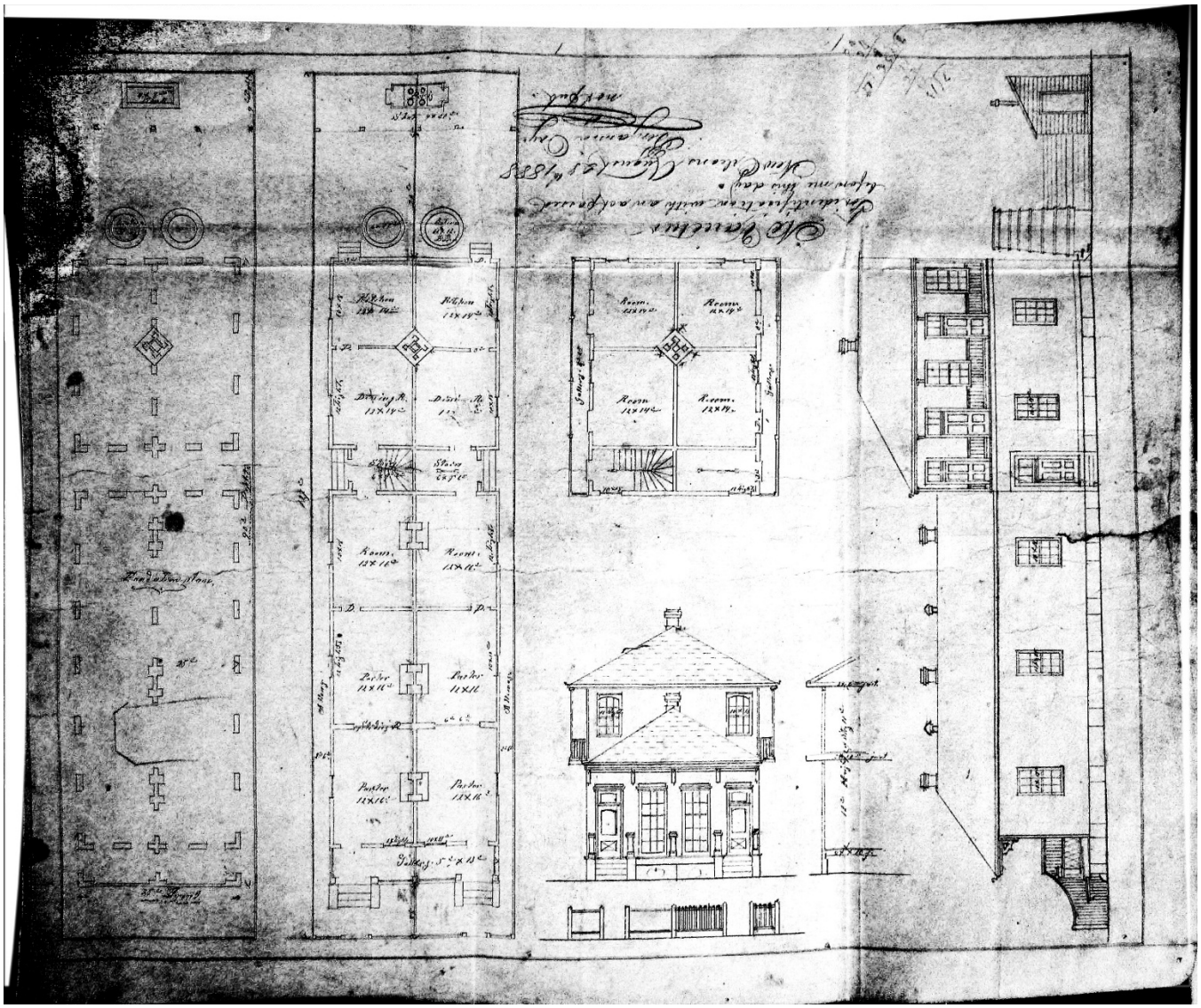


**Fig. 5.3. Plan of a 14 room Double Camelback house attached to Benjamin Ory, N.P., Act 186, p. 2. dated August 28th, 1888. The upper floor contains four bedrooms, each entered separately from the side galleries. These are almost certainly rental rooms. The renters enter the house through side doors which open into the staircases. Dining rooms and kitchens are behind the stair well. Image courtesy of the Office of the Clerk of Courts, Notarial Archives, Historical Division.**

The camelback is a basically a post-1865 phenomenon. Its first appearance in substantial numbers followed the Civil War. The reasons for its invention and growing popularity are not immediately obvious. At first glance they seem unconnected with important economic and technical transformations in Victorian society. Unlike the shotgun, the camelback is not directly associated with the multiplication of narrow lots, or changes in tax or zoning regulations, or the immigration of new ethnic groups so, its presence has always remained an

enigma. Ask any old time resident of New Orleans and you will probably receive the same kind of answer. "People built camelbacks because at the street they were only one story tall, so the entire house was taxed as a single story house." This idea is so widespread that it has become unquestioned gospel. Folk explanations and urban legends often spread quickly in order to account for unusual observed phenomena, particularly when the reason for the popularity of those phenomenon is unclear. But how does one determine the reliability of such an explanation? Were the tax assessors of the past really so gullible that they could not recognize a house which was larger at the rear but smaller at the front?

## Methods

In order to explore this question we combined three different methods. We conducted a census of New Orleans camelbacks through time. Co-author Richardson mapped the location of all camelbacks at three different periods. We undertook archival research on the zoning and tax codes of the municipal government of New Orleans in the nineteenth century. We also investigated the lives of homeowners in the nineteenth century to determine what factors were most important in stimulating them to buy or construct a camelback house.

We began by surveying real estate advertisements and other mentions of house types in local newspapers, trade catalogs and in builder's contracts. Information was also extracted from city government records, private, and university archives. Acts of sale recorded by notaries, tax assessment records from the "field books" of assessors, and architectural art from the offices of local architects were examined.[78] Digital databases -- some extensive -- were developed in order to process the information from an historical- geospatial perspective.

## Debunking an Urban Legend -- A Census of Camelback Houses

In this section we discuss the methods we used in gathering information and in interpreting the causes of selection of a camelback house versus some other possible house type. We test the hypothesis that tax advantage lead people to favor the camelback house. Information on the nature and location of historic camelback houses was obtained from a variety of sources. Architectural drawings of houses which were to be sold at auction in New Orleans in the nineteenth century, potentially provided one of the best sources. New Orleans is apparently unique

in having an extensive and detailed artistic record of houses which were sold to the public. Wonderful, large-scale illustrations are housed in the New Orleans Notarial Archives, History Section -- a division of the Office of the Clerk of Courts. The records include the usual acts of sale recorded before notaries as well as unique large scale colored drawings of buildings which were being sold at auction. The official advertising posters were called *affiches* in French (Fig. 5.4).

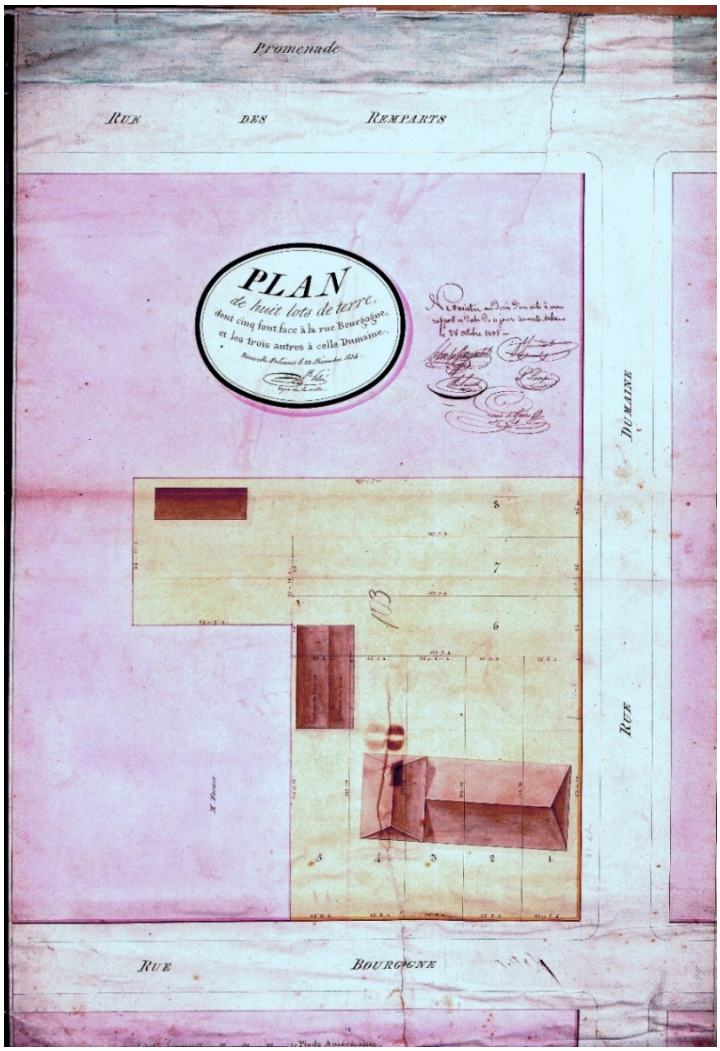



**Fig. 5.4. An *affiche* advertising the sale of property in the French Quarter in 1834. This plan, first drawn in 1824 by City Surveyor Joseph Pilié, shows a proto-camelback Double Linear Cottage at approximately 1006 Dumaine Street near the corner at 841 Burgundy, in Square 103. The house is not a camelback, but it has a one and one-half story tall rear addition. The detached brick kitchen with wooden gallery sits behind and to one side of the main house. In 1834 the property was subdivided into individual lots each 25 to 26 feet in width, English measure. It is apparent that the buildings in this image will be razed. Image courtesy the Office of the Clerk of Courts, Notarial Archives History Division 014.041.**

The purpose of the *affiches* was to advertise the sale of a property in public so that, according to Louisiana's French-based civil law codes, the heirs to an estate would be guaranteed to receive full market price when inheriting properties of deceased relatives. Unfortunately, the Notarial Archives data base of Plan Book images does not contain many camelback houses. The rise of the camelback house parallels the rise of photography for documenting properties, so the wonderful professional art which characterized the *affiches* between ca. 1795 and 1870 diminished rapidly throughout at the period of the rise of the camelback. Only two primitive camelbacks were documented with *affiches*. One was tentatively dated from 1850, the other is seen in Fig. 5.4. Both were proto-camelbacks in which two or more structures had been combined to produce a camelback-like building.

A supplemental Notarial Archives data base collects "attached plans." These are architect's plans which were attached to property sales and building contracts. They also became a part of the legal record, just as the plan book plans did. Many were attached to written contracts for building construction or renovation. They mostly date to the late decades of the nineteenth century so they include more camelback houses (Figs. 5.2 – 5.3).

A major source of information on New Orleans housetypes is the Sanborn Insurance Company maps for the city of New Orleans. These are large scale maps (scale = 1/600 or 50 Ft. to the inch). They depict each building in those squares of the city that were mapped in the relevant periods. Each series of maps covered a number of years. This large set of hand-drafted maps uniquely records the external dimensions of each building, the number of stories it contained, and the kind of materials from which it is built. Thus, camelbacks are generally identifiable as linear cottages with a single story front and a two story rear section. Internal floorplans are not provided, though major internal walls are often indicated (Fig. 5.5).

The Sandborn Insurance Company began business in 1867. The first maps of New Orleans date from 1876. Co-author Richardson combined the separate sheets within each of four different series: 1876, 1885-93, 1895-96 and 1908-09 (Table 1).[79] Later series expand the areas covered as the city grew. High resolution color photographs of the paper map sheets were stitched together into digital map layers and georeferenced, enabling us to locate and map the changes within historic properties.[80] Current street addresses were assigned to the historic buildings. Prior to ca. 1890 in New Orleans, a different system of numbering houses was in use, so every address

listed on Sanborn maps prior to the 1896 Series must be converted to their modern equivalents. All of this permitted us to follow the evolution of historic buildings between 1876 and 1909. This pretty well matches the period of the growth of the Camelback house.

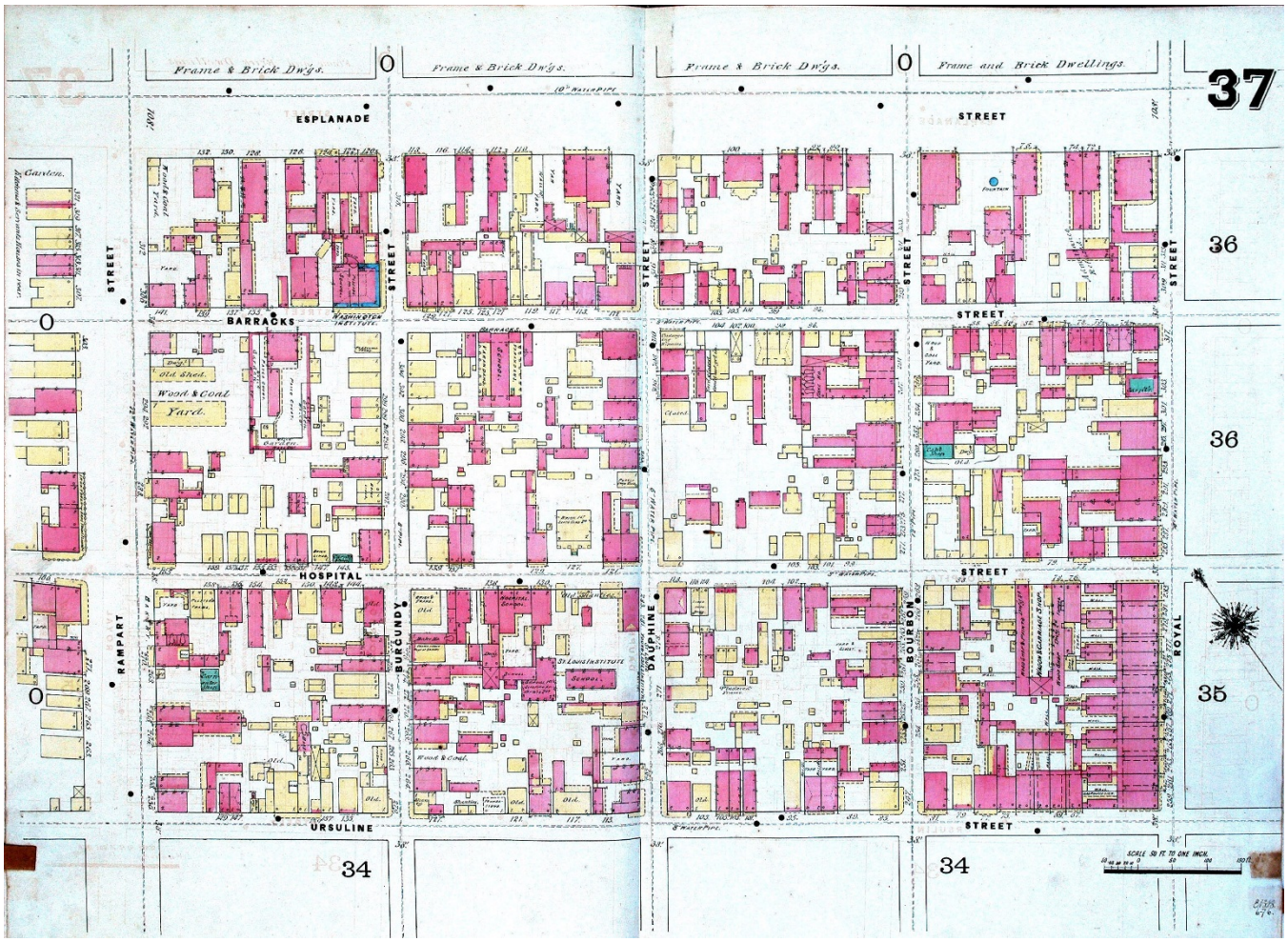



**Fig. 5.5. Sheet 37 from the 1876 Sanborn maps of New Orleans. This sheet depicts 12 squares (blocks) from the northern corner of the French Quarter. A number of camelback houses are to be seen, as are proto-camelbacks in which two or more free-standing buildings have been connected by adding structures between them. Many single story houses have detached two-story kitchen buildings standing behind them. These may become camelbacks through the simple addition of a connecting (dining) room. This section of the city lies within the "Quadroon Quarter." Many free people of color were landowners here, both men and women. Image courtesy the Southeastern Architectural Archive, Tulane University Library, Special Collections.**

Another major source of information on New Orleans historic buildings was the roles of the tax assessors. The Louisiana Collection of the New Orleans Public Library has microfilm copies of assessor's records beginning

in 1855. Examples of the “field books” used by the assessors are housed in the Louisiana State Archives (Baton Rouge) and the New Orleans Public Library (Fig. 5.6). Records begin in 1836 with some years missing. Local independent tax assessments in New Orleans began with the creation of the Board of Assessors of New Orleans in 1856. Prior to that, assessments were based upon the assessments of State assessors or special appointees. In New Orleans, property was taxed annually. The levels of assessed valuation and the millage rate paid by property owners varied through time, sometimes substantially.[81]

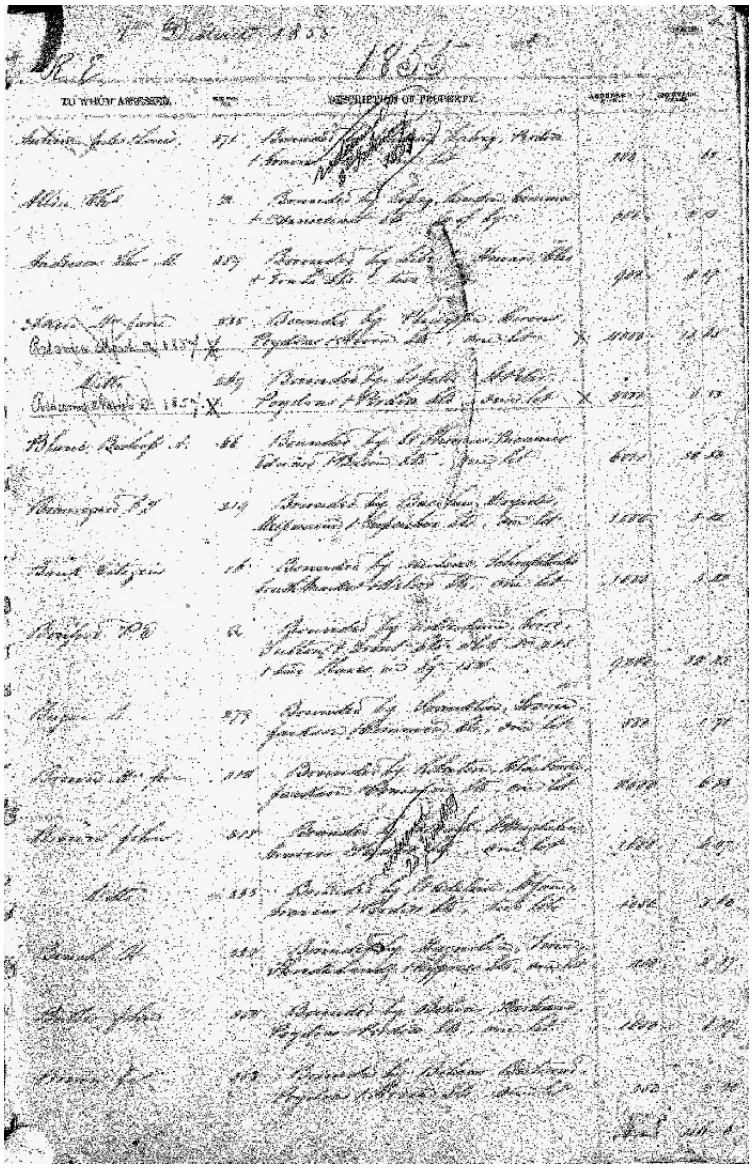


**Fig. 5.6. Page from an assessor’s field book showing assessment rates for New Orleans District. 1. 1855. Names, Square Numbers, Property Descriptions, Total Assessment, and Tax Charges for that year are listed. Image courtesy the Louisiana State Archives.**

**Table 1.**

**Sanborn Map Units Processed for Historical Map**

**Georeferencing of New Orleans**

| New Orleans Sanborn Map Series processed | Raw .jpg Photographs | Processed Sheets (Color adjustments and labeling) | No. of sheets after segmentation for Georeferencing |
|---|---|---|---|
| **1876 Vol I, Vol II** | 62 | 62 | 83 |
| **1885 Vol I** | 61 | 61 | 134 |
| **1885 Vol II** | 57 | 57 | 100 |
| **1887 Vol III** | 54 | 54 | 85 |
| **1893 Vol IV** | 68 | 68 | 136 |
| **1896 Vol I** | 101 | 101 | 155 |
| **1895 Vol II** | 98 | 98 | 165 |
| **1896 Vol III** | 114 | 114 | 166 |
| **1896 Vol IV** | 103 | 103 | 144 |
| **1908 Vol I** | 108 | 108 | 159 |
| **1908 Vol II** | 105 | 105 | 151 |
| **1908 Vol III** | 104 | 104 | 148 |
| **1909 Vol IV** | 104 | 104 | 154 |
| **1909 Vol V** | 108 | 108 | 161 |
| **1909 Vol VI** | 111 | 111 | 163 |
| **1909 Vol VII** | 150 | 150 | 178 |
| **TOTAL** | **1508** | **1508** | **2282** |

Property values were often stable for considerable periods of time before sudden changes were introduced. Assessed valuations for previously undeveloped urban lots were generally set at zero. All properties with “improvements” were assessed. Immediately following the Civil War, the assessed valuations were raised to almost double their antebellum levels. In the federally-administered city, the extra funding was used, in part, to improve infrastructure, which had deteriorated to an unacceptable level. The complaints of local property owners were vociferous:

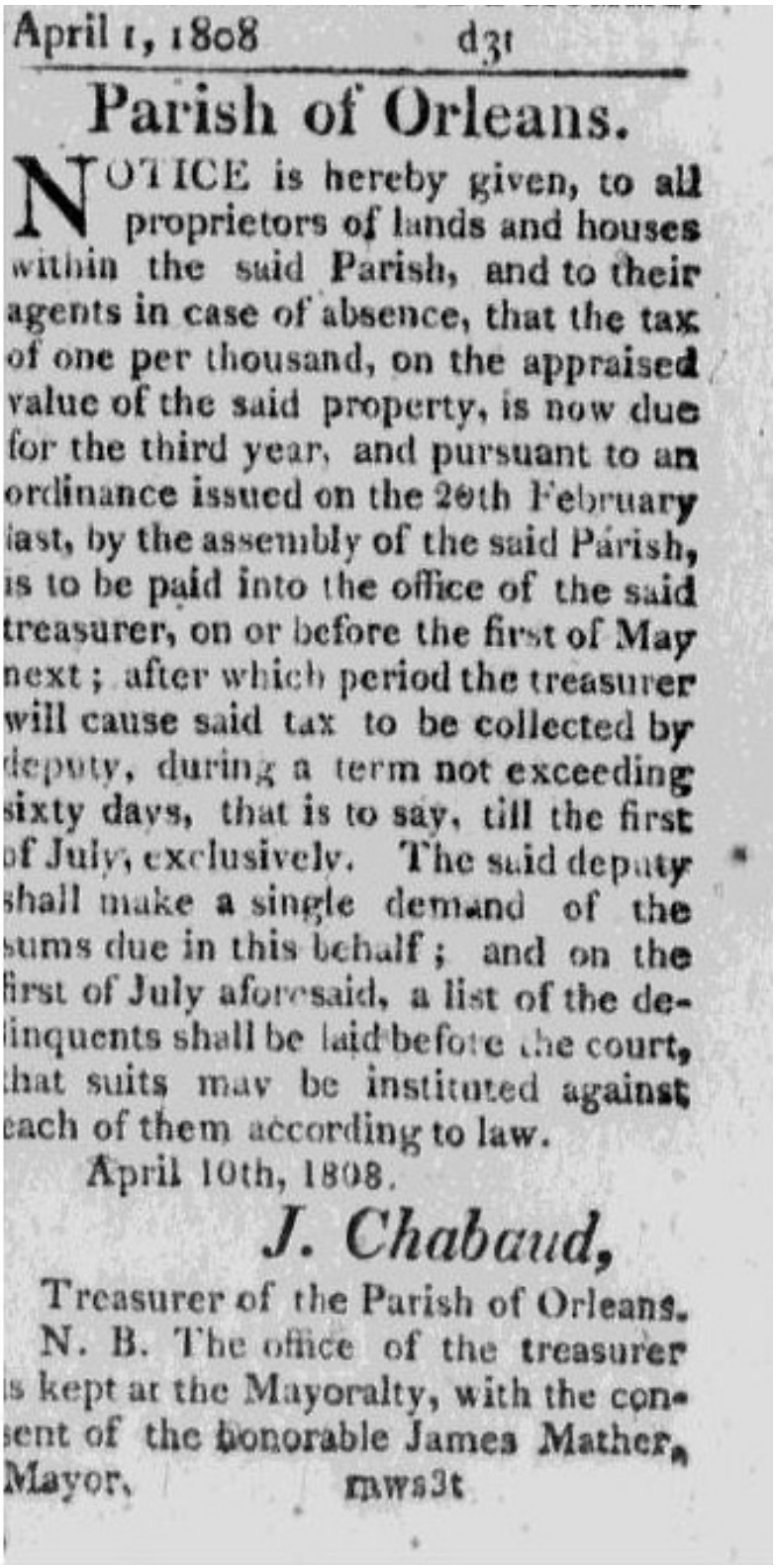
> Everyone feels that the acts of the present government are illegal, that they are usurpation. We are taxed to death, and yet the amount of taxation is not what the people complain so much of as the system of assessment. Under the State government the assessors, instead of being paid a salary,

> are paid a percentage on the amount of assessment, so that every assessor is interested in assessing property beyond its value.[82]

Following the period of Reconstruction in 1877 and 1878, local (Louisiana Democratic) officials replaced the federal officers, and assessed valuations dropped by as much as one-half. In 1893, for example, 32 foot wide by 128 foot deep "half lots" were evaluated at about 8.5 cents per square foot, while 64 foot wide by 128 foot deep "whole lots" were assessed at an average of about 4.5 to 5 cents per square foot. This produced assessed valuations of roughly $306.00 for a half lot and $360.00 for a whole foot lot.

In the Territorial Period (1803-1812), properties had been first taxed at a millage rate of one mill, that is, one dollar annually for every thousand dollars of assessed valuation (Fig. 5.7). By 1855 the average tax paid by home-owners was above 3.6 mils, with smaller properties taxed at a higher millage rate than larger and more expensive properties. Whole lots with houses might be taxed at only 3.4 mils while half lots were taxed at 5.9 to 8.4 mills. Thus, the scale in both assessments and millages placed a relatively higher tax burden on the less affluent home-owner. This impacted the African-American population disproportionally. Taxes were always based upon the total assessed valuation of the property -- land, improvements and slaves.

The way in which various housetypes including camelback houses were taxed may be illustrated with an examination of the history of a single block of houses. We selected square 263 in the Second Municipal District in Faubourg Tremé. In New Orleans mapspeak, city blocks are known as "squares."[20] Square 263 lies just uptown from the Bayou Road, about ten blocks lakeside of Rampart Street, the back-of-town edge of the French Quarter. Our sample square lies between Governor Nicholls and Barracks Streets, and is bounded by North Galvez and N. Johnson. It is situated in a part of the city which was being developed during the rise of the camelback house. Several typical configurations of camelback houses and pre-camelback arrangements are found in the Sanborn maps for this square (Fig. 5.8).



April 1, 1808 d3t

# Parish of Orleans.

NOTICE is hereby given, to all proprietors of lands and houses within the said Parish, and to their agents in case of absence, that the tax of one per thousand, on the appraised value of the said property, is now due for the third year, and pursuant to an ordinance issued on the 26th February last, by the assembly of the said Parish, is to be paid into the office of the said treasurer, on or before the first of May next; after which period the treasurer will cause said tax to be collected by deputy, during a term not exceeding sixty days, that is to say, till the first of July, exclusively. The said deputy shall make a single demand of the sums due in this behalf; and on the first of July aforesaid, a list of the delinquents shall be laid before the court, that suits may be instituted against each of them according to law.

April 10th, 1808.

*J. Chabaud,*

Treasurer of the Parish of Orleans.

N. B. The office of the treasurer is kept at the Mayoralty, with the consent of the honorable James Mather, Mayor. mws3t

**Fig. 5.7. A announcement in the New Orleans Gazette and Commercial Advertiser specifying that a one mil tax is due to be paid by owners of lands and houses, April 1, 1808, p. 3. Image courtesy the Historic New Orleans Collection.**

The assessment values of the various lots on square 263 in 1893 are provided in Table 2. It will be seen that camelback houses stand on Lots 10r, 13, and 14r and the second lot also numbered14r.[83] In 1893 these camelbacks are, by a substantial amount, the most expensive houses standing on the square. Excluding land, the structures are assessed at $2022, $2643, $3056, and $2050 respectively. They do receive one indirect tax advantage against smaller houses. If we consider the total area of the lot, only, in square feet, and not including the value of any structures upon it, parcels measuring over approximately about 4000 square feet are taxed at an average rate of about *five cents* per square foot. Parcels measuring less than 4000 square feet are taxed at an average of about *nine* cents per square feet.[84] There is no direct relationship between house type and the rate of taxation. There is, however, a strong indirect correlation between the total value of one's real estate and the rate of taxation. At no time were houses taxed on the basis of their type or the arrangement of rooms or number of stories. Instead, tax assessments were based specifically upon the estimated retail value of the entire property. In this, camelback houses offered absolutely no advantage over shotguns, Creole cottages, or other popular house types.

## Table 2

## NEW ORLEANS Municipal District 2, Square 263:

## Lot and Building Assessment Evaluation for the year 1893

| OLD Lot Number | Square Feet in Lot | Value of lot 1893 | Value per Square Foot 1893 | Value of Building 1893 | Value lot plus building | Building type 1893 | Building type 2015 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 12 | 4598.7 | 219.82 | 0.05 | 980.18 | 1200.00 | Double Shotgun | Camelback |
| 13.2 | | | | | | Double Shotgun | Camelback / Bungalow |
| 13.1 | 10001.6 | 478.07 | 0.05 | 2021.93 | 2500.00 | Camelback | 3-bay Shotgun |
| 14r.1 | 7464.2 | 356.78 | 0.05 | 2643.22 | 3000.00 | Camelback | Townhouse |
| 14r.2 | 7191.3 | 343.74 | 0.05 | 3056.26 | 3400.00 | Camelback | Camelback |
| 15 | 2924.0 | 250.40 | 0.09 | 1049.60 | 1300.00 | 2-story bldg. | 2-story |
| 16 | 2580.0 | 200.00 | 0.08 | 1300.00 | 1500.00 | Shotgun Single | Double Shtgn. |
| 1 | 3300.0 | 282.59 | 0.09 | 892.41 | 1175.00 | Creole Cottage | Storehouse |
| B1 | 2800.0 | 239.78 | 0.09 | 510.22 | 750.00 | Single Shotgun | 3-bay Shotgun |
| 2 | 2800.0 | 239.78 | 0.09 | 260.22 | 500.00 | Single Shotgun | Single Shotgun |
| 3 | 3708.3 | 317.56 | 0.09 | 982.44 | 1300.00 | Creole Cottage | Creole Cottage |
| 4 | 3100.0 | 265.47 | 0.09 | 734.53 | 1000.00 | Creole Cottage | Creole Cottage |
| 5 | 3200.0 | 300.00 | 0.09 | ---- | no structure | ---- | Double Shtgn. |
| 6 | 3125.1 | 267.62 | 0.09 | 532.38 | 800.00 | Creole Cottage | Creole Cottage |
| 7 | 2268.0 | 194.22 | 0.09 | 505.78 | 700.00 | Single Shotgun | ---- |
| 8 | | | | | | Creole Cottage / Creole Cottage | Creole Cottage / Creole Cottage |
| 9r | 5798.3 | 250.00 | 0.04 | 1750.00 | 2000.00 | Shotgun | Sidehall 3-bay |
| 10r | 8607.6 | 450.00 | 0.05 | 2050.00 | 2500.00 | Camelback | Apartment- |
| 11 | 5208.0 | 250.00 | 0.05 | - | no structure | ---- | 3-plex |

**Table 2 provides information on how we determined assessed valuations for the lots and structures. Old lot numbers were assigned over a number of decades as lots changed size or were subdivided. In 1893, some lot numbers did not reflect previous property divisions. For those we have provided decimal designations. For their locations, refer to Fig. 5.8, below.**

**Gray shaded rows indicate lots with new structures in 1893. These lots have not yet been subdivided for assessment purposes (see dotted lines on plan in Fig. 5.8, below). Thus, we cannot determine the relations between land value and the value of these structures. Orange rows provide assessors' determinations of the value of the land per square foot. Yellow cells provide our own estimates of the value per square foot for lots, and the value of the structures upon them, based on the determinations in orange.**

# Square 263, Second District, New Orleans

## Sanborn Fire Insurance Map 1893

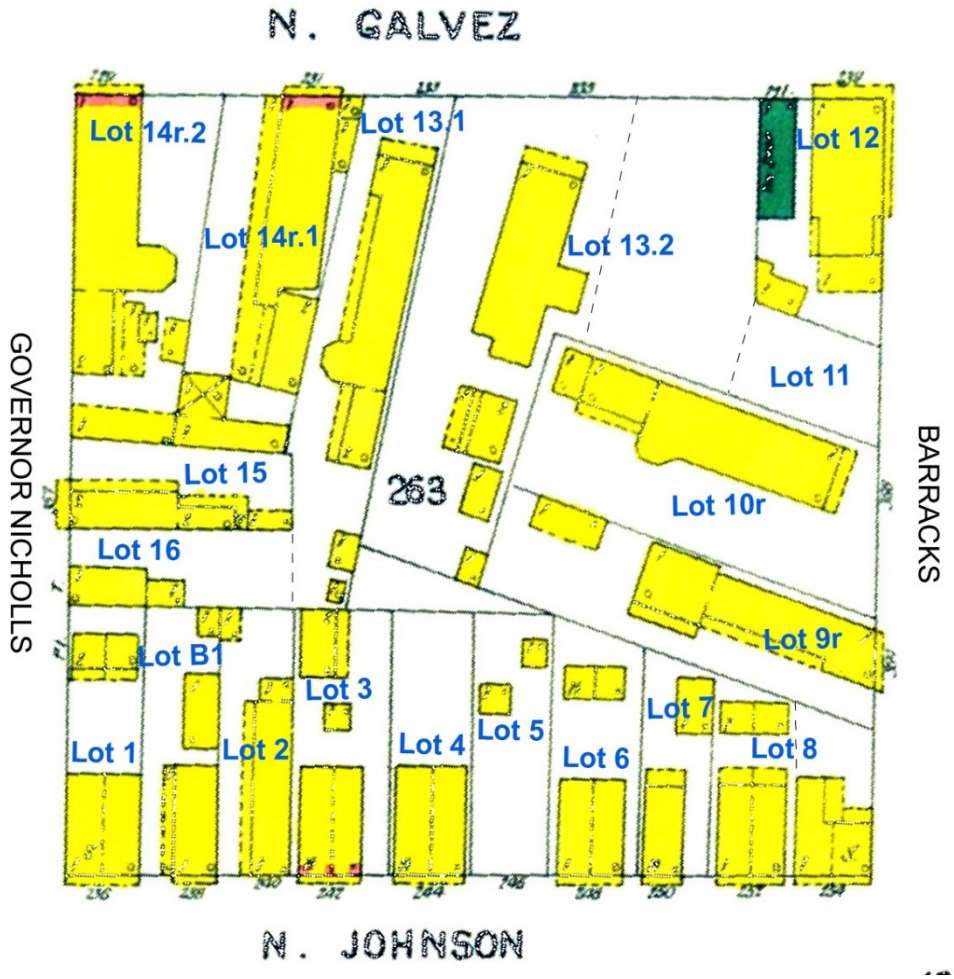



**Fig. 5.8. New Orleans, Second Municipal District, Square 263, as depicted in the Sanborn Map for 1893. Compare building and land valuations from Table 2, above. Camelbacks stand on Lots 14r.1, 14r.2, 13.1, 10r and 9r. Their attached rear kitchens face one side of the lot. In other places, detached rear kitchens faced the front of the lot (Lots 1 and 8). The Double Shotgun on Lot 13.2 will become a full-fledged camelback before 1908.**

**Small $^{o}$ symbols indicate the presence of a chimney, not at the location marked. Small numbers indicate the number of floors. Dotted lines indicate principal walls and open galleries. Yellow indicates a wooden frame structure; brick is symbolized by red. Two Camelbacks on North Galvez Street have brick fronts. All other buildings, including kitchens, are composed of wood. Map courtesy the Maps and Geography Division of the Library of Congress.**





**Fig. 5.9 Two views of the 3-bay Camelback at 1202 North Galvez Street, in Square 263. This house sits on the corner Lot 14r.2. It has undergone changes since being recorded by the Sanborn Insurance Company surveyors in 1893. JDE Photo, 2015.**



**Figs. 5.10. The 3-bay Side Hall Linear Cottage at 2016 North Galvez Street. This cottage rests on Lot 13.1. Its two-story attached kitchen has been Reduced to a single story since 1893. JDE Photo.**



**Fig. 5.11. A 5-bay Side Gallery Camelback at 1230-32 North Galvez Street in Faubourg Tremé. This house rests on Lot 11. facing Galvez. Cleary, it was built after 1893. JDE Photo, 2015.**

**Assessment changes through time**: Thus far we have examined the valuations of houses and land in relation to each other at one point in time. It might be argued that the year 1893 was unique or different in some way from earlier or later years. Table 3 illustrates the changes in assessed valuations through time, beginning in 1859 and ending in 1893. We continue to use the same square as an example. The trends illustrated here were observed in other lots and squares as well.

For purposes of illustration, we select four lots on Square 263. In 1893, **Lot 14r.2** held a four-bay Camelback, but in previous decades the house had been a Double Shotgun house with a detached two story rear kitchen. Later, a single-story dining room section was set between the two structures, extending the shotgun and

making a single structure with a two-story rear section of two rooms on each floor. This converted the house into a Camelback. Later yet, the dining room was expanded with a bay on one side – a popular form of addition in New Orleans in the 1880s. Changes in property value such as these are usually reflected within a year or two in small incremental additions in the total assessed valuation of the property.

**Lot 15** is a three-bay side hall Camelback with a two story rear kitchen. **Lot 4** contains a Double-wide Creole cottage set on a thirty foot by 100 foot lot. **Lot 5** is roughly the same size as Lot 4. Both would be referred to as "half lots" in New Orleans. However, Lot 5 remained mostly undeveloped through the sampled period, with no residential structure built there. If these parcels with different characteristics in house size, house type and developed vs. undeveloped land, change as they develop through time in relationship to one-another, there might be an argument to suggest that house type exerted some influence on the changes in evaluation. In order to look at the relationships between them we calculated the *changes* in assessed valuation between years for the four lots. These changes are found in the darkened horizontal rows in Table 3. They are calculated by determining the number of square feet in the parcel divided by the total assessed valuation of house and land. They are identified as *changes* in value per square foot between two years.

**TABLE 3**

**Value changes in four lots of Square 263: 1859-1893**

| OLD LOT NUMBERS -- Square 263 | 14r.2 | 15 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| lot size 1859 | 129x90 | | 30x100 | 32x100 |
| square feet lot 1859 | 11610.00 | | 3000.00 | 3200.00 |
| value lot and building 1859 | 3000.00 | | 1500.00 | 800.00 |
| value per square foot lot and building 1859 | 0.26 | | 0.50 | 0.25 |
| lot size 1866 | 60x135 | 37x86 | 31x100 | 32x100 |
| square feet lot 1866 | 8100.00 | 3182.00 | 3100.00 | 3200.00 |
| value lot and building 1866 | 5000.00 | 3500.00 | 1500.00 | 1000.00 |
| value per square foot lot and building 1866 | 0.62 | 1.10 | 0.50 | 0.31 |
| changed value per sq ft lot and building 1859-1866 | 0.36 | 1.10 | 0.00 | 0.06 |
| lot size 1867 | 60x135 | 37x86 | 31x100 | 32x100 |
| square feet lot 1867 | 8100.00 | 3182.00 | 3100.00 | 3200.00 |
| value lot and building 1867 | 6000.00 | 3500.00 | 1800.00 | 1200.00 |
| value per square foot lot and building 1867 | 0.74 | 1.10 | 0.58 | 0.38 |
| changed value per sq ft lot and building 1866-1867 | 0.12 | 0.00 | 0.08 | 0.06 |
| lot size 1870 | 111.8x135 | 34x86 | 31x100 | 32x100 |
| square feet lot 1870 | 15093.00 | 2924.00 | 3100.00 | 3200.00 |
| value lot and building 1870 | 7000.00 | 3000.00 | 1800.00 | 1000.00 |
| value per square foot lot and building 1870 | 0.46 | 1.03 | 0.58 | 0.31 |
| changed value per sq ft lot and building 1867-1870 | -0.28 | -0.07 | 0.00 | -0.06 |
| lot size 1871 | 111x135 | 34x86 | 31x100 | 32x100 |
| square feet lot 1871 | 15093.00 | 2924.00 | 3100.00 | 3200.00 |
| value lot and building 1871 | 8000.00 | 3000.00 | 1800.00 | 1000.00 |
| value per square foot lot and building 1871 | 0.53 | 1.03 | 0.58 | 0.31 |
| changed value per sq ft lot and building 1870-1871 | 0.07 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 |
| lot size 1878 | 111x135 | 34x86 | 31x100 | 32x100 |
| square feet lot 1878 | 14985.00 | 2924.00 | 3100.00 | 3200.00 |
| value lot and building 1878 | 5500.00 | 2000.00 | 1500.00 | 700.00 |
| value per square foot lot and building 1878 | 0.37 | 0.68 | 0.48 | 0.22 |
| changed value per sq ft lot and building 1871-1878 | -0.16 | -0.34 | -0.10 | -0.09 |
| lot size 1879 | 111x135 | 34x86 | 31x100 | 32x100 |
| square feet lot 1879 | 14985.00 | 2924.00 | 3100.00 | 3200.00 |
| value lot and building 1879 | 3600 | 1300 | 1000 | 300 |
| value per square foot lot and building 1879 | 0.24 | 0.44 | 0.32 | 0.09 |

**TABLE 3, CONTINUED**
**Value Changes in Four Lots, Square 263: 1859-1893**

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| changed value per sq ft lot and building 1878-1879 | -0.13 | -0.24 | -0.16 | -0.13 |
| lot without or with building (building type) 1883 | Camelback | Single Shotgun | Creole Cottage | No Residence |
| lot size 1883 | 40.5.2x136.9.1 54.7.1x131.1.2 | 34x86 | 31x100 | 32x100 |
| square feet lot 1883 | 7191.35 | 2924.00 | 3100.00 | 3200.00 |
| value lot and building 1883 | 3800.00 | 1300.00 | 1000.00 | 300.00 |
| value per square foot lot and building 1883 | 0.53 | 0.44 | 0.32 | 0.09 |
| changed value per sq ft lot and building 1879-1883 | 0.29 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 |
| lot size 1884 | 40.5.2x136.9.1 54.7.1x131.1.2 | 34x86 | 31x100 | |
| square feet lot 1884 | 7191.35 | 2924.00 | 3100.00 | 3200.00 |
| value lot and building 1884 | 2500.00 | 1300.00 | 1000.00 | 300.00 |
| value per square foot lot and building 1884 | 0.35 | 0.44 | 0.32 | 0.09 |
| changed value per sq ft lot and building 1883-1884 | -0.18 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 |
| lot without or with building (building type) 1893 | Camelback | 2-story bldg. | Creole Cottage | |
| lot size 1893 | 40.5.5x131.91 54.72x142.5 | 34x86 | 31x100 | 32x100 |
| square feet lot 1893 | 7191.35 | 2924.00 | 3100.00 | 3200.00 |
| value lot and building 1893 | 3400.00 | 1300.00 | 1000.00 | 300.00 |
| value per square foot lot and building 1893 | 0.47 | 0.44 | 0.32 | 0.09 |
| changed value per sq ft lot and building 1884-1893 | 0.65 | 0.44 | 0.32 | 0.09 |

**Table 3: The changes in values in dollars per square foot between earlier and later property assessments are shown in the gray horizontal rows. A minus sign indicates a drop in assessed valuation. A figure without a plus sign indicates no change or a rise in assessed valuation. As will be seen, changes in values in one property in one year are usually accompanied by matching changes in assessed valuation of the other lots as well. In cases in which only one lot exhibits a change, enhancement or loss in the value of that property might be due to a fire or to improvements.**

Table 4 illustrates the levels of correlation between the changes in any one of the four sample lots in Square 263, and each of the other lots over time. The correlations are high, far above the level of chance. This indicates that, although there were individual changes in the assessed valuations of specific lots from time to time, for the great majority of changes, the valuations for each of the lots changed in the same direction. Property values were being raised or lowered across the board at different times.[85] At no time did any single lot loose value while the others were gaining assessed value, and vice-versa.

Our conclusion is that assessed valuations were based upon general principles which affected the values of all properties in Orleans Parish at the same time in the same ways. Individual facts, such as the type of house or the number of floors in a house were not significant in changing assessed valuations, but rather, the total value of the land and its buildings (if any) was the determining factor throughout the nineteenth century. Thus, we reject the tax advantage urban legend as not valid.

**TABLE 4**

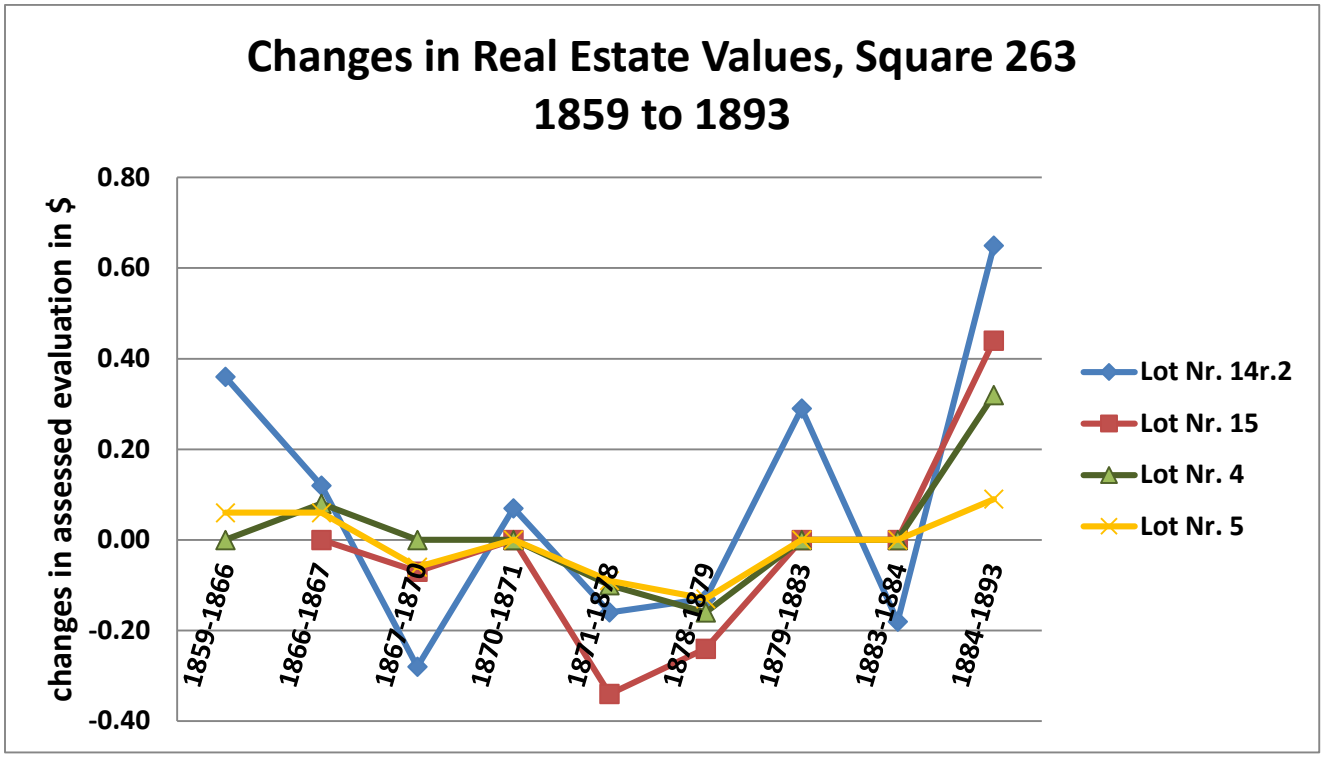


**Table 5**

**Correlations between changes in Real Estate values between years.**

| Old Lot Number | Lot 14r.2 | Lot 15 | Lot 4 | Lot 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **14r.2** | 1 | | | |
| **15** | 0.78 | 1 | | |
| **4** | 0.75 | 0.95 | 1 | |
| **5** | 0.78 | 0.82 | 0.82 | 1 |

**Table 5. A correlation coefficient between 0.75 and 0.95 indicates a strong positive correlation between variables (including lots with and without buildings). If the Real Estate value increases in one parcel between two years, it increases in all other parcels, and the same happens with the decrease of real estate values.**

**Part 2: Forces of Change in the Architecture: of New Orleans, 1865 – 1908.**

Having established that house type was not a factor in the determination of levels of taxation, we now turn to the problem of explaining exactly what *did* cause the rise of the Camelback house after 1865. We assume that the answers are to be found in the impacts of a broad configuration of changes which were occurring in the lives of common people in New Orleans following the Civil War. Evidence of these changes will not be limited exclusively to Camelback houses. Rather it will be seen in parallel developments in a number of contexts and house types, such as shotgun houses. The development of each variant should be explicable through an interpretation of the lives of those families which selected a specific form of house as a response to their immediate needs. The forces which impacted their lives included demographic, social, economic, technical and institutional changes. It is to be expected that persons in different economic classes reacted differently to these forces. We must remain mindful of the historic material reality which each group inherited at the beginning of post-bellum times. Those legacies would exert powerful differential influences on the housing selections which post-bellum residents were about to undertake. To those who lived through these changes, they would not be experienced as a single great leap, but rather as a series of incremental steps which combined to produce a new plateau, such as a new and popular house type, in the post-bellulm decades of the nineteenth century.

Let's begin with a single influential class of actors – the working and middle class women of New Orleans. The role of common women – housewives, working single women, enslaved women, women of all kinds -- has seldom been adequately addressed in studies of architectural history. Could it be that women might be the single most powerful agent of architectural change in the creation of a new housetype?

Our story opens at the end of the antebellum period before the Civil War. In 1860, the population of New Orleans stood at 174,491, with approximately 14,500 black slaves, and 11,000 free people of color.[86] The three populations were not evenly spread throughout the city. Whites lived pretty much everywhere, with the descendants of the French population residing largely in and around the old French

Quarter. Some Anglo-Americans lived there too, but mostly uptown in the CBD, Mid City, the Garden District along St. Charles Avenue and westward to Carrollton. Enslaved blacks also lived everywhere. [see Campanella 2006 for maps of the ethnic residence in New Orleans.] Domestic slaves resided on the properties of their owners, or in tenements located nearby. New Orleans also contained a substantial population of free people of color. They were mostly descended from the old French population and resided largely in the French Quarter and the Creole faubourgs (neighborhoods), Tremé, Marigny, New Marigny and Bywater. Many restrictions had been levied on their freedoms since colonial times resulting in emigration, but the city still held the largest population of free African-Americans in the United States.

As diseases such as yellow fever and cholera were killing thousands annually in the low-lying and unsanitary semi-tropical city, the deceased were replaced by waves of new settlers who more than made up for the losses. Among the Anglo segment of the new arrivals, a substantial number were educated and business-oriented. So were a lesser number of Foreign French. A high proportion of the foreign-born European immigrants were uneducated and unskilled. Many young Irish and Germans filled the jobs of day laborers and domestic servants.[87]

New Orleans was virtually undamaged during the Civil War. The economic life of the city, though disrupted and weakened, continued without interruption from 1862 through 1865.[26] The Union occupation was comparatively benign. The Union military cleaned the city and improved its infrastructure. The impact of the four years of military occupation on the development of the typical family was profound, but the changes were not so much due to local events as they were to broad transformations occurring at the national level. From the perspective of the people toiling in the kitchen, by the end of the Civil War New Orleans was a vastly different city than it had been in 1861.

New Orleans had been specifically exempted from Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation of Jan. 1, 1863. Despite the Union occupation, the life of an enslaved person in New Orleans continued as before, with no freedom. The occupying military leaders thought that by maintaining servitude in Louisiana, the state might be tempted to rejoin the union voluntarily. The strategy did not work, but slavery was not ended until the enactment of the Thirteenth Amendment on December 16, 1865. Even after official

emancipation, freedmen and women who remained in the employment of their former masters quickly discovered that they were burdened with many problems and restrictions including low or non-existent wages. They found no legal protection under such "employment." The only viable solution was to leave the service of their former owners and to seek wage-paying jobs elsewhere.

The sex ratio of Orleans Parish was high, at about 0.89 (89 males for every 100 females). As late as 1880 over 30% of the white women of the parish were widowed. When widows remarried, they married a more diverse variety of men than they would have previously. Some, for example, married "beneath their station" to immigrants, particularly those who were gainfully employed. Some white women married colored men. Colored women continued to work outside the house in much higher proportions than white women. In both colored and white families, higher levels of stress surrounded the food-producing activities due to the reduced domestic staffs and extra burdens placed on women connected with the need for extra income.

Until 1865, a high proportion of the non-immigrant white families of New Orleans had owned black cooks, maids, and housekeepers.[88] The Peonage Act of 1867 abolished the holding of any person in debt servitude or other forms of indenture. Over fourteen thousand persons had been enslaved in New Orleans in 1860. The sex ratio of enslaved persons in New Orleans in 1860 had been about 71. That is, there were seventy-one males for every one hundred females, or something on the order of 10,000 enslaved females. Most of this group had been domestics. Domestic servants were now free to leave their former masters, and that is exactly what they did – in droves. This mass disloyalty sent profound shock waves through the domestic sphere.[89]

How did these families adjust? That is a subject which might require a series of dissertations to answer properly. However, certain trends heavy with architectural import are clear. In the North, cast iron stoves and ranges had been gaining in popularity since the 1840s. They were still too expensive or too mistrusted for many working class families, but in the South the stove had been hardly used at all except in the houses of the wealthy (Ripley 1998:39). Enslaved cooks did the cooking on open fireplaces in the detached kitchen building behind the main house (Fig. 5.12). Following the Civil War, iron foundries

which had been turning out war material now began to specialize in other things, particularly iron for construction, railroad rails, bridgework and other transportation-related equipment. Some also specialized in household appliances. Chief among these were new forms of the cookstove and the range. The range was built into a fireplace; the stove was free-standing and had a stovepipe exhaust (Fig. 5.13). Both completely enclosed the cooking fire behind iron doors and iron plates. Many heated water in a special tank.[90] Stoves and ranges each had their detractors and supporters, but advertising became far more intense than it had been prior to the "recent unpleasantness." A marketing revolution was under way. The relative price of cast iron appliances was reduced due to competition of hundreds of foundries and specialty manufacturers. The stoves required less fuel, and they could burn coal which was now increasingly available in Southern cities due to improved railroad transportation.

In New Orleans, it had been common for the white mistress of the house to participate in some of the activities of the kitchen. Housewives specialized in the more technically difficult activities such as smoking meat, making sausages, and in canning food. So, while the mistress was certainly familiar with kitchen work, she was not used to carrying out the laborious tasks of carting firewood, carrying water, and washing and cleaning the dinnerware and the kitchen itself. Indeed, most of the routine tasks had been left entirely to the experienced enslaved cook. Now, Southern housewives complained that "we have no wood house, no washing machine, no cooking stove… in short, none of the conveniences that you Northern people have been accustomed to. And worse, we have no money to fix these things." [91]




**Fig. 5.12. An enslaved cook cooking on an open fire in a detached kitchen building. This was hot and dirty work. Harper's Magazine.**



**Fig. 5.13. An enslaved cook cooking on a 1840s style cookstove. These were expensive and only available to households of the wealthy in New Orleans. MLE for the Kniffen Lab.**



**Fig. 5.14. A post-bellum housewife in New Orleans heating coffee on a new-style cookstove—a modern appliance of the late 19th century with many conveniences. MLE for the Kniffen Lab.**

Help of various kinds was not slow in arriving to assist the Southern housewife in handling all of these time-consuming and laborious chores. New, smaller Copula smelting furnaces were in operation in the South, including in New Orleans. Cookstoves could be locally produced, saving on transportation costs for the inordinately heavy stoves (Fig. 5.14). Materials such as canned goods and foodstuffs which required refrigeration were now shipped in boxcars and refrigerated rail cars. Meat, fish, fruits and vegetables previously only available seasonally or not at all were now available down the street in the local markets. These were evolving into grocery stores. Some even offered credit to good customers. Some of the technologies which had made these miracles possible had been invented or perfected to supply far-flung armies with adequate diets. Ice boxes were becoming almost a necessity. Ice and coal were now delivered by railcar instead of by ship, and the delivery man carried them right through your door.

Substantial changes were occurring in domestic labor. Whereas in 1860, many middle class families had supported three or more enslaved domestic servants, following the Civil War, the role of domestics was increasingly taken by foreign white immigrant women. In addition, the rise of commerce and industrialization resulted in the opening of many new jobs and business opportunities which were now sought by both colored creoles and white immigrants. Now, white housewives were forced to find other sources of domestic help. Large scale immigration of Irish and Germans to New Orleans helped to fill in some of the losses. European immigrants had long played a central role in domestic service in all of the eastern states. However, with the loss of income experienced by most families in the South, paying daily wages for a cook was difficult and many working-class families could not afford the luxury

For those who could afford domestic help, an information revolution was also underway. Prior to the Civil War, most housewives had had only oral tradition and a few cookbooks to rely upon. “Still, the thrifty housewife [of the 1840s] made and served cakes fit for the gods, with only Miss Leslie’s cook book to refer to, and that was published in the twenties.[92] Post-Civil War publishers were distributing new kinds of manuals for the cook and the housewife. Increasingly, household management was being described as a “domestic science.” Popular how-to-do-it household manuals urged those employing

household domestic servants to treat them with greater respect, “as though they were simply conducting business” [93] Katherine Beecher and others taught about the education of girls in household management. Highly detailed instructions were provided covering the management of time and domestic servants. Wives and their help were given religious-like motivation and calls to duty. Factory-like discipline was extolled. Cleanliness was essential. To help transform the imperious slave mistress into a kind and efficient household manager, studies on the psychology of domestic service called for wives to recognize the evils of an attitude that assumed one’s right to be waited on, and the practical consequences of the exploitation of domestics (“they will desert you”).

Not only was the domestic on call at all hours, but she was effectively isolated from any normal social life. It is no wonder that she was drawn to the call of other employment opportunities. During the last quarter of the century opportunities for employment increased and choosing a household service position was often considered a last resort.[94] Lists of employments appropriate for young women were published. Wages for domestic service rose. In 1870, one out of 8 American families had a domestic servant but by the year 1900 it was only 1 in 15 families.[95]

To help the wife become more efficient in her tasks, numerous innovations in cooking and in kitchen gadgetry saved time and tempers. The number of patents for domestic appliances and devices had exploded since the 1850s. Egg beaters, meat grinders, apple corers, and sifters for flour saved time and wear on the hands.[96] Wire screening was becoming available to prevent the entrance of vermin into the kitchen and dining room. Easy to clean materials were available for the kitchen -- linoleum, tin ceiling panels, and enameled iron surfaces. “Dry sinks’ supplied piped water at the twist of a faucet. Piped gas was soon to follow. All of this meant that a much smaller domestic service staff was required to supply good meals for the increasingly down-sized Southern family. Operating a kitchen required fewer people. A housewife and her female children were often sufficient.[34] However, one essential ingredient was still lacking.

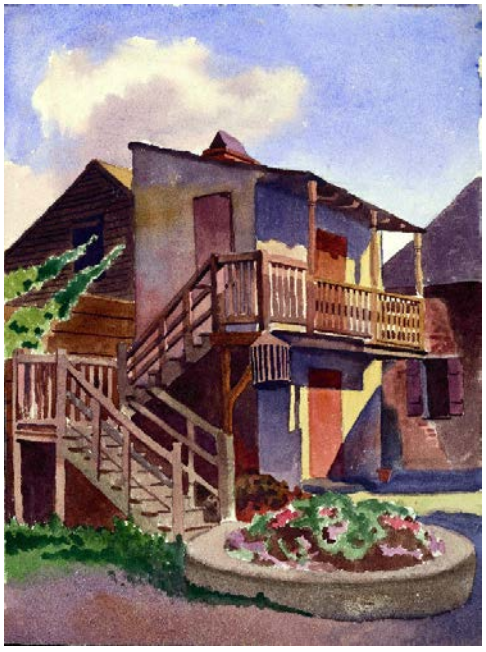


**Fig. 5.15. An antebellum kitchen building at 915-17 St. Anne Street. Painting by Boyd Cruise, LSM EL.2007.1.**



**Fig. 5.16. A Kitchen building in New Orleans converted into a mattress factory. Painting by Wm. Woodward 1904 courtesy the New Orleans Museum of Art. 16.17.**

The pre-Civil War city house had consisted of several separate buildings including a free-standing kitchen. Whether you lived in a single story Creole cottage or a multi-story townhouse, your kitchen stood apart and behind the main house. Often it was two and occasionally even three stories tall. It held the kitchen proper with its large cooking fireplace, a bedroom for the enslaved cook, and perhaps other rooms for rental or domestics Figs. 5.15, 5.16). Now, the domestic servants were gone and the wife was faced with the realization that the work previously done by servants now belonged to her alone. Besides cooking and cleaning, it would be her duty to carry the hot meals across the backyard space and into the *salle* or the dining room where her family, and sometimes guests, awaited their evening meal. Though no white New Orleans housewife seems to have written in detail about this transformation, one can easily imagine the near universal calls for a better cooking and eating arrangement. One widespread

result of these transformations was that housewives were demanding that dining rooms and kitchens be integrated into the house (with the exception of summer kitchens). New dining rooms were inserted and "kitchens were eventually absorbed back into the main body of the house." [97]

But how to do it? Neither the old Creole cottage nor the townhouse had space for a kitchen. The roof form of the popular Creole cottage would not permit an easy expansion of its floor space. To span a depth of roughly 60 feet, one could lay out a floorplan three rooms deep, but to add an additional fourth room to the rear of the house meant that the roof ridge would have to rise. A gable roof with a 30 foot tall roof ridge would simply not fit with the prevailing architectural aesthetic. It would mean that the roof would stand almost twice as tall as the walls of the house. Nor could a two story kitchen building be easily added to the rear of a two-story townhouse without disrupting the living space.

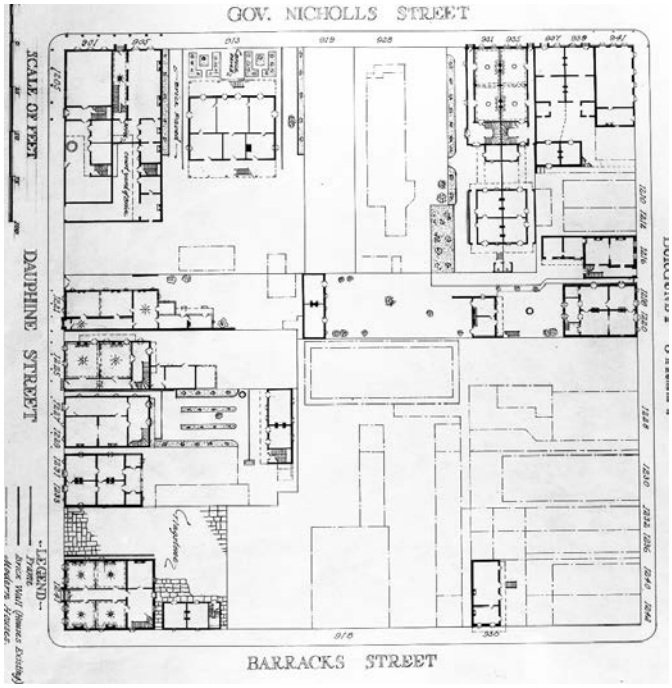



**Fig. 5.17. Square 82 in the French Quarter, Cabrini Square before 1937. This HABS plan shows the floorplans of multiple Creole Cottages and Creole Townhouses which stood on the square, before they were razed to make. Note that adding a full-width building directly behind these common New Orleans residence Types would disrupt their internal organization. Image courtesy the Louisiana State Museum.**

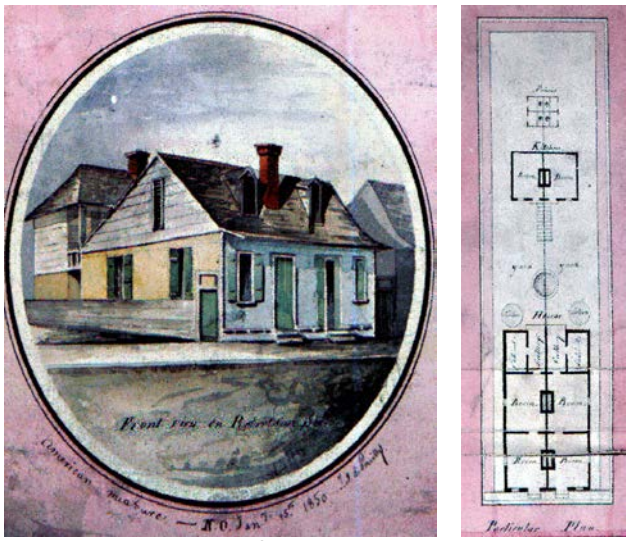


**Fig. 5.18. An 1850 painting of a Double Creole cottage by DePoully. The two-story kitchens rest about 45 feet behind the back wall of the house. A glance at the functional rear cabinet and loggia spaces quickly reveals that the addition of a large dining/kitchen addition directly behind any house with this plan would be highly disruptive to its social and spatial functioning. NONA 076.044.**

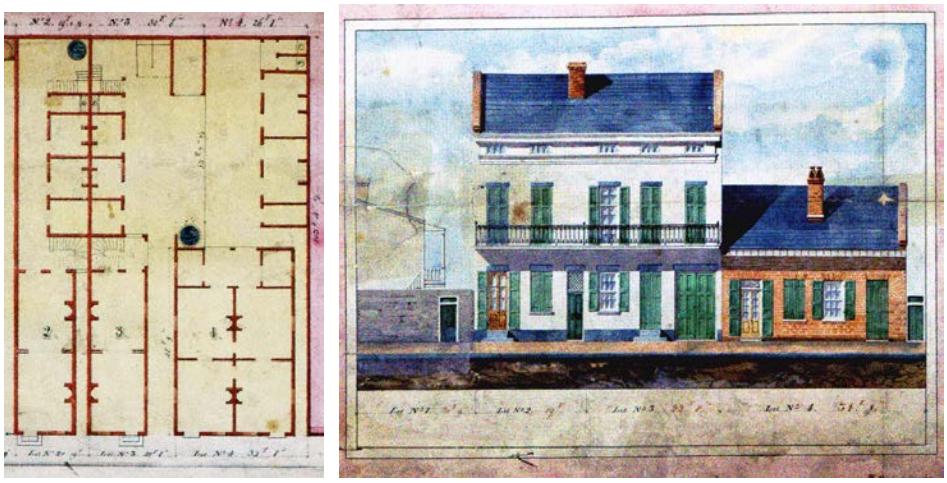


**Fig. 5.19. Plans of a two-story townhouse (left side) and a Creole cottage (right side). The buildings are at 427 and 429 Burgundy Street and were built in the late 1830s. Note that there is no easy place to insert a dining/kitchen expansion in the plans of these two traditional New Orleans houses. NONA 084.028.**

It is from this date, ca. 1865, that we find that new cottages and townhouses houses are no longer being built with rear cabinet-loggias. 1865 is the year of the last architectural manual which calls for the construction of a free-standing kitchen with an open fireplace for cooking. By the end of the 1860s, the old pre Civil War detached kitchen was fast becoming a thing of the past.[98]

In the end, what everyone discovered was that the shotgun house was ideally suited for the kind of expansion required by the addition of a kitchen to the rear of one's house. Shotguns were less expensive to build and they could be expanded almost indefinitely on the deep narrow lots of New Orleans. It was even often possible to add an existing two-story kitchen building directly to the rear of an existing single story shotgun house by simply building a connecting dining room extension between shotgun and the kitchen. One had only the expense of a single additional rear room, plus the modernization of the old kitchen with a cast-iron stove and other up-to-date amenities.

We can follow the development of the Camelback house by comparing two sets of drawings, one from 1830 and the other from 1890. In the first illustration we see a typical configuration of New Orleans houses ca. 1865. Each of the single story houses has a two-story kitchen situated in the rear yard about 20 feet behind the house. The plan of the Creole Cottage is not well suited to accommodate a dining room behind the cabinet rooms, while the shotgun house is ideally suited for this new addition (Fig. 5.20). Builders and architects soon recognized the best possible solution for modernizing a New Orleans house. The shotgun was simply connected with its kitchen building by inserting a dining room, coupled, perhaps with a pantry and maid's room (Fig. 5.21)

Until ca. 1870, these strange looking houses were referred to as "a house and a two-story kitchen, the kitchen being attached directly to the house." Before long, the arrangement came to be called a "camel-back" house. By the time of the 1876 Sanborn Insurance Company map of New Orleans, there would be over a hundred of them spread across the city. For those who could not afford the costs of a new townhouse, the shotgun house – expanded -- was ideally suited to the needs of the modern Victorian nuclear family with its tight budget and its more tightly integrated architecture (Fig. 5.22).



**Fig. 5.20. A typical middle 19th century configuration of New Orleans houses. A 2-bay half Creole Cottage, and a 3-bay Side Hall Linear Cottage, each with detached 2-story kitchens sitting about 20 feet behind their back walls. This was a common configuration in New Orleans in 1865, when Camelback houses became popular. Insert a dining room in the intervening space behind the shotgun house and you have a camelback. It does not work well for the Creole Cottage, however, as it places two cabinet rooms in the wrong location between a front parlor and the dining room.**

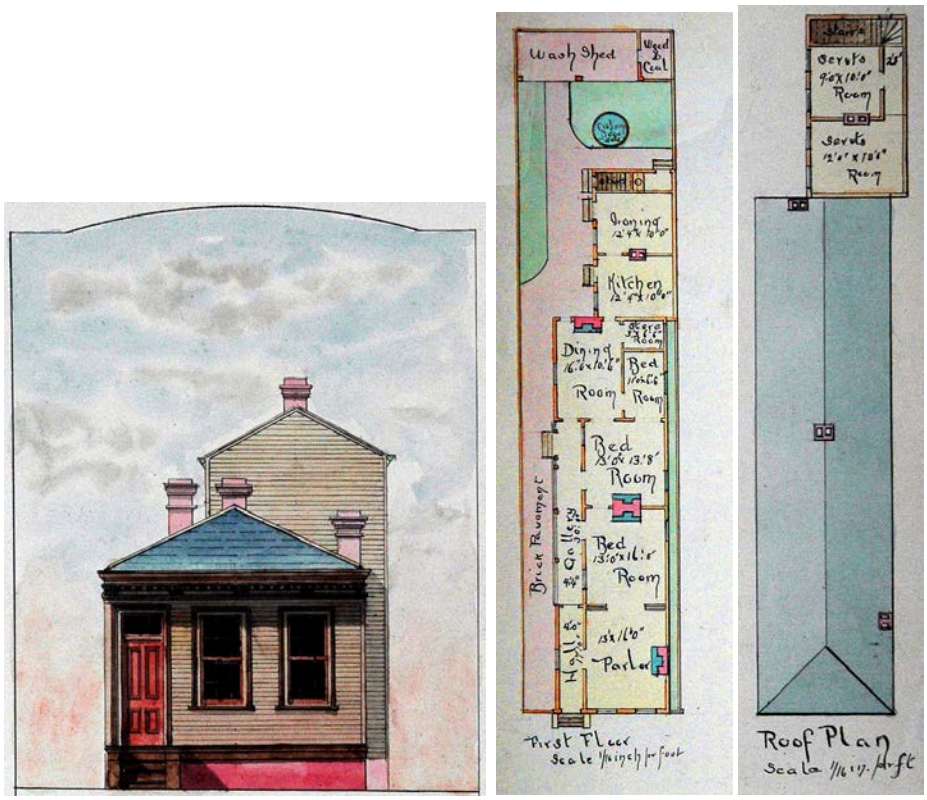



**Fig. 5.21. Design for a 3-bay Side gallery Camelback house from the office of James Freret. This is an Office Sample, used to introduce prospective customers to the kinds of buildings which might be supplied. The house was designed for Julian Leblane, Esq. It was to be built on St. Claude St. It shows an absolutely traditional 3-bay side gallery shotgun house with a slightly offset detached two story kitchen sitting 16 feet behind. Freret has simply inserted a dining room/servant's room between the house and the kitchen, converting them in the most simple way into a Camelback house. By modernizing the kitchen with a cookstove and, perhaps, with a "dry" sink for running water from the cistern, a perfectly modern house results. Image courtesy the Southeastern Architectural Archive, Tulane University.**

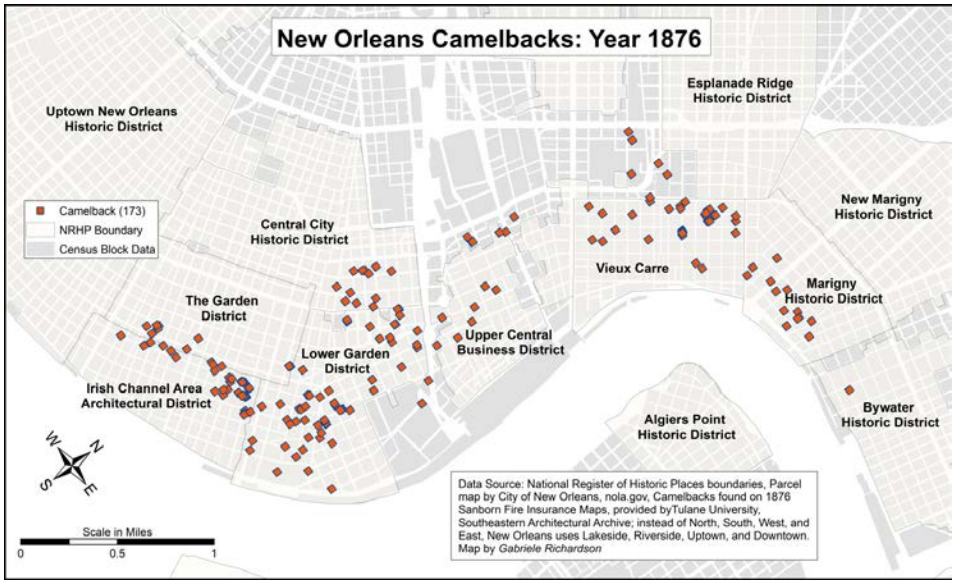



**Fig. 5.22. The distribution of camelback houses in New Orleans in 1876, as depicted on the Sanborn maps. The total number is 173.**

But who, exactly, were the buyers and consumers of the camelback house? The 1880 census contains sufficient information to provide a profile of the residents. Used in conjunction with the Sanborn maps dated four years earlier, we obtained a profile of the classes of people and the professions of the owners of camelback houses. The 1876 Sanborn maps identify 173 camelback houses. The address of each camelback house was written on the map. If an address was in question, we made reference to the 1885 series of Sanborns, which also contained the same older series of addresses. The 1880 census is the first decennial census to list the street addresses of residences. This permits all of the census information on the residents to be correlated with their house type. One problem is that the census schedules are hand-written and a proportion of them are illegible or damaged. Information for any single category (occupation, place of birth) is somewhat less than the total of 173. Because of this, we used percentages.

**Gender:** There was information on the sexes of 155 owners of camelback houses. 73.5 percent were owned by males and 26.5 percent owned by females. That a quarter of these new camelback style houses

were female-owned points to the high level of female-headed households as well as the high level of enterprise of females in New Orleans society in 1880. The average age of the male owners was 42.6 years, that of the female owners 50.0 years. The disparity is probably a reflection of the artificially high levels of widowhood in New Orleans due to the Civil War, even in 1880.

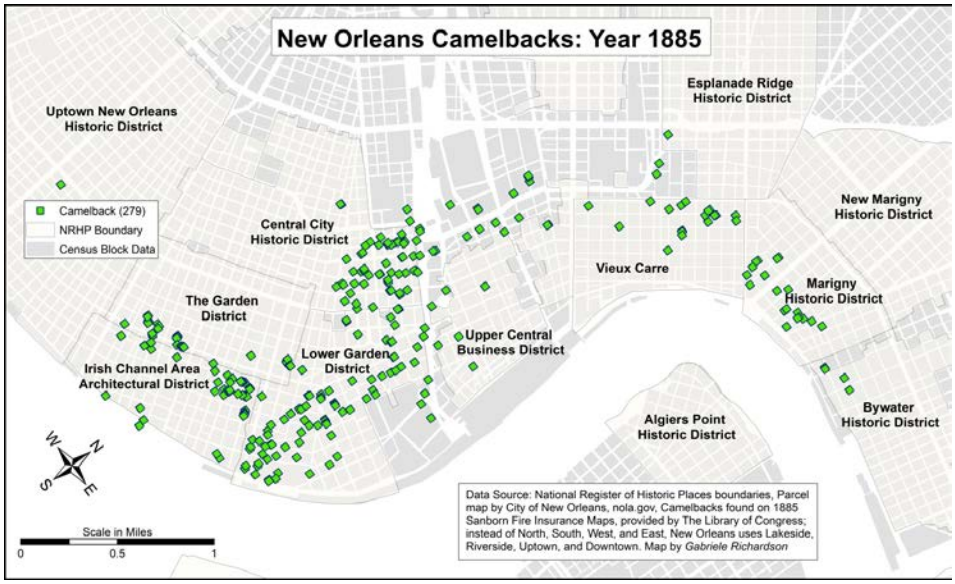
**Race:** The camelback was largely a white phenomenon. 91 percent of the camelbacks were owned by whites, 4 percent by blacks, 4 percent by colored, and one half of one percent by a Chinese owner. One owner was of unknown race. This raises the question of the place of birth of the owners.

**Place of Origin:** Was the camelback a phenomenon of local culture, or was it due to influence from foreign-born persons? Interestingly, only 22 percent of 1876 camelback owners had been born in Louisiana. A total of 44 percent were born in the United States, while 56 percent were foreign born, with Ireland, German speaking countries, and France being the highest contributors in that order. The high mortality rates due to diseases coupled with the high levels of immigration were certainly significant factors here. The preponderance of foreign-born camelback owners raises the possibility that the camelback, itself, represents an outside influence on the traditional Linear Cottage housetypes of New Orleans. Could it be that the newcomers were previously used to the convenience of internal kitchens and cook stoves and that they transformed the shotgun house with these ideas in mind?

**Socioeconomic class:** This is more difficult to assess, but the principal occupations of the owners were listed. Among the 41 female owners, the highest proportion were said to be “keeping house,” or “at home.” This figure includes 37 widows. Widows continued to be a very high proportion of the adult female population in New Orleans. There were only 4 single female homeowners. Occupations of female homeowners included a nurse (1), washerwomen (3), teachers (2), a cook (1), a house servant (1), and a coal and wood dealer (1). For the 114 male owners of camelback houses: merchants and grocers (17), government employees (10), laborers (8), clerks and salesmen (5), butchers (5), workers in the fabrics industries (5), saloon keepers and bartenders (4), shoemakers (4), sailors and workers in naval trades (4), bankers and money brokers (3), workers in manufacturing (3), iron and steel workers (3), tailors and milliners (2), and painters (2) rounded out the list.

The 155 owners for which we have information seem to be about evenly split between salaried workers, trades people, laborers (perhaps self-employed?), and widows. The camelback house appealed to people of the working class and the middle class. These were mostly people of steady but limited incomes who could better afford to expand an existing house than to purchase an entirely new house such as a townhouse or even a shotgun house. They are solid citizens -- people who are economically secure and perhaps upwardly mobile, but not in any sense wealthy. They are also people who could afford to take advantage of the services of the new and growing savings and loan companies and banks. Their socioeconomic status pretty much insured that the first generations of camelback houses would be add-ons and that they would be highly variable in their individuality.

Clearly, the camelback phenomenon is not simply an outgrowth of the old Creole vernacular culture of the city. It is something new; a reaction to post-bellum conditions which drew upon older architectural resources but modified them in radically new ways. Over the succeeding decades, the camelback house continued to grow, both in numbers and in its proportion of all housetypes in the city. By 1885 the Sanborn maps show 279 camelbacks. The camelback has spread with the growth of the city, both upriver into the Garden district and beyond, and downriver into Fiubourgs Marigny and Bywater. The number of camelbacks in the French Quarter had decreased from thirty in 1876 to eighteen in 1885. The densest concentrations of camelbacks are in that portion of Central City adjacent to the CBD, in the Lower Garden District, and in the Irish Channel and adjacent Garden District streets (Magazine, Camp; Refer to Fig. 5.22).




**Fig, 5.23. The distribution of camelback houses as depicted on the 1885 series of Sanborn Maps of New Orleans. The total is 279.**

### The Types of Camelback Houses

Many of the camelback houses depicted on our maps are not the modern camelbacks which people in New Orleans are used to in the late twentieth and the twenty-first centuries. Historic camelbacks are quite different, reflecting the evolution of the housetype over a period of some fourteen decades. We began by dividing Camelbacks into five different categories, based upon stages in their development. They form an evolutionary sequence from minimal camelbacks to modern fully-elaborated camelbacks. The majority of the Camelbacks from the earliest decades, 1870 – 1890, are Synthetic Camelbacks which were constructed out of once separate building units. These consist of a main house, a back house and a connector. The images in this diagram are footprints taken from Sanborn maps (Fig. 5.25). We refer to them in sequence as follows:

**1) A One-Quarter Camelback:** The main house is joined to the back house by a minimal connecting unit which does not fit the width of one or both of the free-standing units. It is simply a covered passage

connecting the two units. We assume that this was the first tentative conjoining of a main house with a free-standing rear kitchen with a newly-installed cast iron stove or range. In addition, a one-quarter Camelback may be connected directly to its rear kitchen, but it has no internal access between the two sections of the house (Fig. 5.24).

**2) A One-Half Camelback:** This is connected by a more substantial connector which may be the width of the front house, or nearly so. The components may be offset or of different widths (Fig. 5.26).

**3) A Three-Quarter Camelback:** Its two-story kitchen building is attached directly to the rear of the main house, but the walls of the main house and the kitchen are not aligned. The kitchen building is usually more-narrow in width than the main house (Fig. 5.27). Finally,

**4) A Full Camelback:** It has no connector. Its two-story rear kitchen unit is perfectly aligned with the main house. This is the form which is constructed entirely as a camelback, from scratch. By the 1880s and 1890s, full camelbacks are being built as a complete new housetype, rather than as separate buildings which have been put together in serial fashion (Figs. 5.30 – 5.36). Now, the camelback has become an entirely new housetype, but it was also possible to construct a camelback in pieces, but maintain the appearance of a Full Camelback. This is also common in New Orleans (Fig. 5.30).

**5) A High-Low:** This is a camelback with an enlarged rear section which is not only two stories tall, but also expanded beyond the width of the front of the house (Fig 5.37).

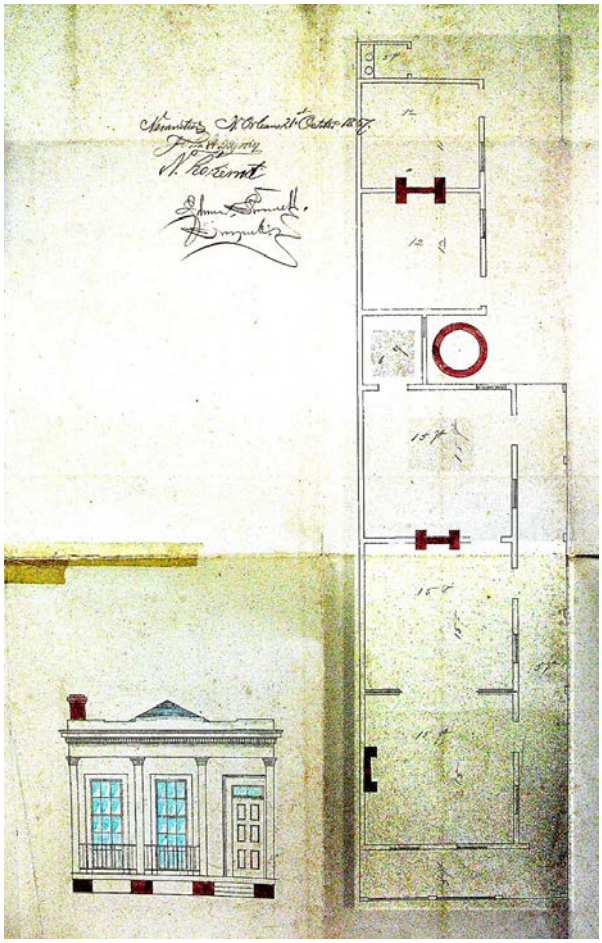


**Fig. 5.24 A One-Quarter Camelback sketch to be attached to a builder's contract. This 1858 Camelback is in Greek Revival décor. There is no interior connection between the residence and the rear kitchen, though they are connected. The house was to be built on Dryades Street. The document was attached to E. Barnette, N.P., Vol 64, Act 444, p. 4. Courtesy the New Orleans Notarial Archives, Division of the Clerk of Courts.**

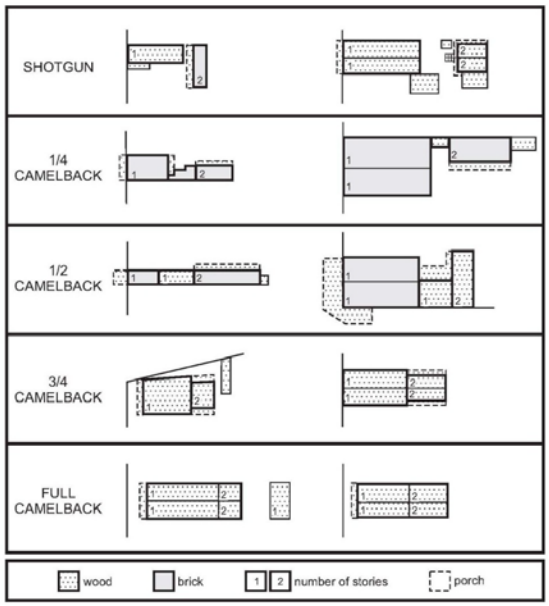



**Fig. 5.25. The evolution of the camelback, as seen through footprints taken from the 1876 Sanborn maps of New Orleans. Dotted lines indicate overhanging roofs or galleries. Solid color indicates a masonry-walled building, dotted spaces are wooden walled structures.**

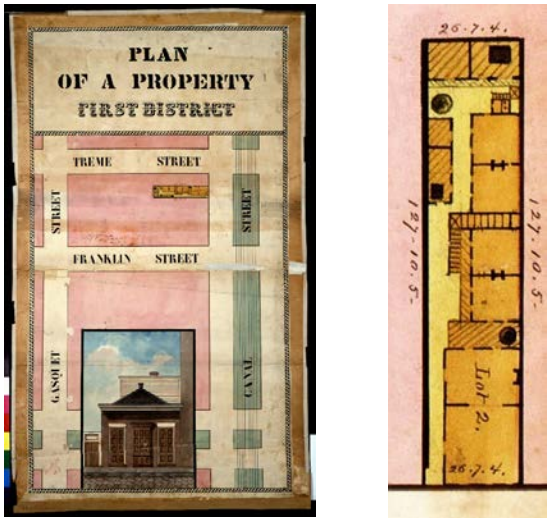






**Fig. 5.26. A One-Half Camelback on Canal Street, Ca. 1879, with a wide connector between the main house and the two-story addition. The connector is an open space with a shed roof. Image courtesy NONA 079.001.**



**Fig. 5.27. A Three-Quarter Camelback with an offset rear kitchen section. The building is on Frenchmen Street in the 8th Ward. JDE Photo 2004.**

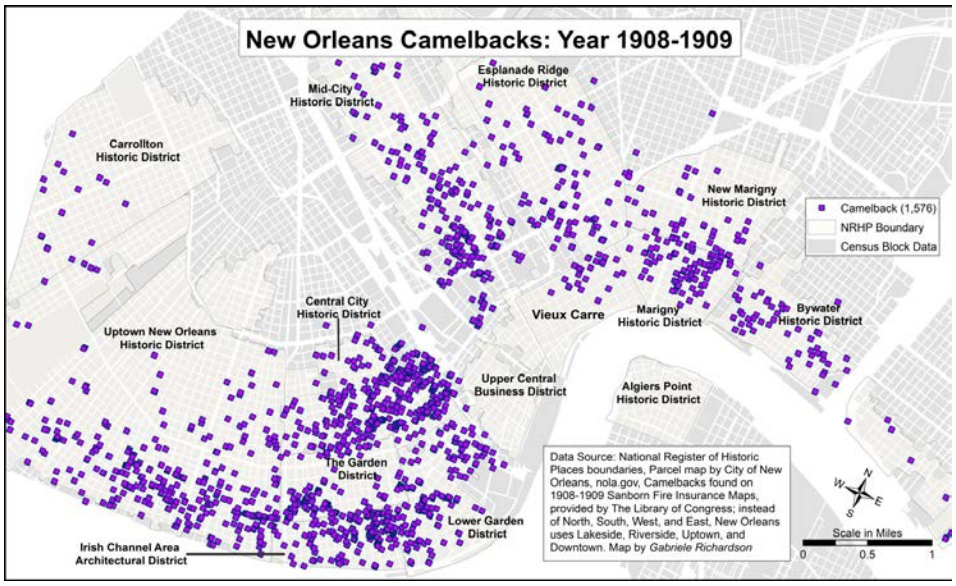



**Fig. 5.28. The distribution of camelback houses in New Orleans in 1908-09. Taken from the Sanborn maps. Camelbacks in the Quarter = 21. Total number of camelbacks is 1,576. Richardson map for the Kniffen Lab.**

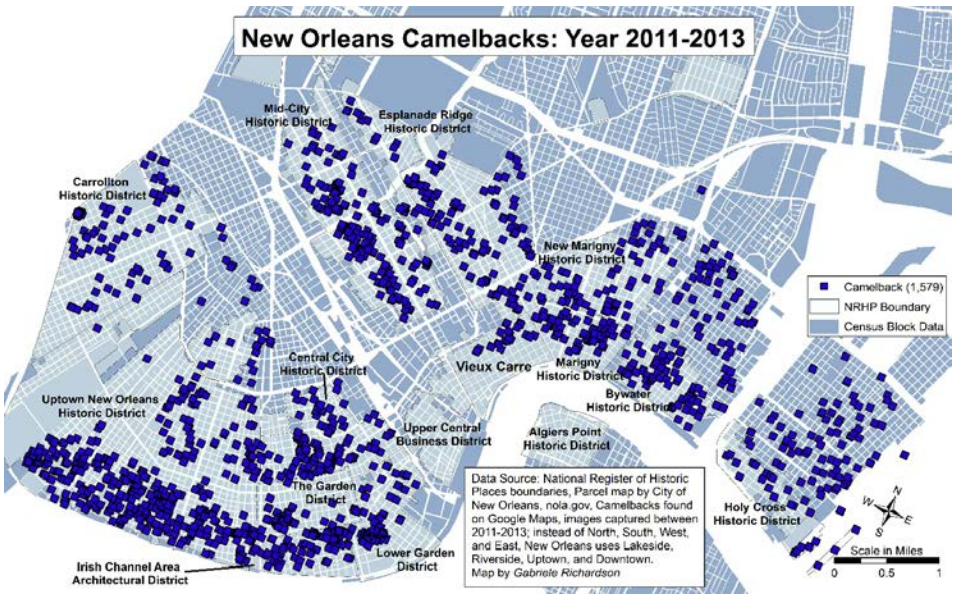



**Fig. 5.29. A map of the historic districts of New Orleans in 2011-13, with the location of Camelback houses. There is a total of 1,579 in this area. Richardson map for the Kniffen Lab.**



**Fig. 5.30. A Single Camelback on St. Claude in the Lower 9th Ward. The early front section of this house was built in barge-board construction. Here, the house has been repaired from damage it received in Hurricane Katrina. The style of the front porch is called "Classical Revival." It dates from the 1880 to 1900. This is a Full Camelback house, even though it was constructed piecemeal at different times. JDE Photo 2010.**



**Fig. 5.31. A 5-bay Side Gallery Camelback double JDE Photo 2011.**



**Fig. 5.32. A Sidesaddle Camelback Double at 2325 Royal Street in Marigny. JDE Photo 2008.**



**Fig. 5.33. A 3-bay *appentis* style Camelback in Treme. JDE Photo 2008.**



**Fig. 5.34. A raised 6-bay Double Camelback at 530-32 Esplanade. This camelback is unusual in that the elevated portion is short and does not extend to the back of the house. JDE Photo 2014.**



**Fig. 5.35. A large and handsome 4-bay Double Camelback in Classical Revival styling at the corner of Hagan and Desoto. JDE photo, 2015.**



**Fig. 5.36. Another form of large 4-bay Double Camelback in Classical Revival styling, with a large upstairs addition, 2255 Brainard in the Lower Garden District. JDE Photo 2010.**



**Fig. 5.37. A post-Katrina Hi-Low Camelback in Holy Cross. JDE Photo 2011.**



**Fig. 5.38. A Craftsman style Double Camelback at 1309-11 Mandeville in Treme. JDE Photo 2010.**

**The Camelback House: 1909 to the Present**

Moving now to the perspective of the last one-hundred years, two basic kinds of Camelback house have dominated the cultural landscapes of New Orleans. Almost all of the Fractional Camelbacks have disappeared. In their stead, we find Full Integral Camelbacks, Full Synthetic Camelbacks and Hi-Low Camelbacks. Integral Camelbacks are one-off houses. They were designed from the beginning as a single unit. Synthetic Camelbacks grew by stages into their present configurations. They are in the majority – an indication of the limitations on building resources of many New Orleanians who favor the Camelback form. Synthetic Camelbacks may take the form of Three-Quarter Camelbacks or they may resemble Integral Camelbacks. Hi-Low Camelbacks are favored in the new or rebuilt neighborhoods such as Navarre and Lakeview.

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As the Camelback house evolved in the early decades of the twentieth century, it continued to diversify. The current configuration of Camelbacks in New Orleans almost defies comprehension, or at least classification. A second major trend followed World War II. Camelbacks were again reconfigured to include even more modern conveniences such as internal bathrooms and all of the other kinds of rooms common to late twentieth century middle class houses. They also became even larger. Hi-Low houses expanded the space available in the interior while at the same time they retained a valued traditional street view. The desire to still have a house which fits into the traditional mold of New Orleans historic houses is strong and widely shared by modern home-owners (Fig. 5.36).

Camelback houses continued to be built in comparatively large numbers between 1910 and World War II. Even in newly developing neighborhoods such as Bywater and Holy Cross, Camelbacks appeared spontaneously, together with Shotgun Singles, Doubles, Side Halls, and other traditional forms of New Orleans cottages and town houses. Camelbacks were decorated in a variety of styles, beginning with Greek Revival and passing through Italianate (Fig. 5.39), Victorian eclectic (Edwardian, Queen Anne, Eastlake, Classic Revival) and into Craftsman (Fig. 5.38). Those neighborhoods developed in the 1920s and 1930s, when the bungalow style was popular, still retained their fair share of new Camelbacks.



**Fig. 5.39. A four-bay Camelback in Italianate dressing. Drawing by Lloyd Vogt.**



**Fig. 5.40. A 1930s 1-bay Single shotgun in Gentilly Terrace, is here expanded into a makeshift Synthetic Hi-Low Camelback. Note the "grotto," common in Catholic neighborhoods. JDE Photo, 2005.**

Two subsequent events were to strongly affect the popularity of the Camelback house. The construction of traditional vernacular architectural forms largely ended with World War II. The G.I. Bill

which followed encouraged the returning veterans to build in a different way. Single-story slab houses were constructed by the thousands as New Orleans continued to push outward towards Lake Pontchartrain and towards the East. Most of these were pattern book houses based on plans distributed nation-wide. In some cases, however, the old vernacular housetypes reëmerged in post-war clothing. Some neighborhoods developed in the 1950s – 1970s retain more traditional vernacular houses than new popular architectural forms (Fig 5.42). Camelbacks in the late 20th century were built with modern materials and low roof pitches, resembling their pattern-book neighbors in all but having the curious feature of a two-story section mounted behind a single story linear cottage form.



**Fig. 5.41. A post-war Hi-Low Camelback at 2519 Verbana in Gentilly Terrace. JDE Photo, 2016.**



**Fig. 5.42. A narrow Neo-Camelback in Holy Cross. JDE Photo, 2007.**



**Fig. 5.43. A large post-Katrina Camelback at 130 Lopez in Mid City. JDE Photo, 2007.**

The second event was considerably more dramatic. In September of 2005, the flooding associated with Hurricane Katrina destroyed thousands of wooden houses in New Orleans. No city in the United States had suffered a comparable level of destruction of its housing stock in a single event. Ten years later the reconstruction of some neighborhoods is still minimal. Did the old Camelbacks survive to be revised once again? The answer appears to be a resounding "yes." Using data from 2011 through 2014 in our most recent survey, 1,579 Camelbacks were standing in and near the historic districts of New Orleans (Figure 5.29). In other words, the density of the Camelback is roughly equivalent to what it was in 1908-09, over a century before. In the six to eight years since Katrina, numerous old Camelbacks were refurbished. Some are still in the process of renovation. Perhaps the greatest evidence of New Orleans' continuing love affair with the Camelback is that an entire new generation of integral "neo-Camelbacks" is being built to replace residences which were destroyed in the flooding and razed. They range from the diminutive (Fig. 5.42, to almost monstrous (Fig. 5.43). Now slab-mounted ranch houses stand interspersed with traditional linear cottages and Creole cottages. Because neo-Camelbacks have modern amenities, such as indoor kitchens, bathrooms, and air conditioning, the original functions of the

camelback section of the house now appear superfluous. It seems the “strength of tradition” and a symbolic identification with traditional forms account for the continued popularity of this local curiosity, long after the social forces that led to its creation had passed into history.

Our final point concerning camelback evolution is that from the beginning of the twentieth century the Camelback house underwent an explosive radiation into a wide variety of subtypes dressed in multiple styles. Its diversity is constantly fascinating – often astonishing. It seems that no two Camelback houses are identical. Builders have stretched this once conservative form into shapes so diverse as to appear unrelated to one another. Classifying the sub-types would amount to a dissertation-length study in its own right. Naming them would stretch the imagination of most inventive lexicographer.

## Conclusion

Now, eighty years after his initial published paper on Louisiana Housetypes, we have sought to follow Kniffen’s conceptual path by offering another contribution to our understanding of the vernacular architecture to Louisiana. In this, we expand upon concepts and methods which he originated.

Kniffen was an enthusiastic supporter of the idea that folk houses could be understood through geographical methods. Mapping their distributions and periods of development was essential to their interpretation, but mapping has not been one of the central themes in the toolkit of those who study vernacular architecture – rather a kind of leitmotif.

In the study of urban vernacular architecture we believe that large scale mapping is critical to a demonstration of origins. When compared against the distribution of social types --classes, ethnic groups, or races -- mapping unveils useful information. As the maps in this article demonstrate, the camelback house appeared almost everywhere in New Orleans simultaneously. It sprang up throughout the faubourgs regardless of social class or ethnic affiliation. This negates the idea that it arose out of an ethnic nucleus, as did the New Orleans Creole cottage. It supports the notion that the camelback is an artifact of the intersection of new technologies with existing popular house types (Linear Cottages). The camelback

sprang to life precisely when new kitchen technologies such as the cast iron stove revolutionized the position of the post-bellum housekeeper and the place of the kitchen in the Victorian house.

Kniffen originated the idea of basing the concept of house type strictly upon principal geometric features shared by many comparable buildings. Throughout New Orleans, the Camelback is considered to be a significant local sub-type. A review of the amazing diversity of buildings referred to as "camelbacks" throws the very concept of housetype into question. Is any single story house with a two story tall rear addition to be called a Camelback? Is the diversity of forms so great that the concept of Camelback should be reserved for a special modification of any vernacular type? For example, can a Creole cottage be a Camelback (Fig. 5.45)? Perhaps we should clearly distinguish between Kniffen's geometrical or structural types, and popular types – those shared in the minds of the population at large.



**Fig. 5.45. A Camelbacked Creole Cottage on Esplande Ave. JDE Photo, 2014.**

The central contribution of this chapter is our interpretation for the reasons behind the rise of the camelback and its continuing popularity. We believe it is not unfair to state that almost no one in New Orleans understands the origins of this prominent architectural type. Urban legends abound -- mostly

pretty far off the mark. In the language of modern material culture history, the camelback is a result of multiple contingent possibilities intersecting with special historical needs and architectural traditions. It emerged out of a sequence of exceptional opportunities. It developed uniquely, because the historical circumstances from which it materialized were unique.

The rise of the Shotgun house has been described in an earlier paper.[99] Shotgun houses abounded in New Orleans at the end of the Civil War. To many they were an inconvenient form as they offered little privacy. Until that time kitchens had been detached from the main house and cooking was done on open hearths. A substantial proportion of the residences of the city consisted of single story Linear Cottages with two story kitchen buildings behind them. In this, the South the rise of the integrated kitchen was retarded due in large measure to the economic stranglehold of the institution of slavery. We have suggested that in New Orleans, the traditional kitchens were eventually integrated with Linear Cottage residences, resulting, among other things, in the curious combination of a single story shotgun with a two story rear addition.

We suggest that the popularity of the Camelback is largely due to three social factors caused directly by post-Civil war conditions: 1) the need of New Orleans women to adapt to the end of slavery and the scarcity and expense of domestic help, especially in food preparation; 2) a revolution in food-preparation technology altering many of the earlier kitchen practices, and; 3) the corresponding need to adapt a suitable existing New Orleans house type to modern dining room and kitchen units. The new integrated kitchen provided for less labor-intensive food preparation. To these causes we tentatively add the possible influence of immigrants, who were not tied to older New Orleans architectural styles and who favored the camelback for its convenience. As an unintended consequence, the Camelback form produced a convenient and isolated master bedroom where privacy was insured. Alternately, the same upper spaces could be turned into extra rental rooms which augmented the incomes of families in straitened circumstances.

At first, Camelbacks were entirely synthetic. They grew piecemeal while meeting the architectural and financial needs of a growing middle class population. They provided a more elegant

statement in an environment in which single story shotgun houses were considered to be the residences of the laboring classes, both white and black. Architects disparaged the low lying Shotgun – architectural historians ignored it. But Camelback Shotguns became an important symbol of the rising middle class. They found favor in a social-symbolic niche lodged between the elegant two and three story townhouses of the modestly wealthy, and the low houses of the laboring classes. They were favored by a foreign-born population which was already accustomed to the convenience of an internal kitchen. By the 1880s, architects and builders were designing and marketing Camelback houses as fully integrated forms. Camelbacks grew larger (Figs. 5.34 – 5.36). They had become a new kind of housetype in their own right, with their own clientele. Because that clientele survived and prospered through the entire twentieth century and into the twenty-first, so has the camelback house.

## NOTES

### Preface

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P2 George Washington Cable, 1889. "Sieur George," *Old Creole Days*. New York: New American Library. P. 186.

### Chapter 1

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2. See: Ole Scheeren. Why Great Architecture Should Tell a Story. Accessed Feb. 6, 2016 at: https://www.ted.com/talks/ole_scheeren_why_great_architecture_should_tell_a_story?language=en
3. Richard Koch's career and contributions are described in: Masson, Frank. Richard Koch, 2013:359-60; Sam Wilson, the Survey in Louisiana in the 1930s. 1983. See also Gorin, 1991, p. 9.
4. Pope 2015:79-81.
5. Gorin 1991, pp. 15-16.
6. Wilson, 1987.
7. Wilson, 1975, Wilson 1980, and Wilson 1968.
8. Wilson 1968.
9. Gorin 1991:81.
10. Wilson, n.d. Louisiana History of Architecture.
11. Wilson 1992:8. Also, information from Samuel Wilson. Lecture to LSU class in vernacular architecture, June 5, 1980; 1987. *The Architecture of Colonial Louisiana, Collected Essays*. Lafayette, LA: Center for Louisiana Studies, 33, 35].
12. Kniffen 1990:35.
13. Kniffen 1990:36.
14. Kniffen 1936 pp. 179-93
15. Kniffen 1965:549-77.

16. I was an anthropology graduate student at the same time at Tulane, and was introduced to Henry. His apartment was adorned with full-sized sketches of the cartoon character, Pogo, whom Henry loved.
17. Glassie, 1968:viii.
18. Glassie 1975.
19. The condition of a gemeinschaft, or a strong sense of common identity and unity -- an unstructured social order in which all members of a community are emotionally bonded, permitting them to share common experiences through the practices of domestic life, and other rituals. – Victor and Edith Turner.
20. Knipmeyer 1956:79.
21. Knipmeyer 1956:81.
22. Vlach 1975. Vol.I:58; Newton 1971:15.
23. Vlach 1975:5.

**Chapter 2.**

24. Accessed at: http://www2.warwick.ac.uk.fac/spc/sociology//rsw/current/cscs/creolizationconcepts Accessed 11/3/10.
25. Refer to Stewart 2007:18.
26. Le Maire 1985 (1714):
27. Charles Cesar Robin, 1808, and Pujol 1939.
28. For overviews, see particularly: Brooks 1993, 2003; Mark 1996, 2003; Teixeira de Mota 1948, and Bourdier and Minh-Ha 1996.
29. Diallo 1975.
30. Jobson 1623:64.
31. Labat 1724, Vol. 6, Fig. 2.
32. Miller 2010:15.
33. Moore, Francis 1738.
34. Post, Franz 1660.

35. De Oviedo 1532; Myers 2007:140.
36. Vlach 1975:106-07; Loven 1935.
37. Vlach 1975 vol. I:194-97.
38. Edwards and Kariouk 2004:40,120.
39. Caillot 1729-1730.

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41. Spear 2009:59-68.
42. Dessen 2007:35.
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44. Lachance 1999:171.
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46. 1997:27.
47. Lachance 1999:175.
48. Rousseve 1937:102.
49. Clark 2013:101.
50. Clark 2013:110.
51. Lemmon and Lawrence, 2006:86.
52. Dessens 2007:27.
53. Hanger 1993:83.
54. Gonichon's Plan of 1730, Lemmon, McGill and Wiese 2003:310-11.
55. Lemmon et. al. 2003:318-19.

56. Plan of Joseph de Pilié, Jan. 30, 1819.
57. "Many fine women with brunette complexions are to be seen walking the streets with the air of donnas. They wear no bonnets, but as a substitute, fasten a veil to the head. As they move it floats gracefully around them. These are termed quadroons, one quarter of their blood being tinged with African. Some of the finest looking women in New Orleans are Quadroons…" James Register, 1834-35. New Orleans is My Name. Shreveport, LA. Mid South Press, 1971:28. LaChance, The Formation of a Three-Caste Society: 273-78.

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59. Sam Wilson Jr., quoted in Huber 1965:37; Edwards and Kariouk 2004:10.
60. Harris 1977:36, 203.
61. Christovich, et. al. 1972:95.
62. Wilson et. al. 1984:51, 67.
63. Hamlin 1944:348.
64. Hamlin 1944:353; Lafever 1855: Plate 1.
65. Banks 1997:1.
66. Kennedy 1989:299.
67. Register 1971.
68. See also NONA 073.025; Wilson et.al. 1984:88.
69. Wilson et.al. 1984:173.
70. Wilson et.al. 1984:72, 155.

**Chapter 5.**

71. Mosley 2015:18-19.
72. In this chapter, the names of established house types and families of houses are capitalized for clarity. Gabriele Richardson wrote the chapter with the assistance of her dissertation

advisor, Jay D. Edwards, of LSU.

73. With the exception of those deriving from a few small neighborhoods in Louisville Kentucky and other river cities.
74. Ruth Schwartz Cowan, "The Consumption Junction: A Proposal for Research Strategies in the Sociology of Technology," in The Social Construction of Technological Systems, Bijker, Wiebe E. and Hughes, Thomas P. and Pinch, Trevor. Cambridge: The MIT Press, 2012, 253-72, available from http://muse.jhu.edu/books/9780262301626; Steven Johnson, How We Got to Now (New York: Riverhead Books, 2014), 117.
75. Jay Dearborn Edwards, "Creolization Theory and the Odyssey of the Atlantic Linear Cottage," Etnofoor, Architecture 23, no. 1 (2011): 50-83.
76. Vlach 1975; 1976; 1977; 1990. Edwards 2009.
77. "City of New Orleans," last modified May 2011, http://www.nola.gov/nola/media/HDLC/Guidelines/03-TypesStyles.pdf. Relevant governmental and non-governmental agencies in New Orleans, which oversee the history of its house types and styles, include The Historic District Landmarks Commission (HDLC), the Vieux Carré Commission (VCC), the New Orleans Notarial Archives History Section of the Office of the Clerk of Courts (NONA), and the Preservation Resource Center of New Orleans (PRC).
78. Maps and plans from this period are hand-drawn. They were not always in English. New Orleans retained a great deal of French and Spanish documentation well into the nineteenth century.
79. The earliest series, 1876, is housed in the Southeastern Architectural Archive, a division of the Tulane University Library Special Collections. The other series were photographed in the Maps and Geography Division of the Library of Congress.
80. Photography of these maps taken at different times and locations resulted in considerable variation in their illumination. Using Adobe Photoshop, Version 7.0, I did my best to return the colors and contrasts of these maps to a single standard. Not uncommonly, individual Sanborn sheets contain

groups of smaller maps drawn from different locations. These had to be cut and stitched into their appropriate places. Occasionally, isolated industrial sites are separated from the overall coverage. These were not included in our remake of the map layers. Using the online black and white digital Sanborn maps http://sanborn.umi.com/la/3376/dateid-000001.htm?CCSI=3026n, each .jpg image was renamed with the proper date, volume, and sheet number of its Sanborn map series (Fig. 5.5).

81. See, for example: New Orleans Public Library, Microfilm CJ 430. New Orleans assessment records, First Municipality, 1836-1847, etc. note that the Square Numbers used in the Antebellum assessments are not the same as were standardized for the Districts of New Orleans later.
82. Testimony of George Jonas, president of the Canal Bank in New Orleans, Jan. 2, 1875, before the Select Committee on that portion of the President's Message relating to the Condition of the South. 43rd Congress, 2nd Session of the U.S. House of Representatives; Congressional Series of United States Public Documents (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1875) Report 101, Part 2, 272. https://books.google.com/books?id=jllHAQAAIAAJ&printsec=frontcover#v=onepage&q&f=false.
83. The lot designations were named by individual surveyors and renamed repeatedly through time. If a lot was subdivided prior to a full survey of the square, two adjacent lots might receive the same designation.
84. A standard whole lot, 64 feet by 128 feet, contains 7200 square feet. A half lot, 32 feet by 128 feet contains half of that, or 3600 square feet. The lots on Square 263 were mostly not standard lots because of earlier long-lot property lines, which were set at angles across the square, conforming to the orientation of the Bayou Road, the earliest road in the area. After the modern street system was laid out, newly created lots conformed to the new orientations, while earlier lots remained at angles to the new streets. According to New Orleans assessors, assessment was always based upon the total evaluation rather than the size of the lot.
85. For example, homeowners might contest the assessed valuation of their properties. If successful, the adjustments would lower their individual assessments somewhat.

86. Richard Campanella, Geographies of New Orleans: Urban Fabrics before the Storm. (Lafayette, LA: Center for Louisiana Studies, 2006), 13.
87. According to the 1880 census, about 81% of the immigrants were native-born U.S. citizens. Roughly, 19% were from foreign countries. In descending order of their numerical contributions, they included German-speaking sovereignties (14 thousand – 31%), Ireland (11.7 thousand – 28%), France (6.9 thousand – 17%), Italy, Spain, Nordic and other countries (6 thousand – 14.6%), Britain and Wales (1,800 – 4%), and British America (368). Germans, Irish and French clearly dominated the foreign-born populations of New Orleans.
88. Sybil Kein, "Louisiana Creole Food Culture: Afro-Caribbean Links," in Creole: The History and Legacy of Louisiana's Free People of Color, ed. Sybil Kein (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2000), 244-51.
89. Ellen M. Plante. The American Kitchen, 1700 to the Present: From Hearth to Highrise (New York: Facts on File, 1995), 55-66; Elizabeth Collins Cromley, The Food Axis: Cooking, Eating, and the Architecture of American Houses (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2010); Nancy Carlisle and Melinda Talbot Nasardinov, America's Kitchens (Boston: Historic New England, 2008), 67-68.
90. Plante, The American Kitchen, 1700 to the Present, 83.
91. Sarah Payne, 1865, quoted in Carlisle and Nasardinov, America's Kitchens, 68.
92. Ripley 1998:43.
93. Plante, The American Kitchen, 1700 to the Present, 113.
94. Plante, The American Kitchen, 1700 to the Present, 111.
95. Plante, The American Kitchen, 1700 to the Present, 113.
96. (Ripley 1998:43.
97. Carlisle and Nasardinov, America's Kitchens, 68.
98. Plante, The American Kitchen, 1700 to the Present, 48, 85.
99. Jay D. Edwards, "Shotgun: The Most Contested House in America," Buildings and Landscapes 16, no. 1 (2009): 62-96.

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