

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Magnolia Mound Plantation is a typical Louisiana late 10th century settlers house of the French and Spanish colonial period. It rests on a high mound with a number of large oak trees which provide deep shade. The orientation of the house was to the Mississippi River and the agricultural fields of the river lands. At present it has been encroached upon by the growing city of Baton Rouge.

Originally the house had a three room, side by side room arrangement. It was extended to the rear (east) in the early 19th century to include a formal dining room and two service rooms. One service room provided stair access to the unfinished loft. A " U-shaped " gallery was constructed during this second stage of development. A shed porch was constructed on the rear (east) facade. During the late 19th century, rooms were added under the gallery on the north and south.

The basic form of the house is rectangular with a large tripped roof, which covered all rooms and galleries. Two dormers punctuate the roof on the west or river side. One major chimney identifies the original back to back fireplace of the first state plan, a second chimney was included in the early 19th century addition to the rear, and a third chimney on the north was added in the late 19th century.

The construction of the house followed the technique of the Franco-Spanish periods of Louisiana settlement. The house is raised approximately four feet above ground. At present the outer piers are of brick (rebuilt in 1951) and the interior supports of large cypress posts. Heavy cypress timbers were placed upon the piers which formed a sill. Each sill member is notched and pegged. The vertical framing members were mortised and tenoned with pegs. The space between vertical members were filled with mud and moss. (Bouzellage) The exterior walls were covered with clapboard. The walls under the gallery were most probably planked; however, this changed to vertical tongue and groove boards. In the early 20th century. The roof framing consists of an " A " frame resting on the original walls of stage one, with an extended rafter system which tied into the ridge intersection and extended out to cover the rear addition (dining room) and galleries. There is not a ridge pole, but all rafters intersection are notched and pegged. The roof cover was constructed of cypress shingles.

Typical of early Louisiana plans of this region, the house did not have corridors; therefore, large double provincial doors provided access and major ventilation for the house. Heavy plank shutters protected the interior rooms. During the early 19th century double hung windows were added. (9/6 glass lights)

The interior decor was altered during the early 20th century. Originally the walls were either plaster or in some rooms planks. The parlor has an elaborate hand made cove ceiling with tooled wood rosette. The Federalist mantels in both parlor and major bedroom are highly refined.

Exposed beams in two of the original rooms are well preserved. Most original hardware exists.

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known)

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

This late 19th century house has both significance and beauty. Its significance rests with its architectural stylistic character of early Louisiana house types, and its association with various personalities of historic importance in the development of the city and region. (e. g. James Hillen, John Joyce, Armand Allard Duplantier etc.) Its beauty can be seen in the siting of the house, planning organization, constructional details and refinements of the interior decor of the early 19th century.

Magnolia Mound Plantation House appears to be one of the earliest structures in the city of Baton Rouge. According to the conveyances from the Archives of the Spanish Government of West Florida, this property was owned originally by James Hillen, an early settler in 1786. On December 23, 1791, John Joyce purchased the property. Joyce, was born in County Cork, Ireland and migrated to Louisiana where he married Constance Rochon. Joyce was mysteriously drowned in Mobile on

May 9, 1798. Constance Rochon Joyce then married Armand Allard Duplantier, a former captain of the continental army under the Marquis de Lafayette. Duplantier was a most influential personality in the city. The Conveyance in the Spanish records is dated May 5, 1800.

The original house was described in the conveyance records as measuring approximately 47 feet in length and 20 feet in depth with a 10 foot gallery. These dimensions are the measurements of the first portion of the present house. It was during the Duplantier ownership that the house was extended and the decor changed to Federalist motifs. During the late 19th century the rooms on the gallery were added. Clear evidence of the change between the mud and moss construction of the late 18th century and the lath and plaster of the late 19th century occurs on the front gallery.

Several persons owned the property from the time of the Duplantier family to the late 19th century when Mr. Louis Barillier sold the land and improvements to Mr. Robert A. Hart and then through family inheritance it was acquired by Mrs. Blanche Duncan. Mrs. Duncan commissioned the architectural firm of Goodman and Miller of Baton Rouge to do extensive alterations and additions in 1951. Mrs. Anna Belle Hart Anderson inherited the property after the death of Mrs. Duncan. In 1965, Mr. Al German purchased the property to remove the house and construct an apartment complex. The city of Baton Rouge expropriated the property in 1966 for its historic and visual significance to the community.

The house is now being restored as a historic house museum.

#### MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

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