

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Jackson Historic District comprises 124 structures, which is about two-thirds of the present town. Like many rural towns in Louisiana, Jackson never grew to the size of the street grid laid out by its city government. Also, like many of its fellows, Jackson's growth from 1815 to the 1930's was gradual and sporadic with occasional fires taking their toll. Thus the grid was only partially filled out, and some gaps were left. This has yielded an open townscape with a mixture of nineteenth and early twentieth century structures as well as a mixture of humble and pretentious structures which are sometimes placed in stark contrast to one another. It is this overall mixture which gives the district its character.

Charter Street runs east-west through the town and is the main commercial corridor. Contrasts previously mentioned are most apparent here. The area is architecturally dominated by the town's two historic banks, Millbank, an impressive Greek Revival structure and the Bank of Jackson, a Romanesque Revival structure with an unusual onion dome. There are also several substantial brick false fronted commercial buildings, including one whose impressive columnar facade was built of bricks taken from part of old Centenary College circa 1930. However, the scene is also shared by a number of frame one story shops, warehouses and sheds which are plain, unpretentious and very low in scale compared to their grander neighbors.

Despite these differences in scale and pretension, the commercial area has a unifying element in its openness. This is because so many of its buildings can be taken in a single view.

North and south of the Charter Street commercial corridor are residential areas. Here too considerable contrast occurs. Certain areas such as College Street and Church Street have large one and one-half and two story residences set on sizable well treed lots. Yet in both cases small, two and three room frame tenant houses are less than half a block away. Dramatic changes of scale and pretension even occur between houses along the same street. For example, College has a row of several shotguns which gives way abruptly to a relatively pretentious Greek Revival raised house.

Beyond the north side of the Charter Street corridor the residential area gives way to several large rural properties. Despite their semi-isolation, they are tied to the district by proximity, historical association, and by architectural characteristics which are shared with other structures in the town.

#### Architectural Styles and Building Types (Breakdown according to map)

##### 1815 to 1845 (29 buildings, 24%)

Buildings of this period represent Jackson's early prominence as a center for the parish. The Federal and Greek Revival styles are treated as one for purposes of this submission because in Jackson they run together. Most of the town's extant early buildings, are nominally provincial Greek Revival, but some show the waning Federal influence. In most cases this takes the form of attenuated porch posts. This can be seen in the unusual upper galleries at Centenary and at McBrannon house. It can also be seen in the surviving lower gallery at the Old Courthouse. In a few cases Federal influence can be seen in corner blocks, fenestration and Adams type mantels, such as at the Presbyterian Manse or at Holcombe House. The most pretentious Federal carry-over in the district is the East Wing of Centenary College where, despite the colossal Doric gallery, the doors all have round arch fanlight tops. All but two of the most pretentious Greek Revival buildings of Jackson have rough, round, stuccoed brick Doric columns similar to Centenary. Examples include the lower gallery at McBrannon house, Millbank and the Masonic Hall. This type of crude Doric articulation has been identified by Sam Wilson as a local style variation common to grander buildings in the Felicianas during the Greek Revival period. The two exceptions to this are Centenary, which is similar to McBrannon house but with wood posts, and Roseneath, which has a fluted temple front and is the only full blown high style Greek Revival building in the town. Most of the lesser Greek Revival residences in town are square posted raised cottages of 3 to 5 bays similar to the Presiding Elder's House. Larger examples have central hall plans and smaller examples have 2, 3, or 4 rooms without halls.

##### 1845 to 1875 (10 buildings, 8%)

The most significant contribution of this period was in the area of ecclesiastical architecture. The Greco-Renaissance Revival Presbyterian church, the Baptist church with its elegant

combination of Gothic and Renaissance features, and the late Gothic style Methodist church are all first rate examples of the eclectic early Victorian influence.

A few late Greek Revival residences (mostly raised cottages) also date from this period. There are also a few simple frame raised cottages of 3 or 4 bays.

#### 1875 to 1910 (15 buildings, 13%)

Although two of the landmarks of the commercial corridor were built during this period, most of the extant buildings are frame residences. The tradition of the one and one-half story raised cottage continued but with late Victorian details and features. In some cases scroll saw ornamentation was applied and in other cases houses received a simpler treatment with turned columns and false galleries. Some earlier raised cottages received false galleries at this time. At the end of the nineteenth century the Queen Anne Revival influence was felt and several raised houses were built adorned with decorated gables, curving galleries and turrets. Two had elaborate.

#### 1910-c.1930 (43 buildings, 35%)

Although two of Jackson's commercial structures, Millbank and the library, date from as far back as the mid-nineteenth century, most of the town's extant historic commercial buildings date from between 1910 and c.1840. Most of these are set along Charter Street and are predominantly low in scale. Two of them are frame boxes with wooden galleries and gable roofs. These date from the 1920's. Several more are of brick and have corbelled cornices and shaped parapets. One is of similar design but constructed of concrete block. Two of these brick commercial buildings (inventory, # 39, 61) are not quite 50 years old at the date of this submission. Both date from the 1930's. They are listed as contributing elements to the district rather than intrusions because their false front designs continue a tradition of small town commercial construction which dates from before 1900. Moreover, they are virtually indistinguishable from much earlier examples.

There were no large residences built during this period; however, many extant cottages and bungalows date from this time. The raised cottage tradition was supplanted by the bungalow style for residences except in the construction of tenant houses. Several shotgun houses were built as well as innocuous frame cottages. In addition, about 6 older raised cottages were modified during this period to the extent that their front galleries were enclosed.

#### Intrusions (27 buildings, 20%)

Although the commercial corridor has some 7 intrusions, they are low in scale, innocuous for the most part, and continue the old streetscape. In addition, they are easily dominated by Jackson's grand old commercial buildings both in terms of scale and size. In fact, in most cases the only reason they are noticeable at all is their signage.

All the remaining intrusions are in the residential areas and most are innocuous frame cottages. They share space with the older houses, but they do not determine the character of the streetscape. They blend in with older residences and thus the old neighborhood feeling remains intact.

#### The Rural Properties at the North End of the Residential Area

Buildings #1 - 11 were included in the district because they are linked to it by proximity, architectural style. and historical associations.

#### Proximity

Centenary College (National Register) is a broad and open green space which was once a large campus. It is linked by 400 ft. of semi-forested land to the landscaped lawns surrounding Centenaria. It is also linked in another direction by open land to the bungalows and cottages on Wilson Drive. These are linked by 100 ft. of semi-forested land to the Visiting Elders' House and the two northernmost plantation houses (buildings 4 & 7). At one time this land was cultivated rather than semi-treed as it is now. Thus the buildings had a stronger link with the town. Even today they

are only separated from the town proper by a few hundred feet of lawn and trees. In fact, the character in the area north of Centenary College is somewhat similar to other residential areas in towns where trees have grown to dominate the streetscape. In addition, all these northern properties are within the city limits and are considered part of Jackson by the populace.

### Architectural Style

There is a strong architectural link between properties in the northern part of the district and the district proper. Buildings #7 and #2 are simple Greek Revival raised cottages, a type found throughout the district. Buildings #1 and #4 are two story, square post gallery fronted houses which echo the style of many of the district's early buildings. In fact, the facade of building #1 is almost a twin to the facade of #25. In addition, building #11 has the same type of crude brick Doric columns found on many of the grander early buildings in the district proper. In summation, the properties in the northern portion of the district developed architecturally along the same lines as the district proper and are an integral part of Jackson's significance as a center of Greek Revival architecture.

### History

The district's northern properties constitute a major part of Jackson's significance as an educational center of 19th century Louisiana. Because Centenary College was one of the town's major institutions, buildings associated with it (Professors' houses, boarding houses, businesses, etc.) are spread throughout the district. Centenaria (#1) was built by a professor; building #2 was a guesthouse used by the college for visiting dignitaries; building #7 was a professor's house and Millwood (#4) was one of Jackson's many private schools.

Of these northern properties, only one, Centenary, is listed on the National Register. In the judgment of the National Register staff, only one other, Centenaria, stands a reasonable chance of obtaining a National Register listing. Since all of these properties contribute to the significance of Jackson for the aforementioned reasons, it was thought best to include them in the district.

### Inventory

1. Centenaria - ca. 1832 - two-story frame residence, hip roof, widow's walk, wide central hall, with doorways decorated with medallions, two-story gallery, Greek Revival.
2. Presiding Elder's House - 1840's, one-story frame, raised cottage, two front doors, gallery posts replaced, some re-siding.
3. House (corner Wilson & Millwood) - one-story frame cottage, 3 bays, c.1850, false gallery, columns replaced, front door transom and sidelights changed.
4. Millwood - ca. 1840 - 5-bay, two-story frame, Greek Revival, with false parapet (changed 1866 or later 19th, century) with bracketed cornice, subsequently asbestos siding added, handsome yard with many trees and original fence.
5. House - c.1920-30, frame bungalow, heavy porch posts.
6. House - c.1920-30 (See #5)
- 6A. Frame cottage - ca. 1950, frame.
7. Austin House - ca. 1832, raised cottage, five bay, Greek Revival, porch pillars rest on ground, not gallery, central hall, extensive use of faux-marbre and faux-bois.
8. House - Nondescript cottage, ca. 1930
9. House - Nondescript cottage, c.1930
10. Spillman House - ca. 1900, frame raised cottage, five bays, Victorian doors, plate-glass windows, recent aluminum siding, but essentially intact.
11. Centenary College - West Wing - 1837 - Greek Revival, 20 bay, brick dormitory, with two story Doric Colonnade, and old Professors' House adjacent.

12. Pipes House - ca. 1900, one-and-a-half story, massive, more or less symmetrical Queen Anne-Colonial frame house, with two turrets, two front gables, with many inset Palladian window motifs.

13. Hagaman house - c.1890, two-story frame, gable-fronted residence, with Eastlake side galleries and rear two-story, semi-octagonal bay.

14. Howell House - c.1900, one-and-a-half story frame, five bay residence with Queen Anne features, including jerkin-head roof and massive front gable with scalloped shingles.

15. See #5, 6, 8 and 9.

16. See #5, 6, 8 and 9.

17. Varnado House - c.1840-1850, Louisiana raised cottage, five-bay frame, 12 over 12 windows, transom, sidelight front door, false gallery, large single dormer added later.

18. Holcombe House - c.1840-1850, frame, raised cottage, five-bay, present front gallery, siding and hip dormer, front dormer windows result of 20th century renovation, interior Adams mantels.

19. Bungalow, frame, c.1920's, with thin columns

20. Shotgun, frame with graceful four-column gable porch.

21. See #5, 6, etc.

22. See #5, 6, etc.

23. See #5, 6, etc.

24. Steele House - ca. 1840-50, frame, raised cottage, two front doors, front porch replaced.

25. McBrannon House - ca. 1845, two-story frame, Greek Revival residence, large transom front door framed with molded boards and corner blocks, lower porch crude brick Doric columns, upper gallery with simple wooden posts, gallery covering tops of upstairs windows and doors, side bay added later for doctor's office.

26. Presbyterian Manse - c.1816-17, frame, five-bay, central hall, Federal style with Adams mantels and elaborate corner block detailing inside and out, large central dormer and diminutive front porch added c.1900.

27. Feliciana Parish Courthouse - 1816-17, was originally two-story, brick building, was cut down after disastrous fire in 1876, first floor walls saved from demolition c.1963-63, three-bay porch.

28. John Horton House - ca. 1830's, one-and-a-half story with basement, formerly five bays, now three, using double windows, other 20th century alterations include concrete block basement, asbestos siding and front dormers .

29. See #5 etc.

30. Marie Cotaya House - ca. 1820, four-bay, gallery fronted cottage with two front doors and brick basement.

31. McKowen Store - c.1836, basic changes in 1940's, one-story hip roof with large windows and false galley all around, frame and stucco with brick basement. Intrusion, essentially in keeping with district in terms of massing and texture.

32. Pipes Store - turn-of-century brick store, six-bay with shallow arched fenestration, stick-style gallery with ornate wooden capitals.

33. B & B Liquor Store - small concrete block building - Intrusion.

34. Betsy's Best Seafood - Small glass-fronted concrete block building. (fast food)
35. Small false-fronted brick building - 1935.
36. Large two-story, commercial building, pedimented front portico, built c.1930 of bricks, columns and some woodwork from East Wing College of Louisiana (Centenary College) 1832-33, demolished c.1930's, building listed as contributing element because parts are very old and large portico contributes much to streetscape.
37. Attached one-story building.
38. Modern, one-story brick commercial building - intrusion.
39. 1939 Commercial building with corbelled table parapet, listed as contributing element, because of style of many commercial buildings in Louisiana.
40. Concrete block commercial building, ca. 1950, with parapet front. Intrusion.
41. Roseneath, ca. 1832, handsome, high-style Greek Revival townhouse, five-bay, with fluted Doric portico, and corner block detail.
42. Presbyterian Church, 1852, temple form church built of brick with raised brick pilasters, round arched windows, spire a 20th century replacement.
43. Millbank - ca. 1829-36 (probably 1835), Greek Revival, five-bay, hip-roof, with crude Doric columns and a large central chimney.
44. Small frame shotgun, ca. 1920.
45. Pipes Store - basically dates early 20th century, however, is much older; large one-story commercial building with headed wainscoting.
46. Concrete block commercial - intrusion.
47. Jackson Town Hall, ca. 1906; two-story eclectic brick building with large round segmental arches; corner turret; surmounted by onion dome; cornice line is picked out by corbelled table; built of pink brick with rose colored mortar.
48. Plain brick commercial building, ca. 1930.
49. Police and Utility Department - Town of Jackson - small brick buildings 1930; with stepped gable front and water tower same period.
50. Bank of Jackson - ca. 1965-70, 5 bay raised cottage style with basically good detail. Intrusion.
51. Audubon Branch Library - ca. 1850, one-story brick with gable front (formerly Johnny Jones Store).
52. The Brides House - ca. 1890; five bay, raised cottage with Eastlake detail.
53. Telephone Building - frame, asbestos siding. Intrusion.
54. Small frame house. Intrusion
55. Small frame bungalow, ca. 1925.
56. Jackson Plumbing Co., small frame, innocuous intrusion.
57. Wright House - one-story frame, raised cottage with front porch partially filled in, asbestos siding, probably ca. 1850, but much remodeled.
58. Roby House - frame, ca. 1830's, raised cottage, 2 front doors, 9 over 6 windows, central chimney, transoms reworked.

59. Small frame house, ca. 1900 with L-shaped plan, elaborate tin roof vents and heavy bungalow-type columns.
60. Frame warehouse, early 20th century with transomed door and wooden window shutters.
61. Keith's Drug Store - brick commercial building 1933; with crested parapet similar to earlier prototypes. Listed as contributing element because of similarity to earlier prototypes.
62. Smith House - one-story frame with hip roof, probably two portions one of which is ca. 1840's and a later 19th century addition - handsome Renaissance Revival portico with bracketed frieze.
63. Frame, asbestos siding, cottage - intrusion
64. Small frame, ca. 1850, raised cottage with 3 bay, late Victorian front gallery and new siding on one side.
65. Lea House - ca. 1930's, two-story frame, hip roof residence with colonial and bungalow details.
66. Small aluminum -sided cottage - intrusion
67. Small asbestos-sided cottage - intrusion
68. Frame 3 bay raised cottage, ca. 1840-50, 9 over 6 windows and central transomed front door, sides covered with asphalt.
69. Frame, turn-of-century, 4 bay raised cottage, re-worked front gallery.
70. Wesley House - ca. 1845 frame, 5 bay raised cottage with jigsaw cut barge boards around the front porch.
71. Frame bungalow with western stick-style detail, ca. 1820
72. Concrete block (see 115 and 6)
73. Howell House, ca. 1870, frame two-story, 5 bay, two-story gallery and Greek Revival style
74. Concrete block and asbestos siding (church) - intrusion
75. Turnipseed House - ca. 1840 frame cottage with bousillage, screened front porch is 20th century work, also new siding.
76. Roberts House - ca. 1880-90 frame, raised cottage, false gallery, openwork porch posts
77. Frame raised cottage, ca. 1880-90, two front doors, 4 bay, false gallery, Eastlake columns
78. See #5 and 6
79. See #5 and 6
80. Five bay, ca. 1880-90 raised cottage, openwork columns, jigsaw cut balustrade bracketed cornice, chimneys cut off below roof.
81. Ca. 1930 bungalow
82. 1960 frame cottage, sympathetic intrusion
83. Masonic Hall - ca. 1826, brick, four-columned temple-fronted, two-story.

84. Three bay raised cottage, 6 over 6 windows. wooden siding, jib door, ca. 1820.
85. Baptist Parsonage, modern brick ranch house, intrusion.
86. First Baptist Church, 1860, brick, Gothic Revival basilica, steeple altered.
87. Intrusion, 1940 sympathetic
88. Intrusion, Colonial revival cottage, 1930's.
89. Intrusion, Colonial revival cottage, 1930's.
90. Intrusion, Colonial revival cottage, 1930's.
91. Methodist Church, 1852-54, brick, Gothic Revival basilica, hood-molded, square head windows.
92. 1870's raised cottage, 4 bays.
93. 1930 bungalow
94. 1930 bungalow
95. 1930 bungalow
96. Early 20th century frame gallery-fronted cottage, no ornamentation.
97. Early 20th century frame gallery-fronted cottage, no ornamentation.
98. Early 20th century frame gallery-fronted cottage, no ornamentation.
99. Early 20th century frame gallery-fronted cottage, no ornamentation.
100. Early 20th century frame gallery-fronted cottage, no ornamentation, also re-sided.
101. Early 20th century frame gallery-fronted cottage, no ornamentation.
102. Early 20th century frame cottage with Eastlake columns.
103. 1940 cottage, intrusion.
104. Queen Anne Revival, 5-bay, porch replaced, lower story bricked over, sawtooth shingling on gable.
105. 1840-50 raised cottage, 3-bay.
106. 1930's bungalow.
107. Early 20th century Catholic Church, Gothic arch door, stained glass round windows
108. 1970 brick, ranch house - intrusion.
109. 1330, 3-bay, gallery-fronted cottage, 12 story, massive end-wall chimneys, double slender columns, some windows and doors replaced.
110. Ca. 1850, 5-bay, screened porch, 112 story, chimneys removed.
111. Bungalow, c. 1930, nondescript.
112. 1840's, cottage, 2 front doors, 12 story, 9 over 6 windows, intricate transoms, ear-molded fenestration, end chimneys.
113. 1840's, 12 story, cottage, 2 front doors, 9 over 6 windows, intricate transoms, ear-molded fenestration, and chimney.

114. Large, frame, turn-of-the-century, Queen Anne cottage, turreted bay, curve-ended gallery.
115. 1950's bungalow, sympathetic, intrusion.
116. Bungalow, 1940's sympathetic, intrusion.
117. Bungalow, 1940's sympathetic, intrusion.
118. 1890's Greek Revival cottage, 1 1/2 story, 5-bay, 12 over 12 windows.
119. 1840-50, 4-bay, 2 front door, raised cottage, with much 19th century detailing and Eastlake columns and doors.
120. 1940's cottage - intrusion.
121. Trailer, unsympathetic, intrusion.
122. Fast food, unsympathetic, intrusion.
123. 1830-40 small Greek Revival, temple front with modified tympanum, 6 over windows, transomed doors, 2 front doors.

Specific dates  
 Builder/Architect

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)  
 Criteria A, B, and C

Jackson is significant in the area of architecture for three reasons.

First, Jackson is a surviving rural town center from the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries with banks, shops, residences, churches, warehouses and all manner of other buildings which might be expected in such a town. Every parish has at least one. But the historic area of Jackson is superior to most historic town centers because it is unusually well-preserved. There are over 120 buildings, fully 80% of which have historic value. This shows a degree of homogeneity seldom found among the old towns of rural Louisiana.

Secondly, the Jackson historic district is one of only two towns in the 8 Florida parishes which have a significant heritage of Greek Revival architecture. Most other towns in the area have no Greek Revival buildings at all. Several towns such as Baton Rouge or Mandeville have a few surviving raised cottages with square post galleries. But the Jackson historic district has over 40 Greek Revival structures, 7 of which rise to a full 2 stories and can be classified as monumental. In Jackson one sees the use of the 2 story gallery, the colossal order, and the full temple front. These impressive features can be found in only one other town in the area.

Thirdly, there are three sizable towns in the 2 Feliciana parishes -- Jackson, Clinton and St. Francisville. All three towns are known for their historic residential areas. But only Jackson has a historic commercial corridor. The old Clinton commercial section has been largely replaced with post-World War II buildings. The commercial section of St. Francisville was around Bayou Sara and has completely disappeared. But the Charter Street corridor has an overall historic commercial character which can be seen in landmark commercial buildings such as the two banks and the Old Pipes store and is supported by the lesser commercial buildings.

The town of Jackson is historically significant as the old parish seat for the entire area of what is now East and West Feliciana Parish and as an important focus for commercial, economic, and educational activity in the area.



By order of an act of the Louisiana legislature dated January 31, 1815, a survey was made to determine the center of Feliciana Parish to establish there a seat of justice. The surveyor found the center of the parish to be what is now the town of Jackson on land belonging to John Horton and James H. Ficklin. These men donated a 300' x 300' piece of land for a public square and 50 acres to the south and southeast of the square. Jackson remained the seat of Feliciana Parish until 1824 when the parish was divided into East and West Feliciana and Clinton became the East Feliciana Parish seat of justice. East Feliciana, however, was governed from Jackson until the first frame courthouse was completed in Clinton in 1826. The Old Feliciana Parish Courthouse, built in 1816-1817, is located within the proposed district and is an important tie with Jackson's tenure as seat of justice for Feliciana Parish.

Jackson's reign as a center of education began in 1825 when the legislature established the College of Louisiana, the state's second state supported college, and located it in Jackson. The college was originally located on the former Feliciana Parish public square; however, in 1830 a new site was purchased in the northeast corner of Jackson. The West Wing of the College of Louisiana, built in 1837, along with the nearby Professor's House, is already listed on the National Register. The College of Louisiana existed until 1845, when it was taken over by Centenary College, a Methodist school located originally in Mississippi. Centenary is considered to be one of the most important of the "church schools" in antebellum Louisiana. It remained in Jackson until 1906 when it moved to its present location in Shreveport. Houses associated with Centenary are scattered about Jackson. Centenaria was built for William Carpenter, a professor at the college, and the Presiding Elder's House was the home away from home for the Methodist presiding elders when they came to Centenary.

In addition to the College of Louisiana and later Centenary, Jackson had a good number of schools and academies, few remnants of which remain. It was apparently especially well known for its academies for young ladies. One such extant example is Millwood, which once housed Millwood Academy.

Jackson was also an important economic and commercial focal point for the area. Two old banks remain, one dating from the antebellum period and one from the turn-of-the-century. Millbank (c. 1829-1836) was the banking house of the Clinton and Port Hudson Railroad Company. The brick, two story, onion dome Bank of Jackson (1906) has been restored for use as the Jackson Town Hall. In addition to being the place where local farmers came to borrow money and see to other banking needs, Jackson also served the region as a distribution point for necessary provisions. It was the place where local people came to purchase dry goods, clothes, manufactured products, and other needed items. The Old Pipes Store is the best of many architectural relics which give evidence of Jackson's commercial activity.

#### Major Bibliographical References

Research report prepared by Mamie Austin Rouzan, based upon research in primary sources such as conveyance records, legislative acts, etc., located in Jackson Historic District National Register file, State Historic Preservation Office, Baton Rouge.

Rouzan, Mamie Austin, All Around the Square, 1971.

Survey of Jackson conducted by the Division of Archaeology and Historic Preservation

Centenary National Register Nomination Form, State Historic Preservation Office, Baton Rouge.